THIS BOOK
MUST NOT BE REMOVED
FROM THE LIBRARY

UNIVERSITY OF LONDON LIBRARY

REFERENCE ONLY

PARL. PAPERS
OR REFERENCE ONLY.

University of London
GURNEY SC
WOODSTOCK ST W

616927

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES

THIRD SESSION OF THE TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND

8 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CLXXXV.

COMPRISING PERIOD FROM THURSDAY, TWENTY-SEVENTH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 1908, TO THURSDAY, TWELTH DAY OF MARCH, 1908.

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION.

1908.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED,
UNDER CONTRACT WITH HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE
BY
WYMAN AND SONS, LIMITED, FETTER LANE, LONDON.

8472

CHRONOLOGY OF "THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols.; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES commence with the year 1803, and the contents are set forth in the following Chronological Table:—

HISTORY.

CONQUEST to 34 GEO. II.—1066 to 1760.

Vol. 1 to 15, 1 Will. I. to 34 Geo. II.
1066-1760

REIGN OF GEORGE III.—1760 to 1820.

Vol. 15 to 35, 1 Geo. III. to 40 Geo. III.
1760-1800

(First Parliament.)

Vol. 35 ....41 Geo. III..........1801
— 36 ....42 — 1802

(Second Parliament.)

Vol. 36 ....42 Geo. III. 1802-3

DEBATES.

First Series.

(Second Parliament—*continued.*)

Vol. 1 & 2...44 Geo. III.......1803-4
— 3 to 5...45 — 1805
— 6 & 7...46 — 1806

(Third Parliament.)

Vol. 8 & 9...47 Geo. III.......1806-7

(Fourth Parliament.)

Vol. 9 to 11...48 Geo. III.......1807-8
— 12 — 14...49 — 1809
— 15 — 17...50 — 1810
— 18 — 20...51 — ... 1810-11
— 21 — 23...52 — 1812

(Fifth Parliament.)

Vol. 24 to 26...53 Geo. III. ... 1812-13
— 27 & 28...54 — ... 1813-14
— 29 to 31...55 — ... 1814-15
— 32 — 34...56 — 1816
— 35 & 36...57 — 1817
— 37 — 38...58 — 1818

(Sixth Parliament.)

Vol. 39 & 40...59 Geo. III. 1819
— 41 ....60 — ... 1819-20

Second Series.

REIGN OF GEORGE IV.—1820 to 1830.

(Seventh Parliament.)

Vol. 1 to 3... 1 Geo. IV. 1820
— 4 & 5... 2 — 1821
— 6 — 7... 3 — 1822
— 8 — 9... 4 — 1823
— 10 — 11... 5 — 1824
— 12 — 13... 6 — 1825-6
— 14 — 15... 7 — 1826

(Eighth Parliament.)

Vol. 16 .... 7 Geo. IV. 1826
— 17 .... 8 — 1827
— 18 & 19... 9 — 1828
— 20 — 21...10 — 1829
— 22 to 25...11 — 1830

Third Series.

REIGN OF WILLIAM IV.—1830 to 1837.

(Ninth Parliament.)

Vol.	1 to 3	1 Will. IV.	1830-1

(Tenth Parliament.)

Vol.	4 to 8	2 Will. IV.	1832
—	9 — 14	3 —	1831

(Eleventh Parliament.)

Vol.	15 to 20	4 Will. IV.	1833
—	21 — 25	5 —	1834

(Twelfth Parliament.)

Vol.	26 to 30	6 Will. IV.	1835
—	31 — 35	7 —	1836
—	36 — 38	8 —	1837

REIGN OF VICTORIA—1837 to 1901.

(Thirteenth Parliament.)

Vol.	39 to 44	1 Victoria	1838
—	45 — 50	2 —	1839
—	51 — 55	3 —	1840
—	56 — 58	4 —	(a) 1841

(Fourteenth Parliament.)

Vol.	59	4 Victoria	(b) 1841
—	60 to 65	5 —	1842
—	66 — 71	6 —	1843
—	72 — 76	7 —	1844
—	77 — 82	8 —	1845
—	83 — 88	9 —	1846
—	89 — 94	10 —	(a) 1847

(Fifteenth Parliament.)

Vol.	95	10 Victoria	(b) 1847
—	96 to 101	11 —	1848
—	102 — 107	12 —	1849
—	108 — 113	13 —	1850
—	114 — 118	14 —	1851
—	119 — 122	15 —	(a) 1852

(Sixteenth Parliament.)

Vol.	123	15 Victoria	(b) 1852
—	124 to 129	16 —	1853
—	130 — 135	17 —	1854
—	136 — 139	18 —	1855
—	140 — 143	19 —	1856
—	144	20 —	(a) 1857

(Seventeenth Parliament.)

Vol	145 to 147	20 Victoria	(b) 1857
—	148 — 151	21 —	1858
—	152 — 153	22 —	(a) 1859

(Eighteenth Parliament.)

Vol.	154 to 155	22 Victoria	(b) 1859
—	156 — 160	23 —	1860
—	161 — 164	24 —	1861
—	165 — 168	25 —	1862
—	169 — 172	26 —	1863
—	173 — 176	27 —	1864
—	177 — 180	28 —	1865

(Nineteenth Parliament.)

Vol.	181 to 184	29 Victoria	1866
—	185 — 189	30 —	1867
—	190 — 193	31 —	1867-8

(Twentieth Parliament.)

Vol.	194 to 198	32 Victoria	1868-9
—	199 — 203	33 —	1870
—	204 — 208	34 —	1871
—	209 — 213	35 —	1872
—	214 — 217	36 —	1873

(Twenty-First Parliament.)

Vol.	218 to 221	37 Victoria	1874
—	222 — 226	38 —	1875
—	227 — 231	39 —	1876
—	232 — 236	40 —	1877
—	237 — 242	41 —	1878
—	243 — 249	42 —	1878-9
—	250 & 251	43 —	(a) 1880

(Twenty-Second Parliament.)

Vol.	252 to 256	43 Victoria	(b) 1880
—	257 — 265	44 —	1881
—	266 — 273	45 —	(a) 1882
—	274 & 275	45 —	(b) 1882
—	276 to 283	46 —	1883
—	284 — 292	47 —	1884
—	293 — 301	48 —	1884-5

(Twenty-Third Parliament.)

Vol.	302 to 307	49 Victoria	(a) 1886

(Twenty-Fourth Parliament.)

Vol.	308 & 309	49 Victoria	(b) 1886
—	310 to 321	50 —	1887
—	322 — 332	51 —	1888
—	333 — 340	52 —	1889
—	341 — 348	53 —	1890
—	349 — 356	54 —	1890-1

Fourth Series.

(Twenty-Fourth Parliament—*cont.*)

Vol.	1 to 6	55	Victoria	1892

(Twenty-Fifth Parliament.)

Vol.	7	56	Victoria	1892
—	8 to 21	57	—	1893-4
—	22 — 29	57	—	1894
—	30 — 35	58	—	1895

(Twenty-Sixth Parliament.)

Vol.	36	59	Victoria	1895
—	37 to 44	59	—	1895-6
—	45 — 52	60	—	1897
—	53 — 65	61	—	1898
—	66 — 76	62	—	1899
—	77	63	—	1899
—	78 — 83	63	—	1900
—	84	63 & 64	—	1900
—	85 — 87	64	—	1900

(Twenty-Seventh Parliament.)

Vol.	88	64	Victoria	1900

REIGN OF EDWARD VII.

(Twenty-Seventh Parliament—*cont.*)

Vol.	89	1	Edward VII.	1901
—	90 to 100	1	—	1901
—	101	1 & 2	—	1902
—	102 to 117	2	—	1902
—	118 to 128	3	—	1903
—	129 to 140	4	—	1904
—	141 to 151	5	—	1905

(Twenty-Eighth Parliament.)

Vol.	152 to 168	6	Edward VII.	1906
Vol.	169 to 182	7	„ „	1907
Vol.	183 to 185	8	„ „	1908

HIS MAJESTY'S PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF STATE, Etc.

SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN'S FIRST ADMINISTRATION, DECEMBER 1905.

THE CABINET.

Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury——Rt. Hon. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, M.P.
Lord President of the Council——Rt. Hon. the Earl of Crewe.
Lord Chancellor——Rt. Hon. Lord Loreburn.
Chancellor of the Exchequer——Rt. Hon. H. H. Asquith, M.P.
Secretaries of State——
  Home Department——Rt. Hon. Herbert J. Gladstone, M.P.
  Foreign Affairs——Rt. Hon. Sir Edward Grey, Bt., M.P.
  Colonial Office——Rt. Hon. Earl of Elgin.
  War Office——Rt. Hon. R. B. Haldane, M.P.
  India Office——Rt. Hon. John Morley, M.P.
First Lord of the Admiralty——Rt. Hon. Lord Tweedmouth.
Chief Secretary for Ireland——Rt. Hon. A. Birrell, M.P.
Lord Privy Seal——Most. Hon. Marquess of Ripon.
President of the Board of Education——Rt. Hon. R. McKenna, M.P.
President of the Board of Trade——Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd-George, M.P.
President of the Local Government Board——Rt. Hon. John Burns, M.P.
President of the Board of Agriculture——Rt. Hon. Earl Carrington.
Postmaster-General——Rt. Hon. Sydney Buxton, M.P.
Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster——Rt. Hon. Sir Henry Fowler, M.P.
The Secretary for Scotland——Rt. Hon. J. Sinclair, M.P.
The First Commissioner of Works—Rt. Hon. L. Harcourt, M.P.

NOT IN THE CABINET.

Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office——Lord Fitzmaurice.
Under Secretary of State, Home Office——Herbert Samuel, Esq., M.P.
Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office——Rt. Hon. Winston Churchill, M.P.
Under Secretary of State, India Office——C. E. Hobhouse, Esq., M.P.
Under Secretary of State, War Office——Rt. Hon. Earl of Portsmouth.
Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury——George Whiteley, Esq., M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education——Thomas Lough, Esq., M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary to the Admiralty——Rt. Hon. E. Robertson, M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade——H. E. Kearley, Esq., M.P.
Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board——Dr. Macnamara, M.P.
Financial Secretary to the Treasury——Walter Runciman, Esq., M.P.
Financial Secretary to the War Office——T. R. Buchanan, Esq., M.P.
Lords of the Treasury——
  J. A. Pease, Esq., M.P.
  Herbert Lewis, Esq., M.P.
  Captain Cecil Norton, M.P.
  J. H. Whitley, Esq., M.P.
  J. M. F. Fuller, Esq., M.P.
Lords of the Admiralty——
  Admiral of the Fleet Sir John Fisher.
  Vice-Admiral Sir C. C. Drury.
  Rear-Admiral Sir H. B. Jackson.
  Rear-Admiral F. S. Inglefield.
Army Council——
  The Secretary of State for War [*in the Cabinet*].
  General Hon. Sir N. G. Lyttelton (Chief of the General Staff).
  General C. W. H. Douglas (Adjutant-General to the Forces).
  General Sir W. G. Nicholson (Quarter-Master-General to the Forces).
  Major-General C. F. Haddon (Master-General of the Ordnance).
  The Under Secretary of State for War.
  The Financial Secretary to the War Office.
  Secretary. The Permanent Under Secretary of State for War (Colonel Sir E. W. D. Ward).
The Civil Lord of the Admiralty——George Lambert, Esq., M.P.
Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland——Rt. Hon. the Earl of Aberdeen.
Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction (Ireland)——T. W. Russell, Esq., M.P.
The Lord Advocate——Thomas Shaw, Esq., M.P.
Attorney-General——Sir W. S. Robson, M.P.
Solicitor-General——Sir S. T. Evans, M.P.

OTHER OFFICERS OF STATE.

Paymaster-General——R. K. CAUSTON, Esq., M.P.
Lord Steward——Rt. Hon. Earl BEAUCHAMP.
Comptroller of the Household——The Master of ELIBANK, M.P.
Treasurer of the Household——Sir EDWARD STRACHEY, Bt., M.P.
Lord Chamberlain——Rt. Hon. Viscount ALTHORP.
Vice-Chamberlain——J. M. F. FULLER, Esq., M.P.
Master of the Horse——Rt. Hon. Earl of GRANARD.
Captain Yeoman of the Guard——His Grace the Duke of MANCHESTER.
Lords-in-Waiting——
- Earl GRANVILLE.
- Lord HAMILTON of DALZELL.
- Lord ACTON.
- Lord COLEBROOKE.
- Lord SUFFIELD.
- Lord HERSCHELL.
- Lord FARQUHAR.

Judge Advocate-General——T. MILVAIN, Esq., K.C.

SCOTLAND.

Secretary for Scotland and Keeper of the Great Seal——Rt. Hon. JOHN SINCLAIR.
Lord High Constable——Earl of ERROL.
Lord Privy Seal——Marquess of BREADALBANE, K.G.
Master of the Household——Duke of ARGYLL, K.T.
Lord High Commissioner——Lord KINNAIRD.
Lord Clerk Register——His Grace the Duke of MONTROSE, K.T.
Lord Justice General——Rt. Hon. Lord DUNEDIN.
Lord Advocate——Rt. Hon. THOMAS SHAW, K.C.
Lord Justice Clerk——Rt. Hon. Lord KINSBURGH, C.B.
Solicitor-General——ALEXANDER URE, Esq., K.C.
Register General and Deputy Keeper Great Seal—Sir STAIR AGNEW, K.C.B.
Commanding Forces——Lt.-Gen. E. P. LEACH, C.B., C.V.O.

IRELAND.

Lord-Lieutenant——Earl of ABERDEEN, G.C.M.G.
Chief Secretary and Keeper of Privy Seal——Rt. Hon. A. BIRRELL, M.P.
Under Secretary——Rt. Hon. Sir A. MACDONNELL, G.C.S.I., K.C.V.O.
Private Secretaries——Lord HERSCHELL and WALTER CALLAN, Esq.
State Steward and Chamberlain——The Earl of LIVERPOOL.
Controller——Lord PIRRIE.
Lord Chancellor——Lord Justice WALKER.
Attorney-General——Rt. Hon. R. R. CHERRY, K.C., M.P.
Solicitor-General——REDMOND BARRY, Esq., K.C., M.P.
Commanding the Forces——Gen. Lord GRENFELL, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

Chairman of Committees——Rt. Hon. Earl of Onslow, P.C.
Clerk of Parliaments——Sir Henry J. L. Graham, K.C.B.
Deputy Clerk of Parliaments (Clerk Assistant)——Hon. E. P. Thesiger, C.B.
Reading-Clerk and Clerk of Outdoor Committees——Edward Hall Alderson, Esq.
Counsel to the Chairman of Committees——Albert Gray, Esq., K.C.
Chief Clerk and Clerk of Public Bills——A. Harrison, Esq.
Senior Clerks——
  Clerk of the Journals——W. A. Leigh, Esq.
  Principal Clerk of Private Committees——J. F. Symons Jeune, Esq.
  Principal Clerk, Judicial Department, and Taxing Officer of Judicial Costs——J. F. Skene, Esq.
  W. H. Hamilton Gordon, Esq.
  Peers' Printed Paper Office——C. L. Anstruther, Esq.
Other Clerks——Hon. A. McDonnell; A. H. Robinson, Esq. (Clerk of Private Bills and Taxing Officer of Private Bill Costs); H. P. St. John, Esq.; V. M. Biddulph, Esq.; Hon. E. A. Stonor; H. J. F. Badeley, Esq.; C. Headlam, Esq.; J. B. Hotham, Esq.; E. C. Vigors, Esq.; G. D. Luard, Esq.; and G. Proby, Esq.
Receiver of Fees and Accountant——T. Ambrey Court, Esq.
Copyists——Mr. H. P. Norris and Mr. R. A. Court.
Messengers——Messrs. C. E. Chizlett, J. W. F. Locke, J. McMillan, G. Bennett, G. T. Philip, W. S. Wright, A. J. Vaughan.
Librarian——Edmund Gosse, Esq., LL.D.
Assistant Librarian——A. H. M. Butler, Esq.
Attendant——Mr. A. N. Stoll.
Examiners for Standing Orders——C. W. Campion, Esq.; J. F. Symons Jeune, Esq.; Clerk ——F. C. Bramwell, Esq.
Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod——Admiral Sir H. F. Stephenson, G.C.V.O., K.C.B.
Yeoman Usher——Captain T. D. Butler, M.V.O.
Serjeant-at-Arms——Lt.-Col. Rt. Hon. Sir Fleetwood I. Edwards, G.C.V.O., K.C.B.
Deputy Serjeant-at-Arms——S. Hand, Esq.
Resident Superintendent——J. K. Williams, Esq.
Shorthand Writer——W. H. Gurney Salter, Esq.
Assistant Shorthand Writer——William Gurney Angus, Esq.
Principal Doorkeepers——Messrs. W. Chandler, E. Fox, F. Holman.
First Class Assistants——Messrs. C. Walker, J. Hedley, J. Lane.
Second Class Assistants——Messrs. B. Gallop, H. B. Strevens, G. W. Cross, W. Stopp.
Third Class Assistants——Messrs. J. Woolacott, A. A. Edney, J. F. Baum.
Messengers——Messrs. A. J. Solman, C. Chapman, W. Phillips, W. W. Meates, T. Whitehead.
Superintendent of Refreshment Rooms——Mr. W. Casbon.
Inspector of Police attending the House of Lords——Mr. A. Palmer.
Clerk of the Works, Houses of Parliament——Mr. P. E. Ridge.
Resident Engineer, Houses of Parliament——Mr. W. Bradshaw.

PRINCIPAL OFFICERS OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Clerk of the House of Commons——Sir Courtenay Peregrine Ilbert, K.C.S.I., C.I.E.
Clerk-Assistant——Arthur W. Nicholson, Esq., C.B.
Second Clerk-Assistant——T. L. Webster, Esq.
Principal Clerks——
  Public Bill Office, and Clerk of Fees——W. Gibbons, Esq., C.B.
  Clerk of the Journals——W. H. Ley, Esq.
  Committee Office——Sir E. H. Doyle, Bart.
  Private Bill Office——J. H. W. Somerset, Esq.
Senior Clerks——C. V. Frere, Esq.; G. C. Giffard, Esq.; S. L. Simeon, Esq.; Arthur I. Dasent, Esq.; Horace West, Esq.; Henry A. Ferguson-Davie, Esq.
Assistant Clerks——Arthur H. Ellis, Esq.; Percy A. Bull, Esq.; F. R. Williams Wynn, Esq.; W. E. Grey, Esq.; F. C. Holland, Esq.; J. W. G. Bond, Esq.; H. C. Dawkins, Esq.; R. P. Colomb, Esq.; B. H. Fell, Esq.; R. E. Childers, Esq.; J. Scott Porter, Esq.; F. C. Bramwell, Esq
Junior Clerks——W. T. Legge, Esq.; C. R. Turner, Esq.; W. K. Gibbons, Esq.; W. P. Johnston, Esq.; Hon. H. R. C. Balfour; R. N. Bailey, Esq.; G. F. M. Campion, Esq.; S. de la Poer Beresford, Esq.; H. S. Green, Esq.; O. C. Williams, Esq.; V. W. D. Fox, Esq.; E. F. Wise, Esq.

Serjeant-at-Arms——H. D. Erskine, Esq., C.V.O.
Deputy Serjeant——F. R. Gosset, Esq.
Assistant Serjeant——W. H. Erskine, Esq.
Office Messenger——Mr. C. J. H. Shearn.
Chaplain to the House——The Ven. Archdeacon Basil Wilberforce, D.D.
Secretary to the Speaker——Hon. Edward Gully, C.B.
Counsel to the Speaker——Ernest Moon, Esq., K.C.
Trainbearer——Mr. W. Murrell.
Messenger——Mr. W. Holt.
Collector of Fees on Private Bills——C. L. Lockton, Esq.
Clerk to Referees——Sir E. H. Doyle, Bart.
Examiners of Private Bills——C. W. Campion, Esq. ; J. F. Symons Jeune, Esq.
Taxing Master——C. W. Campion, Esq. ; Clerk——F. C. Bramwell, Esq.
Vote Office——
    Principal Clerk——Philip Smith, Esq.
    Assistant Clerks——John Poyser, Esq. ; W. K. Sanderson, Esq.
    Messenger——Mr. John Edwards.
Librarian——A. E. A. W. Smyth, Esq. ; Assistant Librarian——V. Kitto, Esq ; Clerks in Library——Messrs. J. R. Crimp, Wm. Stewart ; Messengers——Messrs. A. Firmin, W. Hague.
Shorthand Writer——W. H. Gurney Salter, Esq.
Printers——
    Journals——G. E. Briscoe Eyre, Esq.
    Votes——J. B. Nichols, Esq. (for H. M. Stationery Office.)
Postmaster——Mr. I. Lincoln ; Hall Keeper——Mr. J. Glynn.
Office Keeper——Mr. H. Bullock.
Office Clerk in Committee Office——Mr. T. Fielden Mitchell.
Office Clerk in Journal Office——Mr. A. A. Taylor.
Messengers——Messrs. C. Davie, H. Jones, G. D. Weller, J. Armstrong, J. Woodward, J. Ivory, G. Norman, J. Surry, A. Sepple.
Doorkeepers——Mr. M. Inglefield and Mr. H. Hambling.
Messengers (1st Class)——Mr. C. Woodcraft, Mr. R. Robertson, Mr. J. Hills, Mr. J. Sprague, Mr. A. Andrews, Mr. G. Anstey, Mr. J. H. Day, Mr. J. Henderson, Mr. G. Wainwright, Mr. J. Guyatt, Mr. R. Turtle.
Messengers (2nd Class)——Messrs. A. Haskell, A. C. Johnson, G. Clapperton, H. E. Linington, H. G. Emmett, J. L. Philip, W. Findlay, W. Macdonald, W. R. Brimson, A. New.
Superintendent of Members' Waiting Room——Mr. J. F. Henley ; Assistant——Mr. W. Broadbent ; Porters——Messrs. J. Hart and G. Fry.
Inspector of Police attending the House of Commons——Mr. Scantlebury.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TO

VOLUME CLXXXV.

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1908.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

HIS MAJESTY THE LATE KING OF PORTUGAL.—The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that he had received a letter from the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to His Majesty the King of Portugal.

Ordered, That the said letter be entered on the Journals of the House 1

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; Thames River Steamboat Service Act, 1904 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]; Report from the Committee of Selection, that the Five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Swansea Valley Gas Bill [H.L.], and other Bills do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; and the Thames River Steamboat Service Act, 1901 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]; read, and agreed to: All petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the Petitioners praying to be heard by Counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also Counsel for the Bills 2

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; Thames River Steamboat Service Act, 1904 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ᵃ, and committed: The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 2

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Education (Scotland.)—Code of regulations for day schools for 1908, with appendices:

Presented [by command], and ordered to lie on the Table 3

Butter and Margarine Act, 1907.—List of names approved by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries for use in connection with mixtures of butter and milk, Presented (by command), and to be printed. (No. 23) 3

Trustee Savings Bank.—Sixteenth Annual Report Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 3

Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Acts Amendment Bill [H.L.]—[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Lovat 3

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª,"—(*Lord Lovat.*)
The Lord President of the Council (*The Earl of Crewe*) 12
Earl Cawdor 14

On Question Bill read 2ª accordingly and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

Land Values (Scotland) Bill.—Brought from the Commons and read 1ª.
Bill to be printed (No. 24) 17

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 27TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

ASSASSINATION OF THE KING OF PORTUGAL AND OF THE DUKE OF BRAGANZA.—Mr. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received a letter from the Marquis Soveral, which he read to the House 17

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Madras Railway Company (Purchase) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments [Title amended]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed... ... 18

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—North-East London Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 18

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Cambourne Water.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 18

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (PETITION FOR ADDITIONAL PROVISION (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).—London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 18

PETITIONS.

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—11 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 19

Moray Firth (Illegal Trawling).—2 Petitions for prevention; to lie upon the Table 19

Parochial Medical Officers (Scotland).—Petition for legislation; to lie upon the Table 19

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—51 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 19

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—9 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 19

Page

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Education (Scotland) (Code 1908).—Code of Regulations for Day Schools, 1908, [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 19

Trustees Savings Bank.—Sixteenth Annual Report; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 76] 19

National Gallery Report.—Report of the Director of the National Gallery 20

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Home Office Factory Inspection Staff 20
Fatal Accidents in Scottish Mines 21
Local Authorities and the Infant Life Protection Act 21
Temporary Clerks in Belfast Post Office 21
Depletion of East Bay, Dungeness, of Lug Worms 22
Pay of Royal Engineers and the Ordnance Survey Vote 22
Wheat Prices... 23
Inspection of Weights and Measures 23
Ambulance Certificates for Scottish Master Mariners and Mates 24
The Walker Trustees and Knighthood Fees 25
Borough Councils and Registration of Births Act 25
Education Authorities and the Provision of Meals 26
Labourers Plots at Rathdrum and Registration of Title 26
Horses and Cars for Inspectors of Irish Schools 26
Irish National School Inspectors 27
Alleged Threats to Tenants on Lord Shaftesbury's Carrickfergus Estate ... 28
Excess of Births over Deaths in Ireland 30
Poor Law Relief in Ireland 30
Slings of new Lee-Enfield Rifles 31

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Ratings 31
Naval Mechanicians and Boy Artificers 32
Royal Naval Reserve Engine Room Artificers 32
Greenwich Hospital Pensions 33
Cost of Coal for the Navy 33
Coastguard Duties 33
Duke of York's School 34
Commissions in the Line 34
Shannon Bridge Barracks 34
Army Horses... 35
Army Cyclists 35
South African Garrison 36
Punjab Agriculture 36
Emigration from India 37
Indian Whipping Act 38
Bengal Police Applicants 38

Feb. 27.]

Page

Handcuffing of Indian Political Prisoners 38
The Zakka Khel 39
Bombay Riots 40
Mr. Churchill's African Tour 40
Disturbances in British East Africa 41
Dinizulu's Trial 42
Indians in British East Africa 42
Sir Harry Maclean 42
Mr. Abbott's Ransom 43
Privileged Cabs 44
Census and Franchise 44
Eight Hours (Mines) Bill 45
Convent Laundries 45
Factory Inspection 46
Insurance Gambling... 47
Colliery Enginemen's Hours of Labour 48
Usworth Colliery Accident 49
Imprisonment for Debt 49
Children's Bill 50
Ship's Drill with Life Saving Apparatus 50
Dues on Pleasure Yachts 50
Motor Car Import Statistics... 51
Opium Duties... 51
Unemployed Masons in London 52
London Poor Law Infirmaries 52
Post Office Sanatoria 54
Postal Rates to Shanghai 54
Lord Rosebery and Child Patriotism 55
Teachers Salaries 55
Non-provided Schools in Single School Areas 56
Welsh Agricultural Inspection 56
Sale of Diseased Cattle at Glasgow 57
The Cunard Subsidies 57
County Magistrates 58
British South Africa Company 59
Perjury in the Birmingham County Court 60
Motor Speed Limits 60
Illegal Trawling in the Moray Firth 61
Convict Joseph Hume 61
Mullingar Labourers' Cottages 62
Galway County Inspector's Report 63
Royal Irish Constabulary 63
Irish School Building Grant 64
Motor Speed Limits in Ireland 65
Fair Rents in County Galway 65

Feb. 27.] *Page*

Necessitous Schools in Ireland 66
Irish Primary Education Grant 66
Irish Teacher's Pension Fund 67
Irish Land Stock 67
Ireland and the Education Bill 68
Belfast Sub Post Office 68

NEW MEMBER SWORN.—John Lloyd Morgan, esquire, K.C., for the County of Carmarthen (Western Division).

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES AND CHAIRMAN'S PANEL).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated Members to serve on the three Standing Committees for the consideration of all Public Bills, not relating exclusively to Scotland, which may be committed to a Standing Committee.

SCOTTISH STANDING COMMITTEE.—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported, That Members representing Scottish Constituences are appointed to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Public Bills relating exclusively to Scotland and committed to a Standing Committee.

CHAIRMEN'S PANEL.—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee, That they had selected Eight Members to be the Chairmen's Panel, and to serve as Chairmen of the Four Standing Committees to be appointed under Standing Order No. 47.

Reports to lie upon the Table 69

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) (No. 2) Bill.—Order for Second Reading upon Monday 6th April read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn 71

NEW BILLS.

Hypothec Abolition (Scotland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday, 6th April, and to be printed. [Bill 125] 72

Factors Act (1889) Amendment Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday, 6th April, and to be printed. [Bill 126] 72

Incest Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 127] 72

Public Health Officers Bill.—To be read a second time upon Thursday, 12th March, and to be printed. [Bill 128] 72

Education Bill.—To be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 129] 72

Merchandise Marks (No. 2) Bill.—To be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 130] 73

Character Note Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 27th March, and to be printed. [Bill 131] 73

Licensing Act Amendment Bill.—To be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 132] 73

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).

Ordered, That the proceedings on the Licensing Bill have precedence this day of the Business of Supply.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*) ... 73

Feb. 27.] *Page*

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (LICENSING BILL.)

Ordered, That the proceedings on the Licensing Bill, if under discussion when the Business is postponed, be resumed and proceeded with, though opposed, after the interruption of Business.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*) 73

Licensing Bill.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.*) 73

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Licensing Acts, 1828 to 1906."—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

Mr. A. J. Balfour (*City of London*) 98
Sir Thomas Whittaker (*Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley*) 108
Mr. Arthur Henderson (*Durham, Barnard Castle*) 117
Mr. Bottomley (*Hackney, S.*) 124
Mr. F. E. Smith (*Liverpool, Walton*) 132
Mr. Charles Roberts (*Lincoln*) 143

And, it being a quarter-past Eight of the Clock, and there being private business set down by direction of the CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS under Standing Order No. 8, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

Belfast Corporation Bill (BY ORDER).

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Devlin (*Belfast, W.*) 147
Mr. Muldoon (*Wicklow, E.*) 155

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months." (*Mr. Devlin.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Wolff (*Belfast, E.*) 158
Mr. Mooney (*Newry*) 161
The Chairman of the Ways and Means (*Mr. Emmott, Oldham*) 163
Mr. Sloan (*Belfast, S.*) 165
Mr. Annam Bryce (*Inverness Burghs*) 167
Sir James Parker (*Halifax*) 169

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 130; Noes, 176. (Division List No. 27.)

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

Licensing Bill.—Postponed Proceeding on Question, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Licensing Acts, 1828 to 1906," resumed.

Question again proposed.

Mr. Charles Roberts 173
Mr. Younger (*Ayr Burghs*) 174
Mr. Herbert Roberts (*Denbighshire, W.*) 179
Sir E. Carson (*Dublin University*) 180
The Solicitor-General (*Sir Samuel Evans, Glamorganshire, Mid.*)... ... 190
Mr. Barnard (*Kidderminster*) 196
Mr. Wm. Rutherford (*Liverpool, West Derby*) 199

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Gladstone, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. McKenna, Mr. Solicitor-General, and Mr. Herbert Samuel.

Page

Licensing Bill.—"To amend the Licensing Acts, 1828 to 1906," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday, 9th March, and to be printed. [Bill 133.]

Law of Distress Amendment Bill.—Read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee... 200

And, it being after half-past Eleven of the Clock on Thursday evening, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at Twenty minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 28TH FEBRUARY, 1908.

The House met at Twelve noon of the Clock.

PETITIONS.

Children Bill (Juvenile Smoking Clauses).—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 201

Elections and Registration (London) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 201

Land Values (Scotland) Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 201

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—23 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 201

Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill.—Petition in favour; to be laid upon the Table 201

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 201

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—11 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 201

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—20 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the table 201

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Galway (County).—Report of the Chief Inspector, Royal Irish Constabulary, Galway East Riding; to lie upon the Table... 202

Bankruptcy Courts (Ireland).—Annual Returns of the Official Assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland; to lie upon the Table 202

Queen Anne's Bounty.—Annual Report and Accounts of the Governors; to lie upon the Table 202

National Gallery Report.—Return presented; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 77] 202

Licensing Statistics (1907).—Statistics as to the operation and administration of the Laws relating to the Sale of Intoxicating Liquor; to lie upon the Table 202

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Diplomatic and Consular Report, Annual Series, No. 3961 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 202

Board of Education.—Report of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education upon the question of Devolution in county areas; to lie upon the Table 202

Feb. 28.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Pay of Bristol Telegraphists ... 203
Naval and Military Expenditure ... 204
Sugar used in Brewing ... 207
Billingsgate Post Office—Additional Premises ... 209
Rateable Value of Admiralty Land at Greenock ... 209
Repayments of Naval Works Loans ... 209
Cattle Diseases ... 210
Irish Evicted Tenants—Case of Mr. James Brennan ... 210
Suggested Grant to Mr. Robert Pearson of Clonmore ... 211
Repayment of Military Works Loans ... 212
Engineers Services—Surveyors ... 212

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.

Order for Second Reading read.
Mr. Stanger (Kensington, N.) ... 212
Mr. Acland (Yorkshire, Richmond) ... 221
Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."
Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland) ... 225
Mr. Mallet (Plymouth) ... 232
Amendment proposed—
"To leave out all the words after the word 'be' and to insert the words 'read a second time on this day six months.'"
Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.) 241
Mr. Pike Pease (Darlington) ... 245
Sir Walter Nugent (Westmeath, S.) ... 249
Mr. Fletcher (Hampstead) ... 250
Sir Maurice Levy (Leicester, Loughborough) ... 252
Colonel Lockwood (Essex, Epping) ... 255
Mr. Kettle (Tyrone, E.) ... 259
Mr. Clement Edwards (Denbigh District) ... 261
Mr. Snowden (Blackburn) ... 265
Sir Randel Cremer (Shoreditch, Haggerston) ... 270
Mr. Brodie (Surrey, Reigate) ... 276
Mr. Guest (Cardiff District) ... 279
Mr. Atherley-Jones (Durham, N.W.) ... 280
Mr. Rees (Montgomery Boroughs) ... 281
Mr. STANGER rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."
Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.
Question put accordingly, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."
The House divided:—Ayes, 271; Noes, 92. (Division List No. 28.)
Main Question put, and agreed to.
Bill read a second time.
Bill committed to a Committee of the Whole House for Monday next.—*Mr. Stanger.*

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMAN'S PANEL).

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY reported from the Chairmen's Panel; That they appointed Mr. Stuart-Wortley to act as Chairman of Standing Committee A; and Mr. Eugene Wason to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee on Scottish Bills.

MR. STUART WORTLEY further reported from the Chairman's Panel; That they had agreed to the following Resolution, That any Member of the Chairman's Panel be and he is hereby empowered to ask any other Member of the Chairman's Panel to take his place in case of necessity.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at thirteen minutes after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 2ND MARCH, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

STANDING ORDERS applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Metropolitan Electric Tramways [H.L.]; Interoceanic Railway of Mexico [H.L.]; London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies [H.L.]; North British and Mercantile Insurance Company [H.L.].

Also the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with:—Camborne Water; Margate Corporation—(Petition for additional Provision).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 289

Rochester Bridge Bill [H.L.].—Report from His Majesty's Attorney-General received, and ordered to lie on the Table 289

Swansea Valley Gas Bill [H.L.]; Llanelly Gas Bill [H.L.]; Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.]; Rhymney Railway Bill [H.L.]; Taff Vale Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [H.L.]; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; Thames River Steamboat Service Act, 1904 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Eldon be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Cranbrook; read, and agreed to 289

Audenshaw and Saddleworth Urban District Councils Bill [H.L.]; Briton Ferry Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Pontypridd Water Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.:—

E. Fitzwilliam,
L. Clinton (chairman),
L. Dormer,
L. Saltoun,
L. Ritchie of Dundee;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly 289

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Colonies: Miscellaneous.—No. 49 East Africa Protectorate (Annual Report of the Veterinary Department, 1906–1907) 290

Board of Education.—Report of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education upon the question of devolution in county areas... 290

Trade Reports: Annual Series.—No. 3961. Switzerland 290

March 2.]

Queen Anne's Bounty.—Annual Report and accounts ... 290

Ireland (County Galway, East Riding).—Report of the County Inspector, Royal Irish Constabulary, Galway, East Riding ... 290

Licensing Statistics, 1907.—Statistics as to the operation and administration of the laws relating to the sale of intoxicating liquor.
Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table ... 290

Army (Military Savings Banks).—Statement of the amount due by the public to despositors and of the receipts, interest and disbursements ... 290

Bankruptcy (Ireland).—Returns of the official assignees of the King's Bench Division "in Bankruptcy" in Ireland.
Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table ... 290

Sir John Soane's Museum.—Statement of the funds; ordered to lie on the Table ... 290

THE ZAKKA KHEL EXPEDITION.

The Marquess of Londonderry ... 290
The Lord President of the Council (The Earl of Crewe) ... 291

PERSIAN RAILWAYS.

Lord Curzon of Kedleston ... 292
The Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Fitzmaurice) ... 292

THE TERRITORIAL ARMY.

The Earl of Dartmouth ... 293
The Marquess of Winchester ... 299
The First Lord of the Admiralty (Lord Tweedmouth) ... 300
The Under-Secretary of State for War (The Earl of Portsmouth) ... 300

TERRITORIAL ARMY—SPECIAL CHURCH PARADE.

Lord Newton ... 305
The Earl of Portsmouth ... 308

VOLUNTEERS AND LONG SERVICE.

Lord Ampthill ... 309
The Earl of Portsmouth ... 309

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Six o'clock till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 2ND MARCH, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

NEW WRIT.—New Writ for the County of Down (West Down Division) in the room of the right hon. Lord Arthur William Hill (Manor of Northstead).—(*Sir. A. Acland-Hood*) ... 310

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Dartford Gas Bill; Knott End Railway Bill; Blaydon and Rytton Water (Transfer) Bill.
Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time... ... 310

Cheshire Lines Committee Bill; Motherwell Burgh Extension, etc., Bill; Seaham Harbour Dock Bill; Wishaw Burgh Electricity, etc., Bill. Read a second time, and committed ... 311

Page

PETITIONS.

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) (No. 2) Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table ... 310

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—6 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table ... 310

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—6 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 310

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Colonial Report (Miscellaneous).—Colonial Report No 49 (East Africa Protectorate, Annual Report of the Veterinary Department, 1906–07); to lie upon the Table ... 311

Army (Military Savings Bank).—Statement of the Amounts due by the Public to Depositors and of the Receipts, Interest, and Disbursements; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 78] ... 311

Civil Services and Revenue Departments Estimates, 1908–9.—Referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [79] ... 311

Uganda Railway Acts, 1896 and 1902.—Accounts ... 312

Papers laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.—1. Statement of the Funds of the Museum of the late Sir John Soane on 5th January, 1908 [by Act]; 2. Addition to the Rules for Disposal of Documents under the Public Record Office Acts, 1877 and 1898 [by Act] ... 312

Magistrates (Ireland).—Return ordered, "of the number of Magistrates appointed in the different counties of Ireland" ... 312

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Royal Engineers and Submarine Mining ... 312
Irish National Education Board ... 313
Tobacco Dealers Licences ... 315
Irish Agricultural Statistics ... 315
Volunteer Medical Association ... 315
Second Battalion, Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers ... 316
Service Pensions ... 316
Second Division Clerks ... 317
Workmen's Trains ... 318
Salt Exports ... 319
National Lifeboat Institutions ... 320
Loan Societies ... 320
Cost of Elementary Education in Boroughs ... 320
Income-Tax on Glebe Buildings ... 321
Indian Central Province ... 331
Irish Education Grant ... 322
Tuberculosis in Ireland ... 322
Lambert Minors Estate, Athenry ... 323
Castle Lambert Estate ... 323
Mr. M'Donagh's Galway Estate ... 323

March 2.] Page

Brown Estate, Glones 324
Mr. O'Malley's Estate at Athenry 324
Police Huts at Athenry 324
Newford Police Canteen 325
Walker Trustees and Knighthood Fees 325

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Navy Estimates 326
The Coastguard 327
Duke of York's School 327
Secretaries of County Associations... 327
Territorial Force—Attestation Form 328
Soldiers Invalided for Tuberculosis 328
Committee on Tuberculosis in the Army 329
4th Battalion Essex Regiment 329
British Cavalry 329
Volunteers and the Territorial Force 330
Advisory Council on Attestation 330
4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards 331
Calcutta High Court 331
English Settlers in Kashmir 332
Indian Railway Expenditure 332
Cost of Indian Frontier Operations 332
The Zakka Khel Expedition 333
The Lado Enclave 334
Rand Labour—Madagascar as a Recruiting Ground 335
Land Tenure in Nigeria 335
South African Republic—Civil Servants 335
Martial Law in Zululand 336
United Shoe Machinery Company 336
Colliery Accidents 337
Burglaries in London 337
Factory Inspectors 337
Cornish Magistrates... 338
Milton (New Forest) Rate Dispute... 338
Postmen's Scales of Pay 339
Ballachulish Postal District... 339
Single-School Areas 340
Imperial School of Science and Technology 341
Local Grants to Non-Provided Schools 342
Education Bill 342
Denominational Schools and Cowper-Temple Teaching 342
Punishment in London Schools 343
Duke of York's School 344
Potato Disease in North Wales 344

March 2.] *Page*
Small Holdings in the Island of Vatersay 345
Durness (Sutherland) Crofters 346
Untenanted Lands in Waterford 346
Lord Ashtown's Waterford Estate... 347
Evicted Tenants in County Waterford 347
Stranorlar Evicted Tenants... 348
Labourers' Cottages in the Mount Bellew Union 349
Wood Quay, Galway 349
Irish Mail Service Subsidy 349
Foot-and-Mouth Disease 351
Administration of the Factory Acts 352
The Censorship of Questions 353
Licensing and Education Bills 353
Licensed Property and Death Duties 354
The Licensing Bill 354
Business of the House 354

NEW BILL.

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) (No. 3) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday, 20th April, and to be printed. [Bill 134] 355

REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS.
Mr. J. M. Macdonald (Falkirk Burghs) 355
Sir John Brunner (Cheshire, Northwich) 365

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in view of the continued friendly relations with foreign Powers announced in the gracious Speech from the Throne, this House trusts that further reductions may be made in expenditure on armaments, and effect be given to the policy of retrenchment and reform to which the Government is pledged."—*(Mr Murray Macdonald.)*

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr Asquith, Fifeshire, E.) 369

Amendment proposed—
"In line 3, to leave out all the words after the word 'House,' and add the words 'will support His Majesty's Ministers in such economies of naval and military expenditure as are consistent with the adequate defence of His Majesty's Dominions.'"—*(The Chancellor of the Exchequer).*

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Wyndham (Dover) 381
The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) ... 394
Mr. Simon (Essex, Walthamstow) 401
Colonel Seely (Liverpool, Abercromby) 403
Mr. J. M. Robertson (Northumberland, Tyneside)... 429
Mr. Clynes (Manchester, N.E.) 430
Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis) 434
Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend) 443
Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) 448
The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Haldane, Haddington) 461

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided :—Ayes, 73 ; Noes, 320. (Division List No. 29.)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

And, it being after Eleven of the Clock, and objection being taken to further Proceeding, the debate stood adjourned.

Polling Districts and Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill.
Read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee ... 472

Adjourned at a quarter after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 3RD MARCH, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

King's College London (Transfer) Bill [H.L.].—Report from His Majesty's Attorney-General received, and ordered to lie on the Table 473

Interoceanic Railway of Mexico Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order), and committed 473

Metropolitan Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]; London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order), and committed: The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 473

King's College, London (Transfer) Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order), and committed 473

Rochester Bridge Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order), and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 473

Audenshaw and Saddleworth Urban District Councils Bill [H.L.]; Briton Ferry Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Pontypridd Water Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Viscount Iveagh be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Saltoun; read, and agreed to 473

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Army.—Return giving the strength of each infantry battalion and each battery of artillery on the Home Establishment 473

Ecclesiastical Commission.—Sixtieth Report.
Presented [by command], and ordered to lie on the Table 474

Public Records.—Addition to the rules for disposal of documents: Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table ... 474

Municipal Representation Bill [H.L.].—[SECOND READING.]
Order of the day for the Second Reading read.
Lord Courtney of Penwith 474

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*Lord Courtney of Penwith.*)
The Lord President of the Council (The Earl of Crewe) 475
Lord Belper 477
Lord Ashbourne 480

Lord Eversley 482
Lord Colchester 485
Lord Avebury 486

On Question, Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House

Ash Wednesday.

The Earl of Crewe 488

Moved, that the House do adjourn until Thursday.—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Five o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 3RD MARCH, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Madras Railway Company (Annuities) Bill (changed from "Madras Company (Purchase) Bill").—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 488

North East London Railway Bill.—Read a second time and committed ... 488

Standing Orders.—Resolutions reported from the Select Committee—Resolutions agreed to 488

PETITIONS.

Children Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 488

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—7 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 489

Moray Firth (Illegal Trawling).—4 Petitions for prevention; to lie upon the Table 489

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—24 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 490

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 490

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Army.—Copy Presented, of Return giving the Strength of each Infantry Battalion and each Battery of Artillery on the Home Establishment ... 490

Ecclesiastical Commission.—Sixtieth Report; to lie upon the Table ... 490

East India (Ecclesiastical Charges).—Return presented; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 81.] 490

Boycotting (Ireland).—Return ordered, "of the number of cases of Boycotting and of persons boycotted throughout Ireland 490

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Refreshmement Houses 491
Compulsory Education in Ireland 491
Reduction of Estimates 492

March 3.] *Page*

Rathgar Ex-Telegraph Messenger 493
Deaths of Asiatics on British Ships 493
Politics in the Post Office 508
Sedition Trial at Calcutta 509
Foreign Beef Trusts 510
Convictions of Anti-Vaccinationists 511
Care of Feeble-Minded Children 511
Army and Civil Service Pensions 512
Limavady Urban District Council Contracts 512
Galway Hospital 513
Athenry Evicted Tenant 514
Clounty Outrage 514
Proclaimed Irish Counties 515
Indian Mutiny Veterans 515
Officers of Disbanded Units 516

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The Coatguards 516
Naval Programme of 1904 516
Slave Traffic in the Persian Gulf 517
British Naval Attachés Abroad 517
Naval Pensions 517
Warwickshire County Association 518
Indian Opium Revenue 519
Indian Penal Code—Sedition charges 520
Eastern Bengal Disturbances 521
Kushk-Chaman Railway 521
Indian Native Judges 521
Conduct of Indian Officials 522
The Swodeshi Movement 522
Women's Night Work 522
Uganda Railway 523
Game Preservation in Uganda 523
Dinizulu's Trial 524
Modern University for Egypt 525
Lord Cromer and the Egyptian General Assembly 525
Soudan Campaign—Prisoners at Damietta 526
Russo-Japanese War—British Shipping Claims 526
Chinese Railway Extensions 527
Russian Tea Duties 527
Income-Tax 528
Duties on Solicitors 528
Brereton Colliery Disaster 529
Examinations for Inspectors of Factories 529
Factory Inspectors' Returns 530

March 3.] *Page*

Out-of-Work Benefits in New York 530
Deaths of Asiatics on British Ships 531
St. John Ambulance Association—Seamen's Classes 532
Loans for Relief Works 533
Religious Instructions in Schools 533
London County Council Schools—Syllabus of Religious Instruction 533
Feeding Hungry School Children 534
School Attendance Officers 534
Religious Instruction in Non-provided Schools 535
The Apostles' Creed... 535
Gloucestershire (Henbury) Education Order 536
Politics in the Post Office 537
Glanders in London... 541
Foot-and-Mouth Disease in 1885 542
Foot-and-Mouth Disease—Prohibition of Fodder Imports 542
Irish Local Government Audits 545
Irish School Teachers 546
Irish Resident Magistracy 546
Ballyboy Outrage, Galway 547
Cattle Driving in Mayo 548
Longford League's Threat to Graziers 548
Tyrone Vice-Lieutenancy 549
Cooksborough Estate, Meath 550
Ardglass Estate, Westmeath 550
Irish Stipendiary Magistrates 551

New Member Sworn.—Stanley Baldwin, esquire, for the County of Worcester (Western or Bewdley Division.) 553

Selection (Standing Committee).

Sir William Brampton Gurdon reportrd from the Committee of Selection : That they had added the following Member to Standing Committee A. : Mr. Baldwin

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported from the Committee ; That they had added the following Member to Standing Committee C. : Mr. Freeman Thomas.

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported from the Committee ; That they had added to Standing Committee A. the following Fifteen Members (in respect of the Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) and of the Police (Superannuation) Bills :—Mr. Guinness, Mr. Leverton Harris, Mr. Edward Barry, Mr. Whitehead, Sir Randal Cremer, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Horniman, Mr. Brodie, Mr. Bethell, Mr. Stopford Brooke, Mr. Samuel Roberts, Sir Francis Lowe, Mr. Glover, and Mr. Staveley-Hill.

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported from the Committee ; That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee B. : Mr. Walsh.

March 3.] Page

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had added to the Standing Committee on Scottish Bills the following Fifteen Members (in respect of the Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill): Sir Frederick Banbury, Mr. Bonar Law, Colonel Sandys, Sir Benjamin Stone, Mr. Middlemore, Sir Edward Sassoon, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Macpherson, Mr. Ward, Mr. Richardson, Mr. John Rutherford, Mr. Gibbs, Mr. Thornton, Sir Walter Nugent, and Sir Berkeley Sheffield.

Reports to lie upon the Table 553

SUPPLY (NAVY ESTIMATES).—Order for Committee read.

The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) ... 554

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson.*)

Mr. Arthur Lee (Hampshire, Fareham) 557
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean)... 569
Mr. Austen Chamberlain (Worcestershire, E.) 574
Mr. Wyndham (Dover) 581
Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.) 587
Colonel Seely (Liverpool, Abercromby) 592
The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Lambert, Devonshire, South Molton) 594
Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) 599
Mr. John Ward (Stoke-on-Trent) 602
Mr. Gulland (Dumfries Burghs) 605
Mr. Ferens (Hull E.) 609

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'this House is of opinion that, in the interests of the men in the Royal Navy, effect should be given to the suggestion of the Victualling Committee of last year to raise the money allowance in lieu of the spirit ration, and that the issue of the spirit ration should be discontinued in the case of all new recruits, whilst preserving to them the money allowance in its place.'—(*Mr. Gulland*) —instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

Mr. Edmund Robertson 612
Mr. Leif Jones (Westmoreland, Appleby) 613
Mr. Luttrell (Devonshire, Tavistock) 614
Mr. Morton (Sutherland) 615
Mr. Lupton (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) 616
Mr. Carlile (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) 616

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and agreed to.

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Main Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.
(In the Committee.)

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1908–9.—Committee Report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

CHINESE ON BRITISH SHIPS.

Mr. Fenwick (Northumberland, Wansbeck) 618
Mr. Havelock Wilson (Middlesbrough) 625

Motion proposed, and Question proposed, "That in the opinion of this House, the conditions under which Chinese seamen are employed on British vessels at ports in the United Kingdom calls for an immediate investigation by a Select Committee of this House, with a view to determining whether the provision of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1906, are sufficient to enable the Board of Trade to prevent abuses arising out of the employment of Chinese in the British Mercantile Marine."—*(Mr. Fenwick.)*

Mr. Austin Taylor (Liverpool East Toxteth) 631
Mr. Houston (Liverpool, West Toxteth) 635
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Kearley, Devonport 638
Mr. John Ward (Stoke-on-Trent) 648
Mr. William Rutherford (Liverpool, West Derby)... 651
Mr. Holt (Northumberland, Hexham) 652
Mr. Fenwick ... ...

Motion by leave withdrawn.

ADJOURNMENT.

Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—*(Mr. Lloyd-George.)*

Mr. Morton (Sutherland) 655
Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.) 656
Captain J. Craig (Down, E.) 656

Question put, and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at one minute before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 4TH MARCH, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—Dublin and South Eastern Railway Bill.

Ordered that the Bill be read a second time 657

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].—Standing Orders not complied with:—London and Windsor Motor Roads, Tramroads, and Tramways [Lords].

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH). Standing Orders not complied with,—London and Windsor Motor Roads, Tramroads, and Tramways [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 657

Harwich Docks Bill.—Reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table 657

PETITIONS.

Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill.—To be read a second time upon Wednesday next 658

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—4 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 658

March 4.] Page

Moray Firth (Illegal Trawling).—Petitions for prevention; to lie upon the Table 658

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 658

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—2 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 658

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Vivisection (Royal Commission).—Fourth Report of the Commissioners; to lie upon the Table 658

Civil Services and Revenue Departments, 1908–9 (Vote on Account).—Estimate showing the several Services for which a Vote on Account is required; Referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed [No. 82]... 658

Board of Education.—Supplementary Regulation for Secondary Schools in Wales; to lie upon the Table 658

Revenue (Collection of Taxes).—Return ordered, "showing for each of the three Kingdoms (1) the amount charged for Income Tax, Land Tax, and Inhabited House Duty, etc., etc. 658

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Positions of Ex-Telegraph Messengers 659
Promotion of Engine Room Artificers 659
Shipping Rates 660
Death Duties—Valuation of Licensed Premises 660
The Zakka Khel Territory 661
Free Grant of Ammunition to Civilian Rifle Clubs 661
The Territorial Army Attestation Form 662
Swivel-lug of the Enfield Rifles 662
Guns for the Territorial Army 663
Territorial Army—Pay of Quartermasters 663
The Territorial Army—Attestation Form 663
Arrest of Eugene O'Riordan at King-Williamstown 664
Purchase of the Cooper Estate 664
South African War Compensation Claims—Case of the Lydenburg Estates ... 665
Irish Technical Schools Building Fund 666
Foot and Mouth Disease—Importation of Foreign Butter 666
Single School Areas in Yorkshire 666
Post Office Appointments 667
Manufacture of Horseshoes at Woolwich 667
Malta Fever 668

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

East Indians in Nyassaland... 668
Chinese Labour in South African Mines 669
The Transvaal Government and the French Government—Indentured Labour from Madagascar 669
Uganda Game Reserves 671

March 4.] *Page*

Martial Law 672
Dinizulu's Trial 672
Charges against Dinizulu 673
Fighting at Suj Bulak 675
Workmen's Compensation 675
Welsh Mining Inspector 676
Railway Inquiry 676
Proposed Whaling Stations on the Donegal Coast 677
Non-provided Schools 679
Voluntary Schools 679
Grants to Elementary Schools 680
Scottish Justices of the Peace and Jury Service 680
Scottish Fishery Cruiser 681
Scottish Local Government Act 682
Seine Nets 682
Drift Nets 682
Organs in Scottish Poorhouses 683
Highland Railway Extensions 683
The Irish Police and the Peace Preservation Act 684
Firearms in Ireland 685
Condition of Galway 685
Irish Congested Districts Board 686
Irish University—Speech of the Provost of Trinity College 691
United Irish League and Servant Girl 693
Royal Irish Constabulary Fund 694
Toughboy Labourers' Cottage Scheme 695
Instructions in Cookery in Irish Schools 696
Cookery Apparatus in Irish Schools 696
Millstreet Labourers Acts Inquiry 697
Evicted Tenants—Case of James Gore 698
Proposed Whaling Station on the Donegal Coast... 699
Potato Spraying in Ireland... 699
Adulterated Food-Stuffs 700
Skim Milk 700
Down Hand Loom Weavers 702
Irish Imports of Foreign Fodder 703
County Donegal Joint Railway Crossing near Ballinamore 704
The Government of the Lords 704
Business of the House 705

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had added the following Member to Standing Committee A (in respect of the Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) and of the Police (Superannuation) Bills): Mr. Essex.

Report to lie upon the Table 705

March 4.] Page

NEW BILLS.

Hours of Labour (Bakehouses) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Wednesday, 18th March, and to be printed. [Bill 135] 705

Handloom Weaving (Ireland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday, 30th March, and to be printed. [Bill 136] 705

Death Certificates (Charges) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 137] 705

Pedlars Acts Amendment Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 138] 706

Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 139] 706

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).—Order for Committee read.

The Secretary af State for War (Mr. Haldane, Haddington) 706

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 736
Mr. Wyndham (Dover) 745
Mr. McCrae (Edinburgh, E.) 753
Colonel Kenyon-Slaney (Shropshire, Newport) 758
Mr. Seddon (Lancashire, Newton) 763
Mr. Byles (Salford, N.) 765
Mr. Rees (Montgomery Boroughs) 769
Mr. Lambton (Durham, S.E.) 774

And, it being a quarter-past Eight of the Clock, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 4.

THE PRICE OF BREAD.

Sir Joseph Leese (Lancashire, Accrington) 774
Colonel Seely (Liverpool, Abercromby) 783

Motion proposed, "That this House is of opinion that the recent high price of bread in this country is due to natural causes alone, and that any import duty on wheat would tend to raise the price still higher and aggravate the suffering caused by dear bread."—(*Sir Joseph Leese.*)

Mr. Goulding (Worcester) 786
Earl Winterton (Sussex, Horsham) 791

Amendment proposed—

"In line 2, to leave out all the words after the word 'causes,' and add the words 'and neglect of British resources, and that great advantage to the consumers in the United Kingdom would follow such a rearrangement of duties on food products as will encourage agriculture in the United Kingdom, give a preference to the Colonies, stimulate the productive power of the Empire as a whole, and so lessen our dependence on Foreign countries for the necessaries of life—(*Mr. Goulding*) instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question.

Mr. Essex (Gloucestershire, Cirencester) 797
Mr. Austen Chamberlain (Worcestershire, E) 799
The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs 807

Question put.
The House divided :—Ayes, 293 ; Noes, 90. (Division List No. 30.)
Main Question again proposed.
Debate arising.
And, it being after Eleven of the Clock, and objection being taken to further Proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned.

Licensing Act Amendment Bill.—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 815

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee 815

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES)—Postponed Proceeding on Question "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," resumed.

Question again proposed.

And, objection being taken to further Proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned 816
Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

Adjourned at sixteen minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS : THURSDAY, 5TH MARCH, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

STANDING ORDERS applicable to the following Bill complied with :—Bognor Gas Light and Coke Company [H.L.].

STANDING ORDERS applicable to the following Bill not complied with : – London and Windsor Motor Roads, Tramroads and Tramways.
The same were ordered to lie on the Table 817

Herne Bay Pier Bill [H.L.] ; Huddersfield Water Bill [H.L.].—Reported, with Amendments 817

Bognor Gas Light and Coke Company Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order), and committed : The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection 817

North British and Mercantile Insurance Company Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª, and committed 817

Stratford-upon-Avon, Towcester, and Midland Junction Railway, Evesham, Redditch, and Stratford-upon-Avon Junction Railway, and East and West Junction Railway (Amalgamation) Bill [H.L.]; Alliance and other Assurance and Insurance Companies Bill [H.L.] ; Leith Burgh Bill [H.L.] ; West London, Barnes, and Richmond Tramways Bill [H.L.] ; Croydon and Southern District Tramways Bill [H.L.] ; Camborne Water Bill ; London and Windsor Motor Roads, Tramroads, and Tramways Bill.—Examiners Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next 817

Swansea Valley Gas Bill [H.L.] ; Llanelly Gas Bill [H.L.] ; Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.] ; Rhymney Railway Bill [H.L.] ; Taff Vale Railway Bill [H.L.] ; Great Western Railway Bill [H.L.] ; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [H.L.] ; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.] ; Thames River Steamboat Service Act, 1904 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, that the Lord Belhaven and Stenton be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Graham (*D. Montrose*) ; read and agreed to 817

Mar. 5.] *Page*

London and District Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; London Electric Supply Bill [H.L.]; London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies Bill [H.L.].
The Chairman of Committees (*The Earl of Onslow*) 818

Moved, That it is desirable that the London and District Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; the London Electric Supply Bill [H.L.]; and the London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies Bill [H.L.] be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament.—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS.

Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill.—Petition for Amendment of; Read and ordered to lie on the Table 820

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Board of Education.—Supplementary regulation for secondary schools in Wales (including Monmouthshire) 1907 820

Vivisection (Royal Commission).—Fourth Report.
Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table 821

Local Taxation (Ireland).—Accounts 821

Fertilizers and Feeding Stuffs Act, 1906.—Regulations No. 2, 1907, made by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland ... 821

Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland.—The American Gooseberry Mildew, and Black Currant Mite (Ireland) Order, 1908 821

Militia Act, 1882.—Qualifications of deputy lieutenants.
Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 821

NEW BILL.

Sunday Closing (Shops) Bill [H.L.]—Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Tuesday, the 17th instant. (No. 25) 821

Poisons and Pharmacy Bill [H.L.] SECOND READING.]
Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.
The Lord President of the Council (*The Earl of Crewe*) 821

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)
Lord Ashbourne 823

On Question Bill read 2ª.

Moved, "That it is desirable that the Poisons and Pharmacy Bill be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament."—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

ENGINEER MILITIA.
Lord Raglan 826
The Under-Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Portsmouth*) 833

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE.—Report from, That the Committee have nominated to serve on the Standing Committee.
Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 841

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE.—Report from, That the Committee have nominated Lords to serve as Chairmen of the Standing Committee.
Read, and ordered to lie on the Table 842

STANDING COMMITTEE.—Report from the Committee of Chairmen of the Standing Committee, That they have appointed the Viscount Cross Chairman of the Standing Committee; read, and ordered to lie on the Table 842

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten-o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 5TH MARCH, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).—London Port and Docks Bill; Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill.
Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time 843

PRIVATE BILLS STANDING ORDER 67 NOT COMPLIED WITH.—Sligo and Arigna Railway Bill.
Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 843

Camborne Water Bill.—Presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 843

Private Bills (Group C).—Mr. WHITBREAD reported from the Committee on Group C of Private Bills: That Mr. Joyce, one of the members of the said Committee, was not present during the sitting of the Committee this day 843
Report to lie upon the Table.

Private Bills (Group C).
Ordered, That William Brock Keen do attend the Committee on Group C of Private Bills on Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the Clock ... 843

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.
That they have come to the following Resolution, viz., That it is desirable that the Poisons and Pharmacy Bill be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament.
That they have come to the following Resolution, viz., That it is desirable that the London and District Electricity Supply Bill, London Electric Supply Bill, and London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies Bill be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament 844

Liverpool Corporation (Streets and Buildings) Bill.
Mr. Corrie Grant (*Warwickshire, Rugby*) 844
Ordered, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee of Selection to refer, if they think fit, the Liverpool Corporation (Streets and Buildings) Bill to the Police and Sanitary Committee."—(*Mr. Corrie Grant*)

PETITIONS.

Housing of the Working Classes (Ireland) Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 845

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—6 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 845

Moray Forth (Illegal Trawling).—Petition for prevention; to lie upon the Table 845

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—8 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 845

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 845

Mar. 5.]

Page

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Militia Act, 1882 (Deputy Lieutenants Ireland).—Descriptions of qualifications of Deputy Lieutenants; to lie upon the Table 846

Local Taxation (Ireland) Account.—Account of Receipts into, and Payments out of, the Local Taxation (Ireland) Account; to lie upon the Table ... 846

Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act, 1906.—Regulations, No. 2, 1907, made by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland; to lie upon the Table 846

Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland.—American Gooseberry Mildew and Black Currant Mite (Ireland) Order, 1908 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 846

East India (Trade).—Tables relating to the Trade of British India; to lie upon the Table 846

Board of Education.—List of Certified Schools for Blind, Deaf, Defective and Epileptic Children in England and Wales: to lie upon the Table 846

Post Office (Money Orders).—The Money Order Amendment (No. 2) Regulations, 1908; to lie upon the Table 847

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Galmoystown Lands... 847
Fruit Trade and the Railway Conference 847
Potato Trade and the Railway Conference... 847
Free Railway Passes for Legislators 848
Trade Statistics 848
Gambling in Futures 848
Clerks to Surveyors of Taxes 851
Monaghan Post Office 851
Post Office Sub-Engineers 851
Non-Fatal Accidents in Factories 852
Imprisonment of Anti-Vaccinationists 852
Irish Office of Works Contracts 853
Scottish Statute Law Revision 854
Great Western Railway and the Passenger Duty 854
Passenger Duty Returns 854
Limited Partnerships Act, 1907 855
Beri-beri 855
Carlingford Petty Sessions Procedure 856
Report of Local Authorities Accounts 856
British Sugar Refiners 857
Curriheen Evicted Tenants 857
Castlelyons Evicted Tenants 858
Carrickfergus Dispute—Case of T. M'Kaig 858
Westbourne National Schools, Belfast 859
Carrickfergus Estate, Purchase Scheme 861
Irish Local Government Bye-Laws 861
Crough Evicted Tenant 862
Borrigone Untenanted Lands 862
Crimean Pensions—Case of Andrew M'Cormick 862

West Kent Regiment—Daniel Harvey's Pension ... 863
Private M'Anley, 1st Leinster Regiment ... 863
Patrick Brady—2nd Oxfordshire Light Infantry ... 863
Temperance in the Foot Guards ... 864

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The "Speedwell" Disaster ... 865
Australian Naval Contribution ... 866
Royal Naval Reserve Lieutenants ... 867
Naval Engineers ... 867
Engineer Cadets ... 868
Armstrong, Whitworth and Company and the Fair Wages Clause ... 868
Volunteer Surgeons ... 868
Distribution of Cavalry ... 869
Colour Sergeants ... 870
Queen Victoria School, Edinburgh ... 870
Cordite ... 870
Army Leave Regulations ... 871
Army Clothing Department Inspectorate ... 871
British Factories in the Congo State ... 871
Papers on the Congo ... 872
Congo Case of James Koffie ... 872
Great Britain and Siam ... 873
Siberia—Deaths of British Subjects ... 873
Labour in the Rand Mines—Comparison between Chinese and Natives ... 873
Inspection of Charitable Institutions ... 875
Imprisoned Anti-Vaccinators ... 876
Carnarvon Magistrates and Dog Licence Exemption ... 876
Cost of Vaccination ... 877
Soho Goods Yard Fatality ... 877
Exports and Imports of Motor Cars ... 878
Japanese Imitations of British Trade Marks ... 878
Board of Trade Rocket Regulations ... 879
St. John Ambulance Lectures ... 879
Excessive Train Speeds ... 880
Swiss General Tariff ... 880
Hull Telegraphists' Wages ... 881
Education Returns ... 882
Denominational Schools ... 882
Merionethshire Teachers ... 883
Medical Inspection of School Children ... 883
Council Schools ... 883
Elementary School Class-room ... 884
Kew Gardens... ... 884
Rabies in Northampton ... 884

Mar. 5.] Page

Prohibition of Hay and Straw Imports 885
Beam Trawling on the Clyde 887
Drift Nets and Herring Spawn 888
Shetland Herring Fishery 888
Fair Rent Court for County Longford 889
The Kilbride Evicted Tenant 889
Stacpoole Estate Evicted Tenants 890
Weatherall Estate Evicted Tenants 890
Crookenden and Casey Estates, Cavan 891
Cavan Evicted Tenants 891
Ballinamore and Ballyconnell Navigation Charges 891
Irish Congested Districts Board 892
Gledstane Estate Evicted Tenant 894
Mr. Barry's Cooldorihy Estate 894
Irish Telephone System 895
Navan Post Office 896
Navan Telephone Call Office 896
Mills Imports... 896
Irish Inspector of Industries 897
Irish Precautions against Foot-and-Mouth Disease 899
Crimean War Pensions 900
Licensing Bill and Unemployment 901
Plural Voting Bill 902
Business of the House 902

New Member Sworn.—Arther Philip Du Cros, esquire, for the Parliamentary Borough of Hastings 902

Selection (Standing Committees).—Sir William Brampton Gurdon reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Scottish Bills: Mr. Ward (added in respect of the Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill: and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill): Mr. Runciman.

Report to lie upon the Table 902

NEW BILLS.

Metropolitan Sewers and Drains Bill.—To be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 140] 903

Rabbits on Commons Bill.—To be read a second time upon Wednesday, 18th March, and to be printed. [Bill 141] 903

Breaches of Bye-Laws Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 142] 903

Married Women's Property Bill.—To be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 143] 904

Local Authorities (Taxation and Purchase of Land) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 144] 904

Mar. 5.] *Page*

Business of the House (Supply).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Proceedings on going into Committee of Supply, if under discussion when the Business is postponed this day, be resumed and proceeded with, though opposed, after the interruption of Business."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 289; Noes, 89. (Division List No. 31) ... 904

Supply (Army Estimates).—Order read for resuming adjourned debate on Question [4th March], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Question again proposed.

Mr. Lambton (*Durham, S.E.*) ... 907
Mr. Wardle (*Stockport*) ... 914
Mr. George Roberts (*Norwich*) ... 920

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out from the word 'that' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'in the opinion of this House, the powers now vested in chief magistrates to call upon the War Office to supply troops during times of trade disputes are open to grave abuse, are a menace to the liberty of the subject, and ought to be inquired into and reported upon by a Committee of this House.'"—(*Mr. Wardle.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Haldane, Haddington*) ... 924
Sir A. Acland Hood (*Somersetshire, Wellington*) ... 930
Mr. Atherley Jones (*Durham, N.W.*) ... 931
Colonel Lockwood (*Essex, Epping*) ... 933
Mr. Acland (*Yorkshire, Richmond*) ... 933
Mr. William Redmond (*Clare, E.*) ... 934
The Secretary of State for the Home Department (*Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.*) 936
Captain Craig (*Down, E.*) ... 938
Sir F. Banbury (*City of London*) ... 941
Mr. T. L. Corbett (*Down, N.*) ... 942
Mr. Moore (*Armagh, N.*) ... 943

Question put, and agreed to.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Maclean (*Bath*) ... 944
Mr. Whitehead (*Essex, S E.*) ... 946
Mr. Victor Cavendish (*Derbyshire, W.*) ... 948
Major Dunne (*Walsall*) ... 954
Colonel Ivor Philipps (*Southampton*) ... 955
Mr. Lane-Fox (*Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash*) ... 956
Mr. C. E. Price (*Edinburgh, Central*) ... 958
Mr. Guy Baring (*Winchester*) ... 958
Mr. Summerbell (*Sunderland*) ... 960
Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) ... 963
Mr. Lupton (*Lincolnshire, Sleaford*) ... 964

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Supply.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Army Estimates, 1908–9.—Committee Report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

Mar. 6.] Page

London County Council General Powers Bill (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed.

Mr. Courthope (Sussex, Rye) 966
Mr. Hicks Beach (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury) 970

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to strike out from the Bill all Clauses dealing with milk supply other than the Model Milk Clauses."—(*Mr. Courthope.*)

Mr. Guinness (Bury St. Edmunds) 971
The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. John Burns, Battersea) 978
Mr. Victor Cavendish (Derbyshire, W.) 982
Mr. Cooper (Southwark, Bermondsey) 983
Colonel Lockwood (Essex, Epping) 984
Mr. Seddon (Lancashire, Newton) 985
Mr. Harmood-Banner (Liverpool, Everton) 985
Mr. E. Gardner (Berkshire, Wokingham) 986
Mr. Courtenay Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) 987

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered, that it be an Instruction to the Committee to strike out from Part II. of the Bill all Clauses dealing with milk supply other than the Model Milk Clauses.—(*Mr. Courthope.*)

Blackburn Corporation Bill (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to strike out from the Bill all Clauses dealing with milk supply other than the Model Milk Clauses.—(*Mr. Courthope*) 988

Widnes Corporation Bill (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to strike out from the Bill all Clauses dealing with milk supply other than the Model Milk Clauses.—(*Mr. Courthope*) 988

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn,"—*Mr. Whiteley*)—put, and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at Six minutes before Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 6TH MARCH, 1908.

The House met at Twelve noon of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDERS 62 AND 67 NOT COMPLIED WITH).—Mullangar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders 989

Madras Railway Company (Annuities) Bill.—Read the third time and passed 989

PETITIONS.

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—2 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 989

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—4 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 989

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 989

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Local Taxation (Ireland) Account.—To be printed. [No. 83] 989

Railway Accidents.—Returns of Accidents and Casualties as reported to the Board of Trade; to lie upon the Table 989

Passengers to and from Places out of Europe.—To lie upon the Table... 990

Board of Education.—London County Council Syllabus; to lie upon the Table 990

Treaty Series (No. 6, 1908).—Accession of Sweden to the International Sanitary Convention; to lie upon the Table 990

Army.—Report of the War Office Committee on the Treatment of Soldiers invalided for Tuberculosis; to lie upon the Table 990

Army.—Schemes made by the Army Council for the Establishment and Constitution of Territorial Force Associations; to lie upon the Table ... 990

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Irish Valuation Scheme 990
Conviction of W. and F. Faulkner of Sheep Stealing 991
Licensing Duties 990
Licensing Districts 991
Grocers' Licenses 991
Harpenden Sewerage Scheme 992
Sale of Spirits in Scotland 993
Position of Clerks to Surveyors of Taxes 993
Extra Police at Headford, Co. Galway 993

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee A (in respect of the Polling Districts and Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Herbert Samuel, and Mr. Gladstone; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Birrell, Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland and Mr. Solicitor-General for Ireland.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had added to Standing Committee A the following Fifteen Members (in respect of the Polling Districts and Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Agnew, Mr. Bertram Straus (Mile End), Mr. Robert Price, Mr. Marnham, Mr. Schawn, Mr. Hugh Law, Mr. M'Calmont, Captain Craig, Mr. Thomas Corbett, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. John Johnson, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Jeremiah MacVeagh, Mr. Long, and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had added to Standing Committee A the following Fifteen Members (in respect of the Law of Distress (Amendment) Bill); Mr. Middlebrook, Mr. Whitehead, Mr. Hodge, Mr. Lardner, Mr. Nield, Mr. Brace, Sir William Bull, Mr. Mitchell-Thomson, Mr. Butcher, Mr. Muldoon, Mr. Beale, Mr. Lehmann, Mr. Micklem, Mr. Napier, and Mr. Walker.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee That, in pursuance of the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, they had selected the following

Mar. 6.] Page

Fifteen Members to form the Parliamentary Panel of Members of this House to act as Commissioners: Mr. McCrae, Sir John Tuke, Mr. Findlay, Mr. Ainsworth, Sir John Dewar, Mr. John Deans Hope, Mr. Wilkie, Mr. Bell, Major Anstruther-Gray, Viscount Dalrymple, Mr. M'Callum, Mr. Charles Price, Sir Andrew Torrance, Sir John Jardine, and Mr. Tennant.

Reports to lie upo the Table 993

Education (Local Authorities) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Walker (Leicestershire, Melton) 994
Sir Francis Powell (Wigan) 995

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Viscount Morpeth (Birmingham, S.) 998
Mr. Wedgwood (Newcastle-under-Lyme) 1008

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Viscount Morpeth*).

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. A. G. C. Harvey (Rochdale) 1013
Colonal R. Williams (Dorsetshire, W.) 1017
Sir Edward Sassoon (Hythe) 1019
Mr. Rogers (Wiltshire, Devizes) 1023
Mr. Adkins (Lancashire, Middleton) 1027
Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 1031
Mr. Everett (Suffolk, Woodbridge) 1035
Sir Philip Magnus (London University) 1036
Mr. Verney (Buckinghamshire, N.) 1041
Sir William Anson (Oxford University) 1045
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Mr. Lough, Islington, W.) 1051
Mr. Butcher (Cambridge University) 1057
Mr. Lupton (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) 1062
Mr. Carlile (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) 1064

Mr. ADKINS rose in his place and claimed to move "That the Question be now put."

Question "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question put accordingly, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 196; Noes, 58. (Division List No. 32.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time and committed to a Standing Committee.

THE GERMAN EMPEROR AND THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.) 1067

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP B).—Sir HENRY KIMBER reported from the Committee on Group B of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Tuesday next, at half past Eleven of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table 1068

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at three minutes after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 9TH MARCH, 1908.

SAT FIRST.—The Earl of Suffolk and Berkshire sat first in Parliament after the death of his father 1069

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

STANDING ORDERS applicable to the following Bill have been complied with: Bristol Tramways [H.L.].

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

London and Windsor Motor Roads, Tramroads, and Tramways Bill [H L.].—Presented, and read 1ª 1069

Bognor Gas Light and Coke Company Bill [H.L.].—The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The Order made on Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed 1069

Audenshaw and Saddleworth Urban District Councils Bill [H.L.].—The CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The Orders made on 19th of February and Monday last, discharged, and Bill committed 1069

Madras Railway Company (Annuities) Bill.—Brought from the Commons, read 1ª, and referred to the Examiners 1069

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]. The Order made on Monday last appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bills, discharged 1069

Metropolitan Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, that the Five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Briton Ferry Urban District Council Bill [H.L.], and other Bills, do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the Metropolitan Electric Tramways Bill [H L.]; read, and agreed to: All petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill ... 1069

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Naval Works.—Memorandum showing progress and expenditure 1070

Colonies: Annual.—No. 556. Basutoland 1070

Board of Education.—List of certified schools for blind, deaf, defective, and epileptic children ... ...

London County Council Syllabus 1070

Treaty Series, No. 6. (1908.)—Accession of Sweden to International Sanitary Convention 1070

Education (Scotland).—Report on the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh... 1070

Army.—Report of the War Office Committee on the treatment of soldiers invalided for tuberculosis 1070

India (Trade).—Trade of British India with British Possessions and Foreign Countries 1070

Passengers to and from Places out of Europe 1070

Railway Accidents.—Returns of accidents and casualties as reported to the Board of Trade 1071

Mar. 9.] Page

Marriages, Births, and Deaths (England and Wales) 1071

Church Estates Commission.—Fifty-seventh Report.
Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table. 1071

Army (Territorial Force Associations).—Schemes made by the Army Council for the establishment and constitution of Territorial Force Associations 1071

Leeward Islands.—Prison rule regarding the mode of employment of female prisoners 1071

Post Office.—The Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 14.) Warrant, 1908, dated, 8th February, 1908.

(Money Orders)—The Money Order Amendment (No. 2.) Regulations 1908, dated, 7th February, 1908.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1071

Agricultural Holdings Bill [H.L]; Small Holdings and Allotments Bill [H.L.]—Orders of the Day for the Second Reading read, and discharged. ... 1072

THE GERMAN EMPEROR AND THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY.

The First Lord of the Admiralty (*Lord Tweedmouth*) 1072
The Marquess of Lansdowne 1072
The Earl of Rosebery 1075

House adjourned at ten minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, at quarter-past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 9TH MARCH, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Blaydon and Ryton Water (Transfer) Bill; Dublin and South Eastern Railway Bill; Dartford Gas Bill; Knott End Railway Bill. Read a second time and committed 1077

Gosport Gas.—Reported, with Amendments. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1077

PETITIONS.

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—5 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table ... ...

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—3 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table ... ...

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Education (Scotland).—Report on the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh; to lie upon the Table 1078

Post Office (Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post).—Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 14) Warrant, 1908, dated 8th February, 1908 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table... 1078

Marriages, Births, and Deaths (England).—General Abstract of Marriages, Births, and Deaths registered in England and Wales in the year 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1078

Mar. 9.] Page

Colonial Reports (Annual).—Colonial Report No. 556 (Basutoland, Report for 1906–7) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1078

Leeward Islands.—Prison Rule regarding the Mode of Employment of Female Prisoners; to lie upon the Table 1078

Naval Works.—Memorandum showing Progress and Expenditure; to lie upon the Table 1078

Church Estates Commission.—Fifty-seventh Report; to lie upon the Table 1078

Diseases of Animals Acts, 1894 to 1903.—Order dated 27th February, 1908, revoking Order No. 5179 of the 19th May, 1894, defining a Foreign Animals Wharf at the Port of Newcastle-upon-Tyne [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1079

Deer Forests (Highland Crofting Counties).—Return ordered, "giving the name of each Deer Forest in the six Highland Crofting counties 1079

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Evicted Tenants—Reinstatement of Michael Lyons 1079
British and Foreign Torpedo Boat Destroyers 1080
Rural Public Houses... 1080
Purchase of the Home Farm Estate of Sir George Colehurst, of Ballyvourney... 1081
Congested Districts Board's Centre at Castlerea 1082
Outrage near Gort 1083
Ardnadum Farm, near Loughrea 1084
Outrage at Cismona, near Loughrea 1085
Governments Housing Bill—Extension to Ireland 1086
Alleged Intimidation of Mr. Bond of Rathowen 1086
Cost of Maintenance of Insane Prisoners from Armagh Asylum... 1087
Reinstatement of Mary Coyle 1087
Removal of the Duke of York's School 1088
The Duke of York's School 1088
Foreign Anti-Gambling Laws 1089
Railway Arbitrations 1089
Harbour on the North Devon or Cornwall Coast 1090
The Railway Inquiry 1090
Food Imports and Consumption 1091
Prohibitions of Hay and Straw Imports 1092
Loss of Registered Letters to New York 1092
Pay of Telegraphists 1093
The Constitution of the Isle of Man 1093
The Walker Trustees and Knighthood Fees 1094
Money—Metal Producing Countries—Suggested Union 1094
Stock Exchange Gambling 1094
The Ballyseedy Estate, County Kerry 1095
Claims of Transition Teachers 1095

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Gibraltar Docks 1096
New Armoured Ships 1096

Mar. 9.] Page
Destroyers at Devonport 1096
Established Dockyard Workmen 1097
H.M.S. "Cæsar" Gunnery Practice Accident 1097
The Beresford-Scott Dispute 1098
South African War—Royal Artillery Batteries 1098
The Special Reserve... ... 1098
Indentured Labour for the New Hebrides 1098
Nyassaland 1100
Steamship Communication with British East Africa 1100
South African Customs Unification... ... 1101
Northern Nigeria—Land Tenure and Taxation 1101
Malagasy Labour for the Transvaal... ... 1101
Treatment of Native Labour in South Africa 1103
Transvaal Mines—Imported Labour 1105
Natal Public Debt 1106
Natal Finance 1106
Dinizulu 1107
East African Great Game Reserves... ... 1108
Jubaland 1109
Mozambique Labour for the Transvaal 1109
Probation of Offenders Act, 1907 1110
Juvenile Beggars 1110
Vehicular Fatalities 1111
Phosphorous Poisoning 1111
Licensing Compensation 1112
Phosphorous Matches from the Continent 1112
Dangerous Performances by Women 1112
Hamstead Colliery Disaster... ... 1113
Trade Marks Act, 1905—Rules of Court 1113
Savilles Level Crossing, Colwick 1114
Return as to Seamen 1114
Lascar Firemen 1115
Parisian Octroi Duties 1115
Hampstead Borough Officials and Vaccination 1115
Main Roads National Charge 1116
Housing of the Working Classes Bill 1117
Scottish Milk Supplies 1117
Swansea Education Dispute... ... 1117
Canadian Education Rate 1118
Voluntary School Houses 1119
Contracted-out Schools and Scholarships 1120
Elementary School Buildings 1120
Education Grant 1121
Ventilation of the House 1122
Foot-and-Mouth Disease and Raw Hides 1123

Page

Disinfection of Cattle Steamers ... 1123

Milk-Blended Butter ... 1124

Scottish Milk Supplies ... 1126

Dumbarton Drainage into the Leven ... 1126

Outrage in the Moray Firth ... 1127

Barra ... 1127

Scottish Fire Brigades ... 1127

Highland Deer Forests ... 1127

Sheep Runs on the West Coast of Lewes ... 1128

Carloway Herring Fishery ... 1129

Scottish Whaling Stations ... 1129

Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill ... 1129

Coercion Act Convictions in Ireland ... 1130

Carrickfergus Harbour Loan ... 1130

Ruin of Irish Cottage Industries by Imports ... 1131

The Children Bill ... 1132

Hague Conference and Naval Policy ... 1132

The King's Tour ... 1133

Central Licensing Commission ... 1134

The German Emperor and Lord Tweedmouth ... 1134

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE.

Mr. H. Lea (St. Pancras, E.) ... 1136

NEW MEMBER SWORN.—Francis Edward Meehan, esquire, for the County of Leitrim (North Leitrim Division) ... 1137

STANDING COMMITTEES.—Ordered, That all Standing Committees have leave to print and circulate with the Votes the Minutes of their Proceedings and any amended Clauses of Bills committed to them.—(*Mr. Eugene Wason*) ... 1137

Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment, from the Standing Committee on Scottish Bills.
Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 84.]
Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 84.]
Bill to be taken into consideration upon Friday, 26th June ... 1137

Fatal Accidents (Damages) Bill [LORDS]—Read the first time; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 145] ... 1137

NEW BILLS.

Election of Aldermen in Municipal Boroughs Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 146] ... 1137

London Paving Expenses Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 147] ... 1137

SUPPLY [1ST ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Mar. 10.] Page

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1908–9.—Motion made, and Question proposed, "That 128,000 officers, seamen, and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1909, including 18,463 Royal Marines."

The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee) ... 1138
Mr. Arthur Lee (Hants, Fareham) 1148
Mr. Bellairs (Lynn Regis) 1155
Mr. Mitchell-Thomson (Lanarkshire N.W.) 1164
Mr. Nuttall (Lancashire, Stretford) 1168
Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) 1172
The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Lambert, Devonshire, South Molton) 1182
Mr. Austen Chamberlain (Worcestershire, E.) 1187
Mr. J. M. Macdonald (Falkirk Burghs) 1191

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That 120,000 officers, seamen and boys be employed for the said Services."—(*Mr. J. M. Macdonald.*)

Mr. Smeaton (Stirlingshire) 1194
Mr. Edmund Robertson 1198
Sir F. Banbury (City of London) 1200
Mr. Bellairs 1204
Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.) 1206
Mr. John Ward (Stoke-on-Trent) 1207
Mr. Rees (Montgomery Boroughs) 1209
Mr. Barnes (Glasgow, Blackfriars) 1213
Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.) 1217
Captain Craig (Down, E.) 1220
Sir Gilbert Parker (Gravesend) 1222
Mr. Jenkins (Chatham) 1224
Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1228
Mr. Bramsdon (Portsmouth) 1229
Mr. Lupton (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) 1230

Mr. ASQUITH rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 189; Noes, 43. (Division List No. 33.)

Original Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

Adjourned at fourteen minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: TUESDAY, 10TH MARCH, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Pontypridd Water Bill [H.L.].—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: The Orders made on the 19th February and the 2nd of March last discharged, and Bill committed; Bristol Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order), and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection; Upton Town Hall Bill [H.L.].—Read 2ª (according to order), and committed; Herne Bay Pier Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to Commons 1237

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Postal Agreement (Surinam).—Additional Articles to the agreement for the exchange of money orders between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of the Dutch Colony of Surinam 1237

Board of Education.—Report for the year 1906 on the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Royal Colleges of Science and of Art, the Geological Survey and Museum, and on the work of the Solar Physics Committee 1237

Mines and Quarries (Shaft Accidents at Certain Collieries).—Report by Professor R. A. S. Redmayne, M.Sc., M.I.M.E., F.G.S., on the causes of and circumstances attending the shaft accidents which occurred at the Foggs, Barrow, and Rawdon Collieries 1237

Explosion at Lord Ashtown's Lodge, Glenahiery, County Waterford.—
Report of District Inspector Preston, Royal Irish Constabulary.
Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1238

Diseases of Animals Acts, 1894 to 1903.—Order, defining a foreign animals wharf at the port of Newcastle-upon-Tyne 1238

Lighthouses, &c. (Local Inspections).—Reports.
Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1238

Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill.—[Second Reading.].
Order of the day for the Second Reading read.
The Lord Chancellor (*Lord Loreburn*) 1238
Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)
The Duke of Montrose 1251
Amendment moved—

"To leave out all the words after the word 'that' in order to insert the following Resolution:—'This House, while desirous of facilitating on sound economic principles the extension of Small Agricultural Holdings in Scotland, and of considering such Amendments of the Crofters Acts as are shown to be required, declines to pass a measure—(1) Which unnecessarily extends the provisions of the Crofters Acts throughout Scotland; (2) Which establishes a Land Court for the whole of Scotland; and (3) Which does not enjoy the general approval of the agricultural interests proposed to be affected.'"—(*The Duke of Montrose.*)

The Earl of Onslow 1257
The President of the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries (*Earl Carrington*) 1262
Lord Robertson 1268
Lord Clinton 1274
Lord Saltoun 1278
Moved, That the debate be adjourned till To-morrow.—(*Lord Herschell.*)
On Question, Motion for adjournment agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 10TH MARCH, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Greystones Gas Bill (by Order).—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*The Deputy Chairman*) 1281

Mar. 10.] Page

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill.—Order [6th March] that the Report of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*The Deputy Chairman.*)... 1281

PETITIONS.

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—2 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1281

Licensing Bill.—2 Petitions against; to lie upon the Table 1281

Pure Beer.—Petition for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1281

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—5 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1281

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—5 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1281

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Board of Education.—Report on the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Royal Colleges of Science and of Art, the Geological Survey and Museum, and on the work of the Solar Physics Committee for the year 1906; to lie upon the Table 1281

Lighthouses, &c. (Local Inspections).—Reports; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 85] 1282

Mines and Quarries (Shaft Accidents at certain Collieries).—Report by Professor R. A. S. Redmayne, M.Sc. M.I.M.E., F.G.S., on the causes of, and circumstances attending, the Shaft Accidents which occurred at the Foggs, Barrow, and Rawdon Collieries; to lie upon the Table 1282

Explosion at Lord Ashtown's Lodge, Glenahiery, County Waterford.—Copy Presented, of, (1) the Report of District Inspector Preston, Royal Irish Constabulary; to lie upon the Table 1282

Postal Agreement (Surinam).—Additional Articles to the Agreement for the Exchange of Money Orders berween the Post Office of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of the Dutch Colony of Surinam; to lie upon the Table 1282

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Local Auditor at Gibraltar 1283

Thos. Dixon and Company and the Belfast Harbour Commissioner's Contract... 1283

Mr. James M'Connell and the Belfast Harbour Commissioner's Contract ... 1284

Scottish and Welsh Historical Monuments 1286

Telegraphists with Knowledge of Technical Telegraphy 1287

Punishment of Minor Offences in the Post Office 1287

Lawlessness in Karachi 1288

Place of Worship of the Gordon Highlanders at Jullundar 1288

Alleged Boycott of Irish Materials by the Irish Board of Works 1289

Delay in effecting Improvements to Irish National Schools 1290

Licensing Statistics 1290

Fatal Accidents in Carnarvonshire Slate Quarries 1291

Swine Fever 1291

Education Bill—Effect of Clause 1, Sub-sections (1) and (2) on Single School Areas 1292
Appointment of Additional Magistrates for County Tipperary 1292
Memorial of Transition Teachers in Ireland 1293
Compassionate Allowance to West, Late of Royal Small Arms Factory ... 1293
Territorial Army—Training of Officers on the Unattached List 1294

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Gun Reserves... 1294
Territorial Army—Regimental Sergeant-Majors and Bandmasters 1295
Service Abroad—Furlough Regulations 1295
Army Clothing Contracts 1295
Volunteers and the Social Democrats 1297
Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield—Compensation for Accidents 1297
Communications with the West Indies 1298
Income Tax Abatements 1299
British Trade Agents at Gyantse 1299
Indian Penal Code—Punishment for Sedition 1299
Bengal Opium Exports 1300
Calcutta Police Court—Whipping for Political Offences 1301
Indentured Labour in Trinidad 1302
Game Reserves in Southern Nigeria 1302
Dinizulu 1303
Che-Kiang Railway Loan 1304
Care of Children 1305
Licensed Property and Death Duties 1305
Factory Inspection 1306
Earthenware Manufacture—Special Rules... 1307
Hamstead Colliery Disaster... 1308
Mines (Eight Hours) Bill 1310
Coast Erosion—Damage to the Humber 1311
Dock Accident 1312
West Riding Appeal 1313
Government Employment 1313
Non-provided Schools 1314
Royston School Teacher 1314
Commons Interest in the Lords 1315
Kew Gardens 1316
Scottish Veterinary Surgeons 1317
House Rating at Stenhousemuir 1317
Illegal Trawling in the Moray Firth 1318
Carrickfergus Harbour 1319
Ballintubber Prosecution 1320
Irish Arterial Drainage 1320
Butler Minors Estate, Clare 1321

Mar. 10.] *Page*

Return of Evicted Tenants 1321

Lisburn Registrar of Births and Deaths 1322

Irish School House Plans 1323

The Ventry Estate, Kerry 1323

County Cavan Lieutenancy 1324

Business Arrangements 1325

Goodall Estate, Roscommon 1325

Glenahiery Outrage—Suggested Public Inquiry 1326

NEW BILLS.

Fruit Growers (Scotland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 148] 1328

Police (Weekly Holiday) Bill.—Presented and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 149.]

Mr. Remnant (Finsbury, Holborn) 1328

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Proceedings on the Business of Supply, if under discussion when the Business is posponed this day, be resumed and proceeded with, though opposed, after the interruption of Business."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The House divided.—Ayes, 270; Noes, 87. (Division List, No.) 1332

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Commitee.)

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1908–9.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,129,700, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Wages, etc., to Officers, Seamen and Boys, Coast Guard, and Royal Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1909."

Mr. A. J. Balfour (City of London) 1335
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.) 1336
Mr. Bramsdon (Portsmouth) 1338
Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim S.) 1347
Mr. E. H. Lamb (Rochester) 1352
Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple) 1354
Mr. Hunt (Shropshire, Ludlow) 1356
Colonel Seely (Liverpool, Abercromby) 1358
Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 1360
Mr. Annan Bryce (Inverness Burghs) 1362
Sir John Kennaway (Devonshire, Hornton) 1363
Mr. Wedgewood (Newcastle-under-Lyme) 1363
Mr. Edmund Robertson 1368
Mr. Fell (Great Yarmouth)... 1370

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item B (Coast Guard, Wages and Allowances) be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Fell*).

Mr. Mallet (Plymouth) 1372
Colonel Seely 1372

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 46; Noes, 235. (Division List No. 35.)

The Vote was agreed to.

2. £2,306,700, Works, Buildings, and Repairs at home and abroad.

The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (*Mr. Lambert, Devonshire, South Molton*) 1375
Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 1378
Mr. Arthur Lee (*Hampshire, Fareham*) 1381
Mr. Holt (*Northumberland, Hexham*) 1386
Mr. Pirie (*Aberdeen, N.*) 1388
Sir Gilbert Parker (*Gravesend*) 1389
Mr. Austen Chamberlain (*Worcestershire, E.*) 1392
Mr. J. M. Henderson (*Aberdeenshire, W.*)... 1393
Mr. Flynn (*Cork, N.*) 1393
Captain Donelan (*Cork, E.*) 1394

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

CONTEMPT OF COURT (IRELAND).

Mr. N. J. Murphy (*Kilkenny, S.*) 1394
Mr. Q. A. McHugh (*Sligo, N.*) 1394

Motion made, and Question proposed "That the jurisdiction of judges in dealing with contempt of Court is practically arbitrary and unlimited, and especially in veiw of recent exercises of that jurisdiction in Ireland calls for the action of Parliament with a view to its definition and limitation."—(*Mr. Nicholas Murphy.*)

The Attorney-General for Ireland (*Mr. Cherry, Liverpool Exchange*) ... 1406
Mr. T. M. Healey (*Louth, N.*) 1411
Mr. James Campbell (*Dublin University*) 1415
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.*)... 1419
Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 1423
Mr. Gordon (*Londonderry, S.*) 1426
Mr. Charles Craig (*Antrim, S.*) 1425

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the words 'especially in view of recent exercises of that jurisdiction in Ireland.'"—(*Mr. Charles Craig.*)

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 184; Noes, 59. (Division List No. 36.)

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. Walter Long (*Dublin, S.*) 1429

Main Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 181: Noes, 66. (Division List No. 37.)

Resolved, That the jurisdiction of judges in dealing with contempt of Court is practically arbitrary and unlimited, and, especially in view of recent exercises of that jurisdiction in Ireland, calls for the action of Parliament with a view to its definition and limitation.

Local Authorities (Admision of the Press) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Arthur Henderson (*Durham, Barnard Castle*) 1433

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir F. Banbury (*City of London*) 1435

And, it being Eleven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

Incest Bill.—Read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee ... 1436

Adjourned at four minutes after Eleven o'Clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: WEDNESDAY, 11TH MARCH, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Cambrian Railways.—Petition of the Cambrian Railways Company under their Common Seal, praying for leave to bring in a Bill for enabling the Cambrian Railways Company to raise further money by the creation and issue of debenture stock, together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the Examiners 1437

Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The Orders made on the 19th and 26th of February last discharged, and Bill committed 1437

Tramways Order Confirmation (No. 1.) Bill [H.L.].—Presented by the Lord Granard (*E. Granard*); read 1ª; to be printed, and referred to Examiners. (No. 26) 1437

Rhymney Railway Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having beeen withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The Orders made on the 19th and 26th of February last discharged, and Bill committed 1437

Great Western Railway (Superannuation Scheme) Bill [H.L.].—Reported, without amendment 1437

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Army.—Revised forms of attestation for men enlisting into the Territorial Force. Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table ... 1437

Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill.—Order of the Day for resuming the adjourned debate on the Amendment of the Earl Graham (Duke of Montrose), to the motion that the Bill be now read 2ª, viz, to leave out all the words after ("that") for the purpose of inserting the following Resolution, viz., "This House, while desirous of facilitating on sound economic principles the extension of Small Agricultural Holdings in Scotland, and of considering such amendments of the Crofters Acts as are shown to be required, declines to pass a measure (1) which unnecessarily extends the provisions of the Crofters Acts throughout Scotland; (2) which establishes a Land Court for the whole of Scotland; and (3) which does not enjoy the general approval of the agricultural interests proposed to be affected."

Lord Herschell 1438
The Earl of Camperdown 1442
Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1451
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (The Earl of Elgin) 1462
The Marquess of Lansdowne 1469
The Lord Chancellor (Lord Loreburn) 1481

On Question, whether the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question,

Their Lordships divided:—Contents, 33; Not Contents, 153.

Resolved in the negative accordingly, and the proposed Resolution agreed to. Then it was moved to add to the said Resolution the following words "and (4) which provides for the transfer to three Agricultural Commissioners of the work at present undertaken by the Board of

Agriculture in Scotland, whereas it is essential for the safety of the flocks and herds of Great Britain that the administrative responsibility under the Diseases of Animals Acts should remain in the hands of a single Department."—(*The Earl of Onslow*); agreed to.

House adjourned at Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: WEDNESDAY, 11TH MARCH, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill (BY ORDER).—Read a second time, and committed 1487

Stockport Corporation Bill.—Reported with Amendments. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1487

Private Bills (Group B).—Report from the Committee; That for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday next, at half-past Eleven of the Clock. Report to lie upon the Table 1487

West Bridgford Urban District Water Council Bill.—Reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table 1487

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled; "An Act to authorise the sale of Herne Bay Pier; and for other purposes." [Herne Bay Pier Bill [Lords] 1487

Herne Bay Pier Bill [LORDS.].—Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 1487

PETITIONS.

Children Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 1488

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) No. 2 Bill.—Petition against; to lie upon the Table 1488

Divorce.—Petition for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table 1488

Land Values (Scotland) Bill.—Petition in favour: to lie upon the Table ... 1488

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children).—6 Petitions for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1488

Licensing Bill.—2 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table... 1488

Metropolitan Sewers and Drains Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 1488

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—2 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1488 1488

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Army.—Revised Forms of Attestation for men enlisting into the Territorial Force; to lie upon the Table 1488

Boycotting (Ireland).—Return; to lie upon the Table 1489

Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899.—Order of 12th February for printing read, and discharged 1489

Mar. 11.]

Page

Pauperism (England and Wales) (Half-Yearly Statements).—Statement of the number of Paupers relieved on the 1st day of January, 1908, and similar Statement for the 1st day of July, 1908 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 108, of session 1907.)"—(*Dr. Macnamara*) 1489

Inverness County Council and Allotments.—"Report of a Special Committee of the County Council of Inverness upon applications for Allotments in North Uist and Barra, made in September, 1897, together with any relative Papers."—(*Mr Sinclair*) 1489

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Amalgamation of the Coastguard and Customs and Waterguard Departments.

The Mercantile Marine—Treatment of Crews 1489
Irish Housing Legislation 1493
Whaling Stations on the Donegal Coast 1494
The Government and the Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill 1494
The Parliamentary Debates... 1495
Cost of Elementary Education 1495
Service of Teachers in Contracted-Out Schools 1495
Army Horse Breeding Subsidies 1495
Cavalry Regiments for the Cork Districts... 1496
War Office Writers Pensions 1496
The Duke of York's School 1497
Writers at the Army Clothing Factory 1497
Muzzle Velocity of Service Rifles 1497
Transfers from Special Reserve to Regular Army.. 1498
Cost of Egyptian Garrison 1498
Territorial Army—Grant for Cyclists 1498
Mobilisation Scheme for the Territorial Army 1499
The Territorial Army and Home Defence 1499
Evicted Tenants on the Estate of R. T. Longan, at Ballinacourty 1499
Re-instatement of Mrs. Kellcher, of Quartertown... 1500
Re-instatement of Peter Healy, of Cloughlea 1500
Re-instatement of Representatives of late Dennis Scanlon, of Kilbradern ... 1500
Application for Land of Michael Hartnett and John Collins 1501
Purchase of the Shelton Estate, County Limerick 1502
Expenditure on Structural Alterations in London Non-provided Schools ... 1502
Study of Agriculture in Rural Schools 1503
Fees in Council Schools 1506
Repayment of Loans for Small Holdings 1507
Agricultural Schools—Institutes 1507
Northamptonshire Muzzling Order... 1508
Detection of Rabies in Northamptonshire 1508
Milk Guarantees 1508
Employment of Soldiers by the Post Office 1509
The Post Office Circular and the Savings Bank Department 1510
Reserve Stock of Naval Stores 1510
Number of Crafts in the Home Fleet 1510

Page
Combined Naval Manœuvres 1511
The Nore Division of the Home Fleet 1511
Children as Half-timers in Factories 1511
The Indian Whipping Act 1512
Barrack Expenditure 1512
Value of Machinery Lying idle at Woolwich 1515
Territorial Force—Officers' Outfit Grant 1515
Discharges from Waltham Abbey Gunpowder Factory 1515
Discharges from Woolwich Arsenal 1516
The Walking-out Uniform of the Territorial Army 1516
Territorial Army—Messing Allowance to Officers during Training 1516
Territorial Army—Officers' Outfit Grant 1517

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Navy Estimates 1517
Natives in the South African Mines 1517
Dinizulu 1519
New Hebrides Convention 1520
Chinese in the Rand Mines 1520
Quebec Battlefields 1522
Postal and Telegraphic Rates between Great Britain and France 1523
Liverpool and Hong Kong Mail Subsidy 1523
Adult Night Messengers and the Hobhouse Report 1523
Inland Revenue Stamps 1524
Bexhill Postal Arrangements 1524
Rural Postmen's Duties 1524
Inland Revenue Stamps 1525
Licenses in Scotland... 1525
Afforestations on the Inverliever Estate 1526
Lewis Sanitary Condition 1526
Lewis Cottars 1526
Beauly and Ness Rivers Estuary 1526
Illegal Trawling in the Moray Firth 1527
Maynooth College and Queens College, Belfast 1527
Ballybricken Cattle Drive 1528
Irish Schools—Fees for Bilingual Teaching 1529
Ballinalee Catholic School 1530
Land Purchase in Longford—Tully Grazing Land 1531
Crofton Estate, Longford 1531
Newtownforbes Petty Sessions—Absence of Crime in Longford... 1531
The Ormonde Hunt 1532
The Dublin Crown Jewels 1533
Irish Sub-Land Commissioner's Appointment 1534
The Glenhiery Explosion 1535
Railway Communication with Belfast 1542

Mar. 11.] *Page*

Cullenagh Cattle Drive 1543

Ballinagar Outrage 1543

Lord Shaftesbury's Carrickfergus Estate 1544

Carntall National School 1545

Ballinalee School Teachers 1546

Irish National Board of Commissioners 1546

The Senior Secretary to the National Board 1547

Sir George Colthurst's Estate 1548

Mr. Leader's Millstreet Estate 1550

Seven Day Liquor Licences in Ireland 1551

Horse Breeding in Ireland 1551

Technical Instruction in Belfast 1551

Historical Monuments 1552

Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment; from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 86].

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 86.]

Bill to be taken into consideration upon Friday, 3rd July 1552

Police (Superannuation) Bill.—Reported, with an Amendment, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 87.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 87.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Friday, 3rd July, and to be printed. [Bill 150] 1553

SELECTION (STANDING) COMMITTEES.—Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee A. (added in respect of the Law of Distress (Amendment) Bill): Mr. Micklem; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Law of Distress (Amendment) Bill): Mr. Arnold Herbert.

Report to lie upon the Table 1553

NEW BILLS

National Military Training Bill.—To be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 151] 1553

Trawler's Certificates (Suspension) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 152]... 1553

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1908–9.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces not exceeding 185,000, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1909."

Mr. Arthur Lee (Hampshire, Fareham) 1554
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 1566
Mr. Belloc (Salford, S.) 1572
The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Haldane, Haddington) 1575
Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central) 1580
Mr. Bennett (Oxfordshire, Woodstock) 1583
Mr. Wyndham (Dover) 1588
Mr. Rees (Montgomery Boroughs) 1599
Mr. Crooks (Woolwich) 1603
Colonel Kenyon-Slaney (Shropshire, Newport) 1607
Mr. Maclean (Bath) 1612
Mr. Mooney (Newry) 1613
Mr. Haldane 1614
Mr. Luttrell (Devonshire, Tavistock) 1615
Mr. Byles (Salford, N.) 1621

Mr. Haldane rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 186 ; Noes, 41. (Division List No. 38.)

Question put, and agreed to.

The House resumed, Mr. Speaker in the Chair—

And, it being a quarter-past Eight of the Clock, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 4.

Dublin Metropolitan Police.

Mr. Meagher (Kilkenny, N.) 1625
Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green) 1630

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House is of opinion that the system whereby the maximum amount sanctioned by law at a time when the valuation of the City of Dublin was comparatively low still continues to be levied is unjustifiable, in view of the fact that the valuation of the city has greatly increased, and that the number of police has not appreciably increased ; that the crimeless condition of the city does not warrant this heavy expenditure ; and that the control of this police force should be vested in the local authorities, as is the case in cities in Great Britain."—(*Mr. Meagher.*)

Mr. T. Harrington (Dublin, Harbour) 1633
M. Gordon (Londonderry, S.) 1634
Mr. Kettle (Tyrone, E.) 1635
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.) 1637
Mr. John Redmond (Waterford) 1642
Mr. Walter Long (Dublin, S.) 1644
Mr. T. M. Healy (Louth, N.) 1646
Mr. Moore (Armagh, N.) 1648
Mr. Charles Craig (Antrim, S.) 1652

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Agricultural Education in Elementary Schools Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Jesse Collings (Birmingham, Bordesley) 1653

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir F. Banbury (City of London) 1654

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

Mar. 12.] *Page*

Small Holdings Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir F. Banbury 1655

Mr. Trevelyan (*Yorkshire, W.R., Elland*) 1655

And, it being Eleven of the Clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Wednesday, 25th March.

Trusts Bill.—Read a second time.

Bill committed to a Select Committee.—(*Mr. Rendell.*) 1656

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).—Postponed Proceeding resumed.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow; Committee also report Progress; to sit again To-morrow 1656

Poisons and Pharmacy Bill [LORDS].—Lords Message [5th, March], "That it is desirable that the Poisons and Pharmacy Bill [Lords] be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament," considered.

Resolved, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said Resolution 1656

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.—(*Mr. Whiteley*) ... 1656

Adjourned at five minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 12TH MARCH, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

FURTHER STANDING ORDERS applicable to the following Bill have been complied with; Madras Railway Company (Annuities).

STANDING ORDERS applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with; Argentine North Eastern Railway [H.L.]

The same was ordered to lie on the Table 1657

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.—Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Alliance and other Assurance and Insurance Companies Bill [H.L.]; Leith Burgh Bill [H.L.]; and the West London Barnes, and Richmond Tramways Bill [H.L.]; ought to be dispensed with, and the Bills allowed to proceed.

That the Standing Orders not complied in respect of the Camborne Water Bill; ought to be dispensed with.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Croydon and Southern District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; and the London and Windsor Motor Roads, Tramroads, and Tramways Bill [H.L.]; ought not to be dispensed with.

Read, and agreed to 1657

Great Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on Table. The orders made on the 19th and 26th of February last discharged and Bill committed 1657

Huddersfield Water Bill [H.L.]; Read 3ª and passed, and sent to the Commons 1659

Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 18899.—Report from the Committee of Selection, that the following Lords be proposed to the House as the panel of Lords to Act as Commissioners under the Act, viz:—E. Mansfield, L. Kintore, (E. Kintore); agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly 1657

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Probation of Offenders.—Memorandum by the Home Office. 1658

Explosives (Explosion of Cartridges) on Registered Premises.—Report on the circumstances attending an explosion of cartridges which occurred on the registered premises of Messrs. F. Dyke and Company, at 5, St. George's Avenue, Aldermanbury, E.C., on 1st January 1908.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table. 1658

Poisons and Pharmacy Bill [H.L.].—Message from the Commons, That they concur in the resolution of this House communicated to them on Thursday last, that it is desirable that the Poisons and Pharmacy Bill [H.L.] be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament as desired by this House 1658

NEW BILLS.

Education (School Attendance) Bill [H.L.].—Read 1ª, and to be printed (No. 27) 1658

THE STRENGTH OF THE ARMY.

Viscount Midleton 1658

Moved, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for any Minute of the Army Council approving the further reduction in the numbers of the Regular Artillery, and the Report for 1907 of the late Inspector-General of the Forces so far as it effects "the training and efficiency of the troops under the control of the Home Government, and the readiness and fitness of the Army for war."—(*Viscount Midleton.*)

The Under Secretary of State for War (The Earl of Portsmouth)... ... 1670
Earl Roberts 1681
The Duke of Bedford 1689
Lord Ribblesdale 1694
The Earl of Erroll 1695
Viscount Hardinge 1698
Lord Wenlock 1701
Lord Haversham 1702

Moved, "That the debate be adjourned until Monday."—(*Lord Lucas.*)

House adjourned at half-past Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 12TH MARCH, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Derby Gas Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table 1704

Rochdale Corporation Bill; Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Board Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 1704

Mar. 12.]

Page

PETITIONS.

Land Values (Scotland) Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table ... 1704

Licensed Premises (Exclusion of Children.)—Petition for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1704

Licensing Bill.—2 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1704

Moray Firth (Illegal Trawling).—Petition for prevention; to lie upon the Table 1704

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—5 Petitions in favour; to lie upon the Table 1704

Women's Enfranchisement Bill.—Petition in favour; to lie upon the Table 1705

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

Probation of Offenders Act, 1907.—Memorandum issued by the Home Office; to lie upon the Table 1705

Explosions (Explosion of Cartridges on Registered Premises).—Report on the circumstances attending an Explosion of Cartridges which occurred on the Registered Premises of Messrs. F. Dyke and Company, at 5, St. George's Avenue, Aldermanbury, E.C., on 1st January, 1908 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1705

Navy (Dockyard Expense Accounts, 1906-7).—Annual Accounts; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 88] 1705

Wines Imported.—Return ordered, "showing strength of Wines imported to this country" 1705

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Stolen Postal Orders in Ireland 1705

Post Office and Lottery Literature 1706

Loss of the Pernambuco 1706

Uganda Railway 1707

Tea Garden Labour Commission 1707

Indian Budget 1707

Indian Imperial Legislative Council 1708

Indian Penal Code 1708

Indian Native Rulers and Famine Precautions 1709

Indian Relief System 1709

Indian Imperial Cadet Corps 1710

Wolverhampton Telegraphists Pay 1710

Vaccination of Post Office Officials 1711

Case of Mrs. Bridget Murphy of Ardpatrick 1711

Cavan Evicted Tenants 1712

Royal University of Ireland 1713

Enniskillens Labourer's Cottage Scheme 1713

Strabane Labourer's Cottages 1714

Kingston Estate, County Cork 1715

Army Commissions—Eyesight Regulations 1716

Indian Mutiny Medals 1715

Mar. 12.] *Page*

New Bayonet Tenders 1717
New Attestation Form 1717
Netheravon Yeomanry School 1717
Training Regulations for the Territorial Army 1718
Staff College Students 1718
4th Battalion West Kent Regiment 1718
St. Patrick's Day—Army Ordnance Department 1719
Army Engineer Surveyors 1719
Assam Bengal Railway—Sylhet Connection 1719
Bridging the Ganges 1720
Bombay-Sind Railway 1720
Viceroy's Executive Council—Commercial Ministry 1720
Irish Estimates 1721
Illegal Trawling in the Moray Firth 1721
Tuberculosis in Scotland 1721
Board of Inland Revenue—Secretary's Holiday Expenses 1722
Irish Grants and Expenditure 1724
Training Colleges for Rural School Work 1727
H.M.S. "Dreadnought" 1729
Public Trustee Vote 1730
Volunteer Officers and the Territorial Army 1730
Officers of Cadet Battalions... 1731
Clock Point—National Defence Laws 1731
Waltham Abbey Factory Wages 1731
Cordite Destroyed 1732
Range Finders 1732
West Riding Schools 1732

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Chatham Dockyard Workmen and the Territorial Force... 1733
Royal Naval Engineering College, Dartmouth 1733
Royal Naval Reserve 1733
New Quick-Firing Gun 1734
Anglo-Tibetan Agreement 1735
Famine in India 1735
Conviction of a Bengali Barrister for Assaulting English Railway Officials ... 1736
The Zakka Khel Settlement 1737
British Post Office in China... 1737
Cyclone in Mauritius 1738
Natives in the Transvaal Mines 1738
Mozambique Labour in the Rand Mines 1739
Suggested Further Introduction of Chinese Labour 1740
Compounds at the Mines 1740
Mortality among the Labourers 1742
Transvaal Mines and Malagasy Labour 1743

Mar. 12.]

Page

Dinizulu ... 1744
Native and Chinese Labour, Comparison ... 1745
Mortality in the Mines ... 1746
Medical Inspection of the Natives ... 1746
Governorship of Macedonia... ... 1747
Japanese Infringements of British Trade-marks ... 1747
Great Britain and Siam ... 1748
Indentured Labour at St. Thome and Principe ... 1748
Congo Treaty of Cession and Additional Act. ... 1748
Russia and the Aland Islands ... 1749
British Army in Egypt ... 1749
Egyptian Schools Sports Competition ... 1750
Carthagena—Estate of John Riddle of Sunderland ... 1750
Egyptian Students at Monstafa Kamel's Funeral ... 1751
Sir Harry Maclean ... 1751
Government Employees of the Territorial Force ... 1752
The Licensing Bill ... 1753
Hong Kong Mail Contract ... 1753
Imprisonment for Debt ... 1754
The Children Bill ... 1754
The Hamstead Explosion ... 1755
Railway Shunting Accidents ... 1755
West Riding Education Loan Payments ... 1756
Chinese Mails ... 1757
Neyland Telephone Exchange ... 1757
Post Office Contractors and Cruelty to Horses ... 1757
Newcastle Postman's Grievance ... 1758
Politics in the Post Office ... 1759
Equipment of Contracting-out School ... 1760
Teachers Parchment Certificates ... 1761
Secondary Schools ... 1762
Dewsbury Education Bequest ... 1762
West Riding Schools ... 1763
Provided School Grant ... 1764
Teachers and the Education Bill ... 1765
Single School Parishes ... 1765
Swansea Education Dispute ... 1766
Marble Arch Clock ... 1766
Royal Philanphropic Society ... 1767
Chicago Beef Trust ... 1767
"The Times" and the German Emperor's Letters ... 1768
Nith Fishery... ... 1769
Whaling Stations on the Scottish Coast ... 1770
Flooding of the Valley of the Inny ... 1770
Bevan Estate, Limerick ... 1771

Page

Irish School Teachers Salaries 1772
The House of Lords... 1773
Business of the House 1773

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee A: Mr. Charles Craig; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Thomas Lorimer Corbett.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee: That they had added to Standing Committee A the following Thirteen Members (in respect of the Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill): Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. Glover, Mr. Guy Wilson, Sir Edwin Cornwall, Mr. Newnes, Mr. McKinnon Wood, Mr. Wiles, Mr. Carr-Gomm, Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Guinness, Viscount Morpeth, Sir William Bull, and Mr. Goulding.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee: That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee A (in respect of the Education (Local Authorities) Bill): Mr. Secretary Gladstone and Mr. Herbert Samuel; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. McKenna and Mr. Lough.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee: That they had added to Standing Committee A the following Thirteen Members (in respect of the Education (Local Authorities) Bill): Mr. Walker, Mr. Wedgwood, Mr. Adkins, Mr. Gordon Harvey, Mr. Massie, Mr. Verney, Mr. Winfrey, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Staveley-Hill, Sir Francis Powell, Viscount Morpeth, and Sir Philip Magnus.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee: That they had added to Standing Committee A the following Thirteen Members (in respect of the Incest Bill): Colonel Lockwood, Sir John Kennaway, Colonel Sandys, Colonel Ward, Mr. Crossley, Mr. Maclean, Mr. George Hardy, Mr. Henry Wilson, Mr. Weir, Mr. Hedges, Mr. Robert Pearce, Mr. John Wilson, and Mr. Clynes.
Reports to lie upon the Table 1774

NEW BILLS.

Parochial Medical Officers (Scotland) Bill.—To be read a second time upon Thursday, 30th April, and to be printed. [Bill 153] 1775

Exportation of Horses Bill.—To be read a second time upon Wednesday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 154] 1776

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Proceedings on the Business of Supply, if under discussion when the Business is postponed this day, be resumed and proceeded with, though opposed, after the interruption of Business, notwithstanding anything in Standing Order No. 15."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 277; Noes, 79. (Division List No. 39) ... 1776

SUPPLY [SECOND ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

Mar. 12.] *Page*

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1908–9.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £9,422,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the expense of the pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1909."

Mr. Stanley Wilson (*Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness*) 1779
Sir Ivor Herbert (*Monmouthshire, S.*) 1786

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,421,000, be granted for the said Service,"—(*Sir Ivor Herbert.*)

The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Haldane, Haddington*) 1793
Lord Valentia (*Oxford*) 1798
Mr. Guest (*Cardiff District*) 1801
Colonel Sandys (*Lancashire, Bootle*) 1803
Mr. Acland (*Yorkshire, Richmond*) 1808
Mr. Bright (*Oldham*) 1810
Mr. Seddon (*Lancashire, Newton*) 1813
Mr. Cochrane (*Ayrshire, N.*) 1815
Mr. Byles (*Salford, N.*) 1821
Mr. Courthope (*Sussex, Rye*) 1826
Mr. Mackarness (*Berkshire, Newbury*) 1829
Mr. Hunt (*Shropshire, Ludlow*) 1831
Mr. Bellairs (*Lynn Regis*) 1832
Viscount Helmsley (*Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk*) 1834
Mr. Everett (*Suffolk, Woodbridge*) 1835
Lord Balcarres (*Lancashire, Chorley*) 1838

And, it being a quarter past Eight of the Clock, and there being Private Business set down, by direction of the CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS under Standing Order No. 8, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

Liverpool Corporation Bill.—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Holt (*Northumberland, Hexham*) 1841
Mr. Harmood-Banner (*Liverpool, Everton*) 1841
Mr. Crosfield (*Warrington*) 1842
Mr. Seddon (*Lancashire, Newton*) 1842
Mr. Brunner (*Lancashire, Leigh*) 1845

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time and committed.

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).—Postponed Proceeding on Motion made on consideration of Question, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,422,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1909,"

Which Motion was, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,421,000, be granted for the said Service."—(*Sir Ivor Herbert.*)—resumed.

Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,421,000, be granted for the said Service."

Sir F. Banbury (*City of London*) 1846
Sir W. J. Collins (*St. Pancras, W.*) 1850
Lord Edmund Talbot (*Sussex, Chichester*) 1852

Page
Mr. Lea (St. Pancras, E.) 1853
Mr. Haldane 1855
Mr. Wyndham (Dover) 1863
Mr. Lupton (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) 1868
Mr. Gretton (Rutland) 1872

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

2. £1,743,000, Half-pay, Retired Pay, and other Non-Effective Charges.

3. £1,782,000, Pensions and other Non-Effective Charges for Warrant Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers, Men and Others.

4. £167,000, Civil Superannuation, Compensation, Compassionate Allowances, and Gratuities.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question "That this House do now adjourn,"—*Mr. Whiteley,*)—put, and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at Ten minutes before Eleven o'clock.

END OF TABLE OF CONTENTS TO VOL. CLXXXV.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(*AUTHORISED EDITION*)

IN THE

THIRD SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE UNITED
KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, APPOINTED TO MEET
THE TWENTY-NINTH DAY OF JANUARY IN THE EIGHTH YEAR OF THE
REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1908.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 27th February, 1908.

HIS MAJESTY THE LATE KING OF PORTUGAL.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that he had received the following letter from the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to His Majesty the King of Portugal—

Portuguese Legation,

MY LORD, 26th February, 1908.

I have the honour to inform your Lordship that I am instructed by His Faithful Majesty's Government to convey to the House of Lords the sincere thanks and appreciation of my Government for the kind and condoling expressions passed by their Lordships on the occasion of the lamentable death of my August Sovereign, His late Majesty the King of Portugal and the Algarves, K.G., and His Royal Highness the late Crown Prince of Portugal, K.G. I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to bring these expressions of sincere appreciation of my Government before the House of Lords.

I have the honour to be,

with the highest consideration, My Lord,
Your most obedient humble servant,

SOVERAL.

The Lord Chancellor.
&c. &c.

Ordered, That the said letter be entered on the Journals of the House.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; Thames River Steamboat Service Act, 1904 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.] Report from the Committee of Selection, that the Five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Swansea Valley Gas Bill [H.L.], and other Bills do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.], and the Thames River Steamboat Service Act, 1901 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]; read, and agreed to: All petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the Petitioners praying to be heard by Counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also Counsel for the Bills.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; Thames River Steamboat Service Act, 1904 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed: The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Code of regulations for day schools for 1908, with appendices:

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

BUTTER AND MARGARINE ACT, 1907.

List of names approved by the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries for use in connection with mixtures of butter and milk, in accordance with Section 9 of the Butter and Margarine Act, 1907; Presented (by command), and to be printed. (No. 23.)

TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANKS.

Sixteenth Annual Report of the proceedings of the Inspection Committee of Trustee Savings Banks, for the year ended 20th November, 1907, with appendices: Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

CROFTERS HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL. [H.L.]

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

LORD LOVAT: My Lords, I beg to bring before your Lordships a Bill to better the condition and increase the welfare of the Highland people, and to ask your Lordships to give it a Second Reading. I do not pretend that the reforms set out in the measure are of an epoch-making character, or such as the noble Earl the Minister for Agriculture could call a charter of the crofting population. But I do think that the Bill contains principles of sound progressive legislation, and, at the same time, removes certain hardships under which the crofters at present labour. The Bill is also, I think, a definite step in advance towards what I am sure every Highlander, whether peer or peasant, has at heart—the maintenance of a more thriving population on the soil.

In view of the fact that His Majesty's Government have introduced land legislation in another place, the question naturally occurs, Is it necessary to bring forward a private Bill at all? I say most emphatically that it is. It is necessary, in the first place, because those interested do not wish to see proposals for land reform in the Highlands tied to the tail of a Bill of a highly controversial nature applicable to the whole of Scotland, and to which, at all events, a large proportion of the agricultural community are opposed. The second reason why a private Bill should be brought forward here is that we have been told that the Government consider the House of Lords a suitable place for the discussion of land legislation. Both sides have pledged themselves to some measure of land reform for the Highlands, as is clear from a reference to what happened at the end of last session. Your Lordships will remember that the wish was generally expressed here that there should be such land reform, and the fact was brought out that the Radical crofter Members in another place wished to discuss the question with this House. I refer to the petition sent in to His Majesty's Government. Can anyone say that if we had had a definitely-drawn-up Bill at that time we should not have secured some reform for the Highlands, or that the Government would have been able to sacrifice Highland interests in order to conjure up and strengthen an abortive attack on the House of Lords?

When the Bill now before your Lordships was being considered the first thing that had to be decided was whether we should base it out on the Crofters Act or on Mr. Sinclair's Bill of 1907. It will probably be admitted, in regard to any line of far-reaching reform, that it is necessary in examining the method by which Utopia is to be arrived at, to inquire also into the qualifications of the reputed discoveries of that far-off land.

We find, on reference to Roman history, that the Romans called Cincinnatus from the plough to advise them on the subject of military warfare, but we cannot find out that, having completed his warlike career, anyone went to Cincinnatus to discover his views on land reform. Now, I would not argue that Mr. Sinclair is more qualified to lead the cohorts of Mr. Haldane's partially trained Army, but I would argue, from the words that have fallen from him in the House and out of it and also from what has been said by his supporters, that we have no greater proof that military excellence necessarily shows a knowledge of the crofter question than we have that a nice judgment of barley samples necessitates any knowledge of the raising of grain. I do not wish in any way to throw an aspersion on Mr. Sinclair's ability or to question his political honesty in bringing forward this measure of land reform, but I do wish to point out that here we have legislation on a most difficult subject, introduced by a man who, at all events, has not any great previous knowledge of the Highlands, and supported by a body of men who are neither Highlanders themselves, nor live for the larger portion of their lives in the Highlands, nor have any practical knowledge of the soil; and my contention is that their chance of arriving at the true solution of this difficult question is at all events problematical.

I would ask your Lordships to consider for a moment what the Crofters Act of 1886 actually was. So many views have already been expressed on this subject that perhaps this may be thought unnecessary; but I wish your Lordships for a moment to consider the Crofters Act, not as an Act which might be used elsewhere, but in its actual working as regards the people of the Highland crofter area. The 1886 Act found the crofter who had settled on the soil with what he considered a vested interest in the soil; he had, for the purposes of agriculture, equipped his holding and carried out the whole of the improvements. He found him tied by sentiment and interest to the soil, yet at the absolute disposition of the landowner. In the decade 1870–80, when the fall in agricultural values had caused the foreclosing of many mortgages and the consequent changing of ownership, and the estates being held in trust by South country lawyers, when, moreover, the rise in sporting values had led to the purchase of shooting properties with their accompanying fringes of agricultural lower ground, it was found that what had been a possible condition of things so long as the sentimental bond between owner and tenant of the same race, often of the same name, existed, became impossible when worked on the commercial basis of the new South country owner.

At the time the Crofters Act came in there had been produced a very genuine grievance. That Act gave to the crofter fixity of tenure, a fair rent, and, within reasonable limits, power of adding to the extent of his land. That the Act did not give him any great reduction in rent will be admitted. I mention this fact because it has been often said that the Highland difficulty was got over through the monetary result in the reduction of rent; but, if it did not reduce the rent to any great extent—merely some 20 per cent.—it provided for a special people a special form of land tenure, which, under the circumstances, I think must be admitted was probably the best that could be devised. It arrived at a happy medium between the personal ownership of the landlord and the fixity of tenure of the crofter, by which the landlord was able to invest money to a reasonable extent in the soil, while the crofter was able to carry out what buildings he could because the improvements he made on his land were his own.

I do not say for a moment that this system of land tenure would answer equally well in the south, because there the landlord equips the land entirely and the whole of the tenant's money is therefore capable of being administered in agriculture proper. But in the Highlands, where the agricultural position is really almost an impossible one, the co-operation between landlord and tenant is eminently necessary. The rent of the average croft is, roughly, £3 an acre. To equip the croft the housing takes £110 at least, and the farm offices not less than £60. I ask your Lordships whether it is financially sound for any one expending this sum of money to expect a return of £3. I am sorry to enter at any length into this point, but the question of buildings is so largely wrapped up in that of small holdings that I think it is, perhaps, necessary to develop this point. After all, it is not very much good creating new holdings until you have actually stopped the flow from the land which is going on in those parts where crofts actually exist at present. If your Lordships will examine the returns you will see that the number of crofters in the crofting area is smaller than at the time of the passing of the Act. That is not the fault of the Crofters Act, nor is it due to the fact that we have not got the Sinclair Bill. The reason is that every year a certain number of these small crofts, with badly built houses, come in, for which no tenant can be found, and instead of building new houses these crofts are divided and added to the neighbouring crofts. It is neither worth the landlord's while to build new housing on a small old croft, nor worth the tenant's while to go in for it.

The Crofters Act cannot be regarded as a piece of legislation for one class alone; it regarded the economic problem, and the welfare of the whole Highland people. In a poor country where a vast extent of hill-land exists, whose rateable value is to be calculated, not in sovereigns, but in halfpence, where the assessment for rates and taxes is 10s.—in one case 20s.—in the £, it was certain that any interference with existing vested interests, until other equally rate-producing vested interests could be raised in their place, was a matter that could only be viewed with the gravest concern. The Crofter Commission realised that it was necessary, therefore, to go slowly, and only to tackle the problem in the first case in the congested district area where it was most acute.

I do not propose to detain your Lordships at any length in regard to the Bill which I have had the honour to introduce, but I would ask you to consider for a moment one or two groups of clauses contained in the Bill. The first group to which I would like to refer deal with certain injustices under which the crofters suffer under the Act of 1886. Your Lordships will see that by Clause 1 a large proportion of leaseholders are brought within the scope of the Crofters Act. It is felt that an injustice was done by leaving them out, and if this Bill should become law they will be given full advantage of the Act. There is also, in Clause 2, a proviso that nothing shall be construed as debarring a crofter from sub-letting his dwelling-house to holiday visitors. It was felt that this would add considerably to the returns which come from the soil. There is an increasing tendency on the part of people in the large towns to spend portions of the summer and autumn in the north of Scotland, and it was felt that any encouragement in this direction could not but have beneficial results. Another advantage is offered to the crofters in Clause 8 of this Bill, which extends the provisions of the Act of 1886, relative to the enlargement of holdings, to an application for enlargement of a holding by a single crofter, or two or more crofters. Hitherto five applicants have been necessary, and it was felt to be only fair that certain smaller crofter communities should not be debarred from taking advantage of the Act. Then there is another clause in the Bill admitting the crofter to the advantages of compensation for damage by game, thereby putting him on a level with the tenant farmer.

A further group of clauses to which I should like to refer for a moment deal with the amalgamation of the Congested Districts Board and the Crofter Commission. Mr. Sinclair, in another place, has declared that it is impossible to combine the judiciary duties of the Crofter Commission with the executive work of the Congested Districts Board. The principle, no doubt, is perfectly sound. But I would ask your Lordships to consider the fact that the Crofter Commission, costing very nearly £5,000 a year, has in the last two years done hardly three weeks' work. The total amount of the reductions in rents last year, or, in fact, during the last two years, could have been covered by a couple of £10 notes; and I think, if the extortions, amounting to £2 or £3, of a Radical Peer, and the further extortions, amounting to £8 or £10, of an American millionaire had been left out, one £10 note would have covered the reductions during the two years. I mention this to show that the work of the Crofter Commission has at all events nearly approached its end, and I think the amalgamation of these two bodies would lead to a great saving of money

The work of the Congested Districts Board, on the other hand, has increased, and one reason for bringing these two bodies together is that the best part of the work of the Congested Districts Board, that of making new holdings, is held up through the difficulty of getting combined work out of the two boards. I may quote, as an example, what has happened to myself. The division of a farm took place nearly a year ago, in connection with which I took over sheep stock to the value of £3,000 or so; but the rents, which were to be fixed by the Crofter Commission, have not yet been fixed. The result is that the crofters do not care to take on engagements, the rent being still unsettled. There are other similar cases in which considerable difficulty has arisen. This is probably not the fault of the bodies themselves. The Congested Districts Board works for the main part in the outer isles, and the *personnel* of the Crofter Commission is dotted over Edinburgh, London, and the North, and it is difficult to get rapid decisions. I think it would greatly facilitate the work if these two bodies were amalgamated. There is another reason why we wish to combine the work of the Crofter Commission and the Congested Districts Board. In the 1907 Bill there were proposals for the constitution of new boards, and new boards are apt to mean new men. In the Highlands both landlords and tenants know the work that has been done by the Crofter Commission and the Congested Districts Board, and I think, in view of the wild sayings, not only of the supporters of His Majesty's Government, but also of some of His Majesty's paid officials, it is desirable in the interests of the people of Scotland that there should be no "wild men" on these boards.

There is another question on which I should like to say a word—that of allowing the new board to purchase land and lease it, instead of purchasing it for sale only. This involves a big problem, but I think it is a stepping-stone towards the solution of the difficult question of the crofters of the outer isles. People are apt to forget that in Scotland we have no less than three crofters problems. One on the east coast, where the crofter is of a self-helpful nature, where, though he may not have a large croft, the crofter is able to get sufficient work in the majority of cases to pay his way, and where there is little or no land hunger; another on the West Coast, where there is land hunger, where the crofter is not self-helpful, and where there is marked lack of employment; and a third in the Lewes and outer islands, where squatting, whatever people may say to the contrary, has hardly been checked since 1886, and where the condition of affairs is getting worse and worse. The economic position is impossible through the highness of rates, and the number of people settled there, even if the whole of the land be divided, is probably too great for the island, and no solution is a possible one except land purchase and development by some powerful body. One step towards doing good in the outer isles would be to give power to the Congested Districts Board to purchase land and to lease it, instead of forcing the crofters to buy. It has been shown at Skye, where the Congested Districts Board have already purchased land, that the crofter is not willing to purchase.

Another group of clauses, taken directly out of the 1907 Bill, may be described as in the landlords' interest. I do not think I need go largely into them. One deals with the question of sanitary arrangements, the onus of which is now put on the crofter. This is, after all, only fair, as by this Bill the crofter is entitled to let to summer visitors, and therefore, in a way, turns his croft into an hotel. There is a further clause which gives certain advantages to the landlord on the subject of water, and on the resumption of a holding, all of which, again, are taken bodily from Mr. Sinclair's Bill of 1907. I am not one of those who believe that all is well in the Highlands, and that no reforms are possible; I believe that reforms are needed, and can be effected, provided they are in accordance with existing legislation and on well-considered lines. I think the time is now propitious for such reform. It was shown last year that both sides were in favour of action, and if method only keeps us apart, there is no reason why that should not be got over. Speaking for myself, I would say that it does not seem to me to matter much whether we call the Congested Districts Board agricultural commissioners, or whether we call the Crofter Commission a Land Court, or whether they act separately or together, provided always that Parliament gives sufficient funds to enable those bodies to carry out the work entrusted to them, that the work is conducted efficiently and quickly, and that the *personnel* of the Board is such that the landlords and bigger tenants in the Highlands are not frightened. I would say to His Majesty's Government that if there is one thing which would be more likely to get a Bill for land reform through than anything else, it would be the publication of the names of the men intended to be nominated for the new board.

May I further, in all humility, offer this piece of advice to His Majesty's Government, that they should grapple with existing troubles before they look for new ones. There are at present black spots—I do not think they can be called by another name—in the outer isles and the Lewes; there is, as I have pointed out, a leakage from the existing number of crofts on the mainland, which will continue until new industries can be developed to keep the people on the soil. The problem of the Lewes and outer islands is one which has not been really faced by any Secretary for Scotland yet, or, for the matter of that, by any Commission; and, therefore, if the present Secretary for Scotland will face and solve this difficulty for the benefit of the Highlands, it will be the best thing that has been done for many years. As regards the formation of new crofts, I believe that can be done if sufficient money is found to carry out the work. I do not believe, having worked in a very small way myself in putting new crofters on the soil, that it can be done with the ease many people imagine. There are obstacles in the way, both personal and material, which will always make this question a difficult one, and it can only be really faced if a sufficient amount of money is forthcoming.

The Government have declared that in the creation of new crofts under their Bill they do not intend to go in for the eye-picking of farms and the turning out of old tenants who have been long on the soil, any more than they mean to take land from the landlord without paying adequate compensation. But if the Government are really animated by that excellent intention, why do they not put it in the Bill? I have no hesitation in saying that if sound and competent men are appointed to administer a reasonable scheme for the creation of new crofts, every help would be given to find land for the purpose; and there would be no objection even to the grant of compulsory powers. I beg to move the Second Reading of this Bill.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2ª."—(*Lord Lovat.*)

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): My Lords, after the statement which I made on behalf of the Government on Tuesday last, I am sure noble Lords opposite will not expect me to deal in any detail with the clauses of the Bill which the noble Lord opposite has introduced in such a very interesting speech. We all recognise the great authority with which the noble Lord speaks on this subject, and it was quite unnecessary for him to apologise, either for the historical survey with which he opened his speech, or for the exceedingly clear and detailed manner in which he described the clauses of his Bill. I am perfectly sure my right hon. friend the Secretary for Scotland would welcome the advice and co-operation of the noble Lord in dealing with the crofter question.

Now, my Lords, I am bound to say that, so far as the general question of this debate is concerned, we still maintain the objections which we expressed on Tuesday last to the discussion of this subject before the Government Bill comes up from another place. Despite the arguments on Tuesday of my noble relative on the Cross Benches, I still maintain that if it became the frequent practice for Government Bills to be anticipated by the introduction in the House of other measures dealing with the same subjects, and their discussion was forced on the minority by the majority, the position of Ministers in charge of those Bills would become almost intolerable. Equally we maintain the objection which we stated as to the House of Commons not being quite fairly treated by the introduction of these Bills. My noble friend, quite unintentionally of course, did me a slight injustice when he assumed that I complained of the treatment of His Majesty's Government. That was not so. On the contrary I explicitly stated, in my reply to the noble Earl, Lord Camperdown, that if he thought, as the most straightforward of opponents, as he always is, that he had a chance of embarrassing the Government by bringing in his Bill, it was a very natural course indeed for him to take. I do not admit the embarrassment.

For I do not admit, as a general proposition, that if the Government bring in legislation dealing with one part of the United Kingdom in a particular year, they are necessarily inconsistent because they object to the same legislation being brought in for a different part of the United Kingdom in another year. If some noble Lord were to introduce an Evicted Tenants Bill for Wales, or a measure to apply some of the licensing or educational legislation of Wales to England, we should have no difficulty, I think, in showing that the circumstances were not suitable for such legislation. Therefore, before you can convict us of inconsistency, you have to show two things. In the first place you have to show that the circumstances of the two countries are the same. Now, my Lords, it is taken as an axiom by noble Lords opposite, that the circumstances of the Lowlands of Scotland are identical with those of England. I do not intend to enter into that question now, but when my noble and learned friend on the Woolsack brings in his Bill, I have no doubt he will have some arguments to produce showing that the circumstances are not precisely identical. But, even if they were identical, you have to prove something else. You have to prove that the inhabitants of the other country—because after all, Scotland in a hundred respects, habits, legislation, and in many other matters, is a different country from England—you have to prove that the inhabitants of that country, who are the people affected and the people to be considered, prefer the application of the same solution to meet the difficulty rather than a new one. Consequently I do not admit that there is any inconsistency whatever in our objecting to this application of the measure which we applied to England last year.

Now, my Lords, so far as this particular Bill is concerned the circumstances are somewhat different. This measure is to a certain extent founded upon, or at any rate, closely resembles in parts, the Bill of the Secretary for Scotland. I cannot claim a very close acquaintance with the noble Lord's Bill, but I understand that in some respects it falls short of the other measure, both as regards the area to which it is applied and the number of persons who would be affected. And not only does it fall short of my right hon. friend's Bill, but it also falls short of propositions which have been made on this subject in past years by those who belong to the same party as the noble Lord opposite. That being so, surely it would be more reasonable to consider the larger proposals first—those contained in Mr. Sinclair's Bill—and then, if you do not approve of them, have recourse to those suggested by the noble Lord. But I am quite aware that what I say will have no effect on noble Lords opposite. They will, no doubt, proceed to read this Bill a second time, and I merely desire to say that if they do so we shall not put them to the trouble of dividing. We shall express our formal dissent, and I have no doubt that that is a course which will commend itself to noble Lords opposite.

EARL CAWDOR: My Lords, the noble Earl has certainly laid down a new principle in the way he proposes to deal with private Members' Bills. It seems to be laid down now that if the Government have introduced, or propose to introduce, a Bill upon any definite question, private Members anxious to produce legislation should remain in humble silence until the Government are graciously pleased to produce their measure. That is an entirely new doctrine either in your Lordships' House or in another place. Private Members are surely at liberty to bring in their measures when they please and as they please, and I cannot see that it is possible to argue, as the noble Earl argues, that in taking this course on the present occasion my noble friend is treating the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack and the House of Commons with discourtesy, and dealing, I suppose, unfairly with His Majesty's Government.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: Oh, no.

EARL CAWDOR: Unkindly then

*THE EARL OF CREWE: Oh, no.

EARL CAWDOR: Well, kindly. At all events, the noble Earl protests against its being done, and we understand that in his view, and in the view of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, it is an unbusinesslike procedure.

LORD COURTNEY OF PENWITH: Hear, hear.

EARL CAWDOR: The noble Lord opposite cheers that statement. I will say a word in a moment about the businesslike view of the transaction, but it does seem to me a most unreasonable position to take up. We know from what we hear that in another place discussion upon Bills of all sorts is not quite so free as it might be, and we have been under the impression until recently that in this House at all events there was freedom of speech and facility of debate. Is it possible that we are going to have a closure in another form, by a conspiracy of silence on the Government side? If that were carried out, it would practically make debate impossible. I do not think myself, and I venture to say your Lordships will not think, that this is a dignified or a proper course for His Majesty's Government to take. I do not propose, in view of the position the noble Earl has taken up, to go into detail in regard to the Bill which my noble friend behind me has so very clearly and ably explained to your Lordships. It is a Bill practically identical in most parts with the Bill which we understand is to come up to your Lordships from another place; there are a few variations in it, but they are not very considerable. So far as I know, there is a consensus of opinion among landowners and crofters that the amendments of the law proposed in this Bill are desirable.

Now, let us turn for a moment to the businesslike transaction. His Majesty's Government admit that these amendments of the Crofters Act are desirable, and that they wish to see them passed into law. If the Bill that has just been introduced to your Lordships by my noble friend is proceeded with, it can become law this year without any trouble whatever, and unhampered by side issues of a very grave character. But what do noble Lords opposite propose as a businesslike transaction? They intend to link these simple amendments of the Crofters Acts to dual ownership, a Land Court, and proposals which were described the other evening by the noble Earl, Lord Rosebery, as grossly disparaging to the county councils. Is that a businesslike transaction? Without expressing any opinion on the merits of the Government Bill, is it not very possible, even probable, that a measure so weighted is less likely to pass than the simpler measure now before us? If the Government were really anxious to deal with the Crofters Acts in the way proposed by my noble friend, would they not assent to this unhampered Bill? What is the object of binding crofter legislation to other matters which are in bitter dispute? Have the Government discovered that while the crofting amendments are popular in Scotland, dual ownership and a Land Court are unpopular, and are the county councils beginning to appreciate the disparagement placed on them by the Government's proposal? No doubt the Government will require all the assistance they can get from extraneous sources to persuade Parliament and the people of Scotland to accept dual ownership and a Land Court, and I can quite understand their saying to their supporters, "You must support this Bill, otherwise away go these valuable amendments to the Crofters Acts." But if the Government's Bill, with all the lumber imposed on it, fails, my noble friend's Bill can be proceeded with.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord TWEEDMOUTH): Hear, hear.

EARL CAWDOR: The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty approves of that, and I hope, therefore, we shall have the assistance of the Government in endeavouring to pass it into law. Further discussions at present must be one-sided, and it would be of no use to continue them, but I trust that the House will at all events give a Second Reading to the Bill now, and that before the end of the Session it may become law whatever may happen to the Bill of the Government.

On Question, Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the whole House.

LAND VALUES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Brought from the Commons and read 1ᵃ.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: Will the noble Earl give the House an indication when the Government are likely to take the further stages of this Bill.

*THE EARL OF CREWE: I am afraid I am not in a position to say.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: May I assume that the Second Reading will not be taken before the Small Holdings (Scotland) Bill?

THE EARL OF CREWE: Certainly, if the noble Lord so desires.

Bill to be printed (No. 24.)

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 27*th February*, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

ASSASSINATION OF THE KING OF PORTUGAL AND OF THE DUKE OF BRAGANZA.

MR. SPEAKER acquainted the House that he had received a letter from the Marquis Soveral, which he read to the House as followeth:—

Portuguese Legation,
February, 26th, 1908.

Sir,

I have the honour to inform you that I am directed by His Faithful Majesty's Government to convey to the Members of the House of Commons the sincere appreciation and thanks of my Government for the kind and sympathetic expressions of condolence passed by them on the lamentable occasion of the death of my August Sovereign, His late Majesty the King of Portugal and the Algarves, K.G., and His Royal Highness the late Crown Prince of Portugal, K.G. I have the honour to request that you will be so good as to bring these expressions of sincere appreciation of my Government before the House of Commons.

I have the honour to be,
with the highest consideration,
Sir,
Your most obedient,
humble Servant,
SOVERAL.

The Right Hon.
The Speaker,
Etc., etc., etc.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Madras Railway Company (Purchase) Bill.—Reported, with Amendments [Title amended]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Private Bills (Standing Order 62 complied with)—

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz.:—North-East London Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Private Bill Petitions (Standing Orders not complied with).—

MR SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—Camborne Water.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Private Bills [Lords] (Petition for additional Provision) (Standing Orders not complied with).—

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for additional Provision in the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz.:—London

County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

PETITIONS.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation; From Blaydon (two); Dover; Hale End; Idle; Leyton; Leytonstone; London; Tonbridge; Walthamstow; and Woodford; to lie upon the Table.

MORAY FIRTH (ILLEGAL TRAWLING.)

Two Petitions from Rosehearty, for prevention; to lie upon the Table.

PAROCHIAL MEDICAL OFFICERS (SCOTLAND).

Petition of the Scottish Poor Law Medical Officers' Association, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour; From Addiscombe; Bakewell; Balham (six); Billinghurst; Blackfriars Road; Blackpool (seventeen); Bow Road; Brighton; Brixton; Burnley; Camberley; Coventry; Dawley; Hants and Isle of Wight; Harrow; Leytonstone; Lower Tooting (two); Metal Bridge; Morecambe; National Unitarian Temperance Association; Poplar (two); Scunthorpe; Staveley; Upper Tooting (three); Wigton; and Worthing; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour; From Bristol (three); Heaton Mersey; Manchester; Preston; West Gorton; and Withington and Didsbury; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND) (CODE 1908).

Copy presented, of Code of Regulations for Day Schools, 1908, with Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRUSTEE SAVINGS BANK.

Copy presented, of Sixteenth Annual Report of the Proceedings of the Inspection Committee for the year ended 20th November, 1907, with Appendices [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 76.]

NATIONAL GALLERY (REPORT).

Copy ordered, "of Report of the Director of the National Gallery for the year 1907, with Appendices." — (*Mr. Runciman.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Home Office Factory Inspection Staff.

MR. H. J. TENNANT (Berwickshire): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he proposes to make any increase in the staff of the Factory Department, either of His Majesty's inspectors, of His Majesty's women inspectors, or of His Majesty's inspectors' assistants; if increases are contemplated in any of these branches of his Department; and whether the general staff of the Home Office will be strengthened.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) During the autumn I made careful inquiry into the work of the Factory Department, and came to the conclusion that a strong case was made out for strengthening considerably both the organisation and the inspecting staff of the Department. A scheme was accordingly prepared and submitted to the Treasury which, subject to a few modifications, has now received their assent. I cannot, within the limits of this Answer, enter into the details of the scheme, but it involves the following very substantial additions to the headquarters and general inspecting staff during the next financial year: the headquarters staff will be strengthened by the addition of a second deputy chief inspector and a second medical inspector; the general inspecting staff by a superintending inspector, sixteen inspectors, eleven inspectors' assistants, and five lady inspectors. Further provision is also made for clerical assistance, both at headquarters and in certain districts where the clerical work is heavy. At the same time I have had under consideration the industrial work of the Home Office proper, and decided that, in view of its great growth, the branch of the office which deals with this work should, as soon as possible, be relieved of the other important duties which are now assigned to it, and should devote itself exclusively to administration of industrial law and the study of industrial questions. The Treasury have agreed to an addition to the staff to enable this to be done.

Fatal Accidents in Scottish Mines.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrew Burghs): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will furnish a Return of the fatal accidents in mines in Scotland; and what cases of gallantry in the rescue or attempted rescue at personal risk of life have been reported to him since 1st December last.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) These figures are given annually in Part I. of the Mines Annual General Report and Statistics, published by my Department. In the year 1907, there were 192 fatal accidents in mines in Scotland, resulting in 199 deaths. As regards the second part of the Question, one Scottish case about which the hon. Member has communicated with me, has been brought to my notice since the 1st December last.

Local Authorities and the Infant Life Protection Act.

MR. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can say how many local authorities in England and Wales, Scotland, and Ireland, have appointed special inspectors under The Infant Life Protection Act, 1897, and how many have not; how many cases have been registered in each year since the passing of the Act; and, if he cannot at once give this information, whether he will grant a Return.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I have not got this information, but I shall be glad to obtain it and give it as a Return. I will communicate with my hon. friend as to the form the Return should take.

Temporary Clerks in Belfast Post Office.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General, whether he is aware that for several months past six temporary sorting clerks have been employed on full-time duties at the Belfast Office; and when he proposes to have their places filled by established officers.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) This matter had already been receiving my attention, and I hope that it will be practicable at no distant date to dispense with the temporary force now employed at Belfast. A revision of the force of the Belfast post office is now under consideration and care will be taken, in accordance with the usual practice, to provide for the performance of the duties, as far as possible, by established officers.

Depletion of East Bay, Dungeness, of Lug-worms.

MR. LAURENCE HARDY (Kent, Ashford): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he is aware that the French have recently taken large quantities of lug-worm, dug from the East Bay, Dungeness, and that arrangements are being made for the exportation of 5,000 lug-worm a a day; whether he is aware that the fishing in Dungeness Bay depends largely on the plentiful supply of lug-worm, which attract the fish and provide ample supplies of bait for the local fishermen; and whether in view of the fact that so large an export will soon exhaust the supply, he will take some measures to check a proceeding so detrimental to the fishing industry.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) We have not received any complaints from local fishermen as to the practices mentioned by the hon. Member, but inquiry will be made into the matter in order to ascertain whether any action can be taken in the interest of the fishing industry.

Pay of Royal Engineers and the Ordnance Survey Vote.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if it is intended to charge the regimental pay of the companies of Royal Engineers on the Ordnance Survey against the Ordnance Survey Vote; what additional expense will this entail against the Ordnance

Survey Vote; and if the companies of Royal Engineers employed on the Ordnance Survey could be returned to their military duties, and thereby retain the service of civilians who are being discharged on reduction of establishment.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) It has been decided to defray the regimental pay, &c., of the three companies of Royal Engineers, except for the periods during which they undergo military training, from the Ordnance Survey Vote; and to give effect to this decision a sum of £20,000 has been transferred from the War Office to the Ordnance Survey Estimate for the next financial year. Any alteration in the organisation of the Ordnance Survey in the direction indicated in the concluding paragraph of the Question would be detrimental to the best interests of the Survey and of the public service, and cannot therefore be entertained.

Wheat Prices.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if the price of 32s. 11d. per quarter, being the average price of wheat imported into London in 1907, includes landing charges and port dues; and, if not, what is the approximate amount of those charges per quarter.

(*Answered by Mr Kearley.*) The price quoted does not include charges of the nature referred to. I understand that in the case of wheat in bulk the charge for working out, weighing, and delivering overside into barges amounts to 1s. 9d. per ton. The rates for landing, reweighing, delivery, &c., vary so much, according to place and circumstances of discharge and the period which elapses between the final discharge of parcel and actual delivery, that I cannot give an average figure. The ton may be taken as equivalent to four and two-third quarters.

Inspection of Weights and Measures

MR. B. S. STRAUS (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he would state, in reference to Regulation 9 of the Board of Trade Weights and Measures Regulations, 1907, as to how many boroughs and county councils permission has been granted by the Board of Trade to extend the period of inspection from one to two years, either generally or with respect to some part of their area; and whether, in view of the necessity of protecting the interests of the poorer classes of the community, he will consider the advisability, if boroughs are undertaking annual inspection, of refusing to grant any relaxation to county councils in regard to general traders short of annual inspection in so far as towns having a population of 10,000 and upwards are concerned.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) Permission has been granted to thirty-one county councils and to ten town councils to extend in certain cases the period for inspection prescribed by the Weights and Measures Regulations. I quite agree with my hon. friend that an extension of the period of inspection is probably less likely to be required in towns than in country districts, and, while I am not prepared to apply any rigid numerical tests in such cases, I may say that a distinction between urban and rural parts of a county has in certain instances already been made.

Ambulance Certificates for Scottish Master Mariners and Mates.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if it is contemplated that the St. John Ambulance Association will continue to issue certificates of proficiency in first aid to Scottish candidates for examination as masters and mates at the conclusion of the present course.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The issue by the St. John Ambulance Association of certificates of proficiency in first aid to candidates for examination in Scotland for certificates as master or mate is not contemplated.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: To ask the President of the Board of Trade what is the present number of recognised lecturers under the St. Andrew Association in Scotland; and if their services are available at any ports besides Glasgow, Dundee, Leith, and Aberdeen.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) I am not aware what is the present number of recognised lecturers under the St. Andrew Ambulance Association in

Scotland. The ports in Scotland at which candidates for certificates as master or mate can be instructed in first aid are those mentioned in the Question.

The Walker Trustees and Knighthood Fees.

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the demand of the Walker Trustees of Edinburgh for a fee of £3 6s. 8d. from all knights bachelor of the United Kingdom; and, having regard to the fact that all fees for knighthood were abolished in 1902, will he state what steps he proposes to take, if any.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I am aware that the Walker Trustees, as representing the Heritable Usher of Scotland, have applied for the fees in question to those who have received the honour of knighthood; but the Treasury have been advised that the right of the trustees to such fees is confined to the cases of knighthoods conferred upon Scotsmen or upon Englishmen in Scotland.

Borough Councils and Registration of Births Act.

MR. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn): To ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether, in reference to The Registration of Births Act, 1907, he is aware that many metropolitan borough councils have passed resolutions adopting the Act, but have not yet obtained the approval of the Local Government Board to their putting the Act in force; and whether he can state how soon this approval will be given, so that the benefits of the Act may be obtained.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) Some questions affecting the administration of the Act generally have had to be considered in connection with these resolutions. The cases will now shortly all be disposed of.

SIR W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board, how many of the local authorities to whom The Notification of Births Act, 1907, is applicable have adopted that Act in England and Wales, Scotland and Ireland, respectively; and whether the Local Government Board has in any case taken action under Clause 3 of the Act, by putting it in force although it has not been adopted by the local authority.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) In England and Wales, with which only I am concerned in this matter, 113 local authorities have adopted the Act. The Answer to the second part of the Question is in the negative.

Education Authorities and the Provision of Meals.

SIR W. J. COLLINS: To ask the President of the Board of Education, how many local education authorities have taken action under Clause 1 of The Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1906, by aiding school canteen committees and, under Clause 3 of the same Act, by defraying the cost of food out of the rates, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I must refer my honourable friend to the Answer given to a similar Question on the 25th instant, of which I will send him a copy.

Labourers' Plots at Rathdrum and Registration of Title Act.

MR. MULDOON (Wicklow, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been called to the loss caused to the ratepayers of the Rathdrum Rural District by reason of the omission of the former solicitor to the council to register the plots of land acquired under the Labourers Acts under the Local Registration of Title Act; and whether he will favourably consider a provision being made in the forthcoming Land Bill to remedy the defect.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The matter referred to in the Question is at present the subject of legal proceedings between the council and their former solicitor, and the case is to be heard at the Wicklow Assizes on the 29th instant. While these proceedings are pending it does not seem desirable to consider the question of amending the Law as suggested.

Horses and Cars for Inspectors of Irish Schools.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether senior district inspectors of national schools in Ireland are allowed to use their own horses and cars when on official duty, and are paid a reasonable mileage rate therefor; whether junior inspectors, who do practically the same kind of work, have been refused the privilege; and, if so, will he explain the reason for this difference in treatment, especially as the Treasury loses thereby, hired horses and cars generally costing more than the mileage allowed to senior and district inspectors when using their own vehicles.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Commissioners of National Education inform me that both senior and junior inspectors of national schools are allowed to use their own horses and cars when travelling on official business, provided that the circumstances of the locality in which they are employed are such as to render this course desirable in the interests of efficient discharge of duty and economy in expenditure, the mileage rate sanctioned by the Treasury being allowed in such cases. Three members of the inspection staff, of whom one is a junior inspector, are at present authorised to use their own horses and cars.

Irish National School Inspectors.

Mr. PATRICK O'BRIEN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that there are at least three grades of inspectors of national schools; whether the senior inspectors have any jurisdiction over the district inspectors, and, if so, what is the exact date on which it was first conferred, and the precise terms of the regulation referring to the matter; and whether the district inspectors have any jurisdiction over the junior inspectors, and, if so, what is the exact date on which it was first conferred, and the precise terms of the regulation referring to the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Commissioners of National Education inform me that their inspection staff consists of two chief inspectors, twenty-two senior inspectors, thirty-five district inspectors, seventeen junior inspectors, together with three inspectors of special branches. The chief inspectors have the general direction of the work of the other inspectors. Each senior inspector is responsible for the work of the inspection circuit in his charge, and is bound to report neglect of duty, &c., on the part of district or junior inspectors working in his circuit. He can also call on his colleagues in the circuit to assist him in the inspection of certain schools in his particular charge, and in cases of urgency he may instruct one of the other inspectors of the circuit to perform work in a different section of the circuit from his own. The senior inspector is generally responsible for the sufficiency of the work performed by his colleagues in the circuit. There are two sections in each circuit, and the section inspector may be either a district inspector or a junior inspector. A section inspector is primarily and especially responsible for the work of his own section. Should a junior inspector be employed temporarily in assisting a section inspector, he must arrange his duties with the section inspector's concurrence, but there is no general jurisdiction exercised by the district inspectors over junior inspectors. The present arrangement of duties of senior, district, and junior inspectors was made in January 1907.

Alleged Threats to Tenants on Lord Shaftesbury's Carrickfergus Estate.

Mr. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware of the action of the Estates Commissioners in regard to certain judicial agricultural tenants on Lord Shaftesbury's Carrickfergus estate in issuing letters threatening that unless they purchased at a reduction of 15 per cent. on second-term rents, or with the bonus over 29¼ years' purchase, they would be excluded from the sales; that a first-term tenant called M'Kaig was also threatened unless he purchased at a reduction of 15 per cent; will he inquire whether the inspector recommended M'Kaig should pay the said price as well as the second-term tenants, and, if not, what did he recommend; is he aware that these tenants petitioned the Estates Commissioners early in January last protesting against the said action and asking for a definite time to consider their threat of exclusion, but that no answer has been received; will he state if this procedure was subscribed to by the three Commissioners unanimously, and, if so, what steps will be taken to remedy their administrative action, having regard to the financial situation involved in the working of the 1903 Land Act; if he will state when the purchase moneys are to be advanced on this estate, also the total number of tenants in the Greenisland and Woodburn districts, and of those how many are judicial agricultural and how many lease holders, and what number of each class have signed agreements to purchase and what number have not; if the Commissioners are facilitating the landlord in every way by proposing to grant the bonus on the minority of holdings in the Greenisland and Woodburn separate estate, while the majority of the tenants on this separate estate are being threatened with exclusion unless they pay the price named for holdings; if he is aware that the Greenisland tenants are higher rented than in the other districts where the tenants have purchased; and will he take steps to see that in future the interest of the tenants and the general taxpayers are safeguarded by having the bonus withheld where such indirect pressure is brought to bear on tenants to pay extreme prices.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have not issued any threatening letter in this matter, as suggested. They have informed the solicitors acting for the tenants, who have refused to purchase their holdings at the reduction of 15 per cent. agreed to by other judicial tenants on the estate, that they will not stop the sale of the rest of the estate, containing approximately sixty tenants, all of whom have signed purchase agreements, and whose holdings are either within the zones or afford security for the prices which the Commissioners propose to sanction. It would be contrary to practice to disclose the contents of inspector' reports, which are confidential documents. The Commissioners did, in January last, receive a letter from the solicitors for the tenants who had not agreed to purchase, asking, *inter alia*, for time for consideration. The solicitors were informed in reply that at any time these tenants came to terms with the vendor the Commissioners were prepared to declare the lands comprised in their holdings an estate. The conclusions communicated to the solicitors were those of the Commissioners, and were arrived at with due regard to the provisions of the Act. The purchase money of the holdings agreed to be purchased will be advanced as soon as the owner's title has been proved. The Commissioners are not able to identify the exact portion of the estate described in the Question as the Greenisland and Woodburn districts, but the tenants who have agreed to purchase form the large majority of the total number on this particular property which is known as the Carrickfergus property. The Commissioners are not aware whether or not the tenants referred to as the Greenisland tenants are more highly rented than the tenants in other districts. The Commissioners fully considered the entire matter before coming to a determination. No presure has been brought to bear by the Commissioners on the tenants. The Commissioners are prepared to deal with the matter at any time should the outstanding tenants agree with the owner on the terms of purchase.

Excess of Births over Deaths in Ireland.

MR. DUNDAS WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he can state what was the estimated excess of births over deaths in Ireland during the year 1907.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry*). The excess of births over deaths registered in Ireland during the year 1907 was 24,153. The figures, however, have not been finally revised.

Poor Law Relief in Ireland.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he will state the total amount expended in Poor Law relief in Ireland, and also the amounts expended respectively upon actual relief of distress in and out of workhouses, and upon the salaries and emoluments of officials.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) The following table gives the poor relief expenditure for twelve months ending 30th September, 1906, the latest period for which information is published, the main heads of expenditure being given:—

	£
Cost of indoor relief	456,474
District schools:—	
Cost of maintenance	7,918
Boarded-out children:—	
Cost of maintenance	16,600
Cost of outdoor relief	198,337
Salaries and rations of officers, amount of	204,307
Institutions for the blind, etc., and external hospitals:—	
Cost of maintenance of persons sent thereto by the guardians	21,175
Medicines, etc., in workhouses:—	
Cost	10,861
Other expenses	125,948
Total poor relief expenditure	£1,041,620

Slings of New Lee-Enfield Rifles.

Mr. COURTHOPE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that in the new converted long Lee-Enfield rifle there are no swivel-lugs in front of the magazine, and that consequently the sling cannot be used as an assistance to the firer; and whether, in view of the fact that the use of the sling improves the shooting of almost all users of the rifle, he will give directions that, in the case of all future conversions, the guard-screw in front of the magazine shall either carry a swivel or shall be interchangeable with the swivel-screw on the toe of the butt.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Placing a swivel-lug immediately in front of the magazine when converting the long Lee-Enfield rifle was carefully considered. The conclusion come to was that there was not sufficient advantage to be derived from so doing.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Ratings.

Mr. C. DUNCAN (Barrow-in-Furness): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty when are the new ratings of warrant shipwright, warrant rigger, warrant coxswain, warrant armourer, warrant steward, warrant writer, warrant cook, etc., to be added to the Navy List of Officers in His Majesty's Fleet.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Edmund Robertson, Dundee): The question of extending warrant rank to certain classes of naval ratings is engaging the attention of the Board of Admiralty, but as a decision has not been arrived at, I am not in a position to make any announcement on the subject.

Naval Mechanicians and Boy Artificers.

Mr. C. DUNCAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will consider the advisability of the abolition of training establishments for mechanician and boy artificers with a view to providing a source of economy for future Naval Estimates.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I answered a similar Question yesterday in regard to mechanicians, and the same answer applies also to boy artificers.

Mr. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): As this new system is very costly, whereas the one it superseded cost nothing will the right hon. Gentleman give the House an estimate of the cost?

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I said yesterday it was not possible to disengage the cost of this from other naval services.

Royal Naval Reserve Engine-Room Artificers.

Mr. C. DUNCAN: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty how many of the Royal Naval Reserve engine-room artificers now enrolled in the Fleet hold Board of Trade certificates as engineers; what position will these men occupy when called upon to serve with the new rating of mechanician; and is it proposed to refuse the services of volunteers who possess this qualification.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The answer to the first Question is sixty-five. In answer to the second Question, these men will occupy the same position as engine-room artificers. The reply to the last Question is in the negative.

Greenwich Hospital Pensions.

Mr. RIDSDALE (Brighton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether one of the attractions held out to Mr. S. H. Andrews, a naval pensioner, to re-engage when he did in 1872, was that, in addition to a time-expired pension, he would obtain a Greenwich Hospital pension of 5d. a day on attaining the age of fifty-five; whether such pension became due on 8th July, 1899, and has since been withheld; and whether, if the facts are as stated, he will have the grievance remedied.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The age pension can in no circumstances be claimed as a right, and awards must always be limited by the amount of the funds available. Mr. Andrews became eligible in July, 1899, and since then his application has been, and will be, considered with those of other applicants.

Cost oi Coal for the Navy.

Mr. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the amount of coal used by the Navy and its cost per ton on the average in 1906, as compared with the amount used and the cost per ton last year; what is the total additional cost incurred as a result of the rise in the price of coal; and whether the Government have given any consideration to the question of purchasing its own coal mines, with a view to obviating so large an increase in the coal bill of the Navy.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: It has never been the practice, and it is not considered desirable, to publish quantities and prices. The additional cost of coal in 1907 as compared with 1906 was £200,000. The question mentioned in the third paragraph was exhaustively considered in 1901, when the difficulties were found to be insuperable.

Coastguard Duties.

Mr. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, in cases where coastguards are to be abolished, if he can state what arrangements are to be made by the Government as to attendance upon the telegraphic and telephonic communications established for life-saving purposes, the erosion of the foreshores, notice as to vessels in distress or wrecks of same, and all such duties as are now performed by coastguards.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I propose to make a statement on this subject when introducing the Navy Estimates.

Duke of York's School.

Mr. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether there be any profit on the removal of the Duke of York's school from Chelsea to Dover; if so, what will be done with the funds so acquired; and whether it is proposed to reduce the number of boys in the school on its removal to Dover.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Haldane, Haddington): The first part of the Question cannot be answered until the disposal of the site has been settled. It is proposed to reduce the number of boys from 550 to 480 in view of the establishment of the Queen Victoria School in Scotland.

Commissions of the Line.

Mr. MACLEAN (Bath): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is intended in the future to grant commissions in the Line to officers of the Special Reserve and for the Territorial Army, after competitive examination, in a similar manner to those now existing in connection with the Militia and Imperial Yeomanry.

Mr. HALDANE: With regard to officers of the Special Reserve, the answer is in the affirmative. Whether the same privilege can be extended to officers of the Territorial Force is still under consideration.

Shannon Bridge Barracks.

Mr. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state the cost to the

Government in rent and maintenance of the grounds and disused military barracks at Shannon Bridge; how long it is since this barrack was in the occupation of the military; and whether, seeing that most of the barracks along the Shannon have been either surrendered to the landlord or sold, he will consider the advisability of acting similarly with regard to these buildings.

Mr. HALDANE: The site of the barracks which have been occupied by the Royal Irish Constabulary since 1884 is subject to a rent of £9 4s. 7½d. per annum. The rent and the cost of maintenance are paid by the Irish Government. The tenure of the barracks by the Royal Irish Constabulary is subject to the condition of re-occupation by the troops if necessary. In the circumstances it is not proposed to surrender or sell the barracks.

Army Horses.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he has any information of the number of horses fit for cavalry work in the United Kingdom, and how does the number of such animals compare with the needs of the Army; and whether any steps are contemplated for encouraging the breeding of horses suitable for the requirements of the Army in Ireland and in other parts of the United Kingdom.

Mr. HALDANE: Without a proper census it is impossible to give exact figures, but from information obtained it may be taken that approximately there are 150,000 riding horses in the United Kingdom. The total number, in addition to existing establishments, of riding horses required to mobilise the expeditionary force and Territorial Force is 59,796 of which 30,770 are required for cavalry alone. As regards the last part of the Question, the question is being fully considered by the Board of Agriculture in concert with the War Office.

Army Cyclists.

Mr. PARTINGTON (Derbyshire, High Peak): I beg to ask the Seecretary of State for War what is the organisation proposed for cyclists in the Territorial Army, and if it is proposed to form battalions; how many are to be formed, and what will be their establishment; and what establishment of cyclists the infantry which have cyclist companies or sections at present will be allowed to retain.

Mr. HALDANE: The General Staff, who attach great importance to having cyclists in the Territorial Force, are of opinion that greater efficiency can be obtained with cyclists when organised and trained as battalions, and not as heretofore in companies or sections forming part of infantry battalions. Cyclists will therefore be organised in battalions of 8 companies with a headquarter and machine-gun section. There will be 10 cyclists battalions, with an establishment of 22 officers and 532 other ranks, which includes a medical officer and 4 Territorial Medical Corps men. No cyclist companies or sections will be allowed to be retained in the Territorial infantry battalion.

South African Garrison.

Mr. GODFREY BARING (Isle of Wight,): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the four battalions to be withdrawn from South Africa will, on their return, be supernumerary to the expeditionary force as laid down in 1906.

Mr. HALDANE: When the four infantry battalions are withdrawn from South Africa one of them will be utilised to complete the expeditionary force. This will leave three battalions available to increase the infantry allotted to lines of communication for which two battalions only at present are detailed.

Punjab Agriculture.

Sir GEORGE SCOTT ROBERTSON (Bradford, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what is the area which has been brought under cultivation during the last ten years in the Punjab by means of irrigation; how many people have settled on this land, and what is the proportion of military pensioners amongst them; what is the revenue per cent. on the capital outlay; and what room is there for further similar reclamation of waste land in the Punjab.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): In the Irrigation Colonies of the Punjab, to which I presume the Question refers, nearly 2,000,000 acres of waste have been brought under cultivation and irrigation during the last ten years. The population of these colonies now approaches 1,000,000 persons. I am unable to give the proportion of military pensioners. The largest of these reclaimed districts, that of the Chenab Canal, gives a return of over 20 per cent. The others are less profitable. In the Punjab as a whole State-owned irrigation works give a return of nearly 11 per cent. The Irrigation Commission have estimated that, within the next twenty years, 2,600,000 more acres of waste in the Punjab may be reclaimed by canals.

Emigration from India.

SIR GEORGE SCOTT ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what is the number of people who emigrate from India annually, and how many of them are Mahomedans; what are the countries they chiefly go to; and is the field for emigration at the present time inconveniently restricted.

MR. MORLEY: Statistics are available only in respect of emigration under contract, which is regulated by the Indian Emigration Act: under this heading the number of emigrants in each of the last two years has been about 21,000. I cannot say what proportion were Mahomedans. The countries receiving most emigrants in recent years have been Natal and Demerara, which have averaged about 4,000 each. The field for emigration under contract to labour is restricted by the Government of India in the interests of the labourers; no restriction, so far as the Government of India, are concerned, is put upon other emigration, and I am not aware of the existence of inconvenience of the kind suggested in the Question.

Indian Whipping Act.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is now in a position to give any indication of the character or tendency of the Bill for the Amendment of the Whipping Act in India which is under consideration.

MR. MORLEY: Until the Bill has been introduced, which will be very shortly, I am unable to make any statement.

Bengal Police Applicants.

SIR H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the notification in the *Eastern Bengal and Assam Gazette* of 22nd January, in which Lieutenant D. Cameron, 7th Rajputs, and Lieutenant W. H. Hodgson, 119th Infantry, are appointed to the first grade of assistant superintendents of police; whether during the past forty years and more, no military officer has been appointed to the Bengal police; what are the reasons for this suspension of the ordinary rules of recruitment for the higher ranks of the Indian police service; and whether the regulations providing that vacancies are to be filled up by competition in England and India are no longer in force in Eastern Bengal and Assam.

MR. MORLEY: In October last, I sanctioned the appointment of three military officers to the Police of Eastern Bengal and Assam, the reason for this exceptional measure being the disturbed condition of the country and the necessity for bringing the Police Establishment at once up to its full strength. The ordinary methods of recruitment remain nevertheless in force for Eastern Bengal and Assam, as well as for other parts of India.

Handcuffing of Indian Political Prisoners.

SIR H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has issued orders prohibiting the practice of handcuffing political prisoners in India while under trial; and whether he will take into consideration the further question of the treatment of political prisoners after conviction, and direct that they should not be classed with felons and criminals, but treated as misdemeanants.

Mr. MORLEY: I have asked the Government of India to give instructions that prisoners under trial should not be handcuffed unless there is a reasonable expectation that they will use violence, or that an attempt will be made to rescue them. I will consider the question of treatment after conviction; but, as the hon. Member is aware, the only distinction known to Indian law is that between simple and rigorous imprisonment.

The Zakka Khel.

Mr. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Government of India in any way had an agreement with the Zakka Khel, giving subsidies to sustain a certain fighting force in the form of militia on the frontier, or for any other purpose; and, if so, what was the annual amount of such subsidies, through whom paid, and whether the last payment was made in full.

Mr. MORLEY: A subsidy of £1,360 per annum was granted in 1898 to the Zakka Khel, but not in consideration of any military service. The subsidy is paid direct to the tribe. In June, 1907, in view of the large amount of unpaid fines for past outrages outstanding against the tribe, it was decided to withhold the subsidy.

Mr. O'GRADY: Am I to understand that the subsidy was not paid in full, and that, the tribe taking the matter into their own hands, made forays, and that that was the real cause of this frontier war?

Mr. MORLEY: My hon. friend, if I may say so with perfect courtesy, is wholly mistaken. There is no connection whatever between the subsidy and the frontier war.

Bombay Riots.

Mr. O'GRADY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the riot that occurred between two rival sects of Mahomedans at Bombay; whether he can state the actual number of police injured, the number of rioters killed and injured, and the number of non-rioters killed and injured; by whose authority did European officers unconnected with the police fire on the rioters; and whether any steps were taken to safeguard ordinary pedestrians from the effects of firing by police and European officers.

Mr. MORLEY: I have no knowledge of any rioting at Lucknow. I presume the hon. Member had in mind the rioting reported from Bombay on 13th February. Eight police were wounded, three very seriously, while five rioters were killed and five are known to have been wounded. One non-rioter looking on from a house was killed by a stray bullet. No European officer unconnected with the police was present. The police officers who used revolvers did so by order of the Commissioner of Police. As for safeguarding ordinary pedestrians, I hardly see how it is to be expected in the confusion of an angry riot.

Mr. Churchill's African Tour.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, if the Reports on his recent visit to African Colonies will be laid upon the Table.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.): Sir, I have submitted to the Secretary of State a series of reports and communications upon various public matters with which I had an opportunity of becoming personally acquainted in Malta, Cyprus, Northern Somaliland, British East Africa, and Uganda. These reports must be regarded as confidential minutes for the information of my noble friend and certainly could not be published in any form.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: May I ask, if we are not to have the benefit of these reports in any shape or form, and whether the official reports are those which are now appearing in the *Strand Magazine?*

MR. CHURCHILL: The reports which I have furnished are regarded as confidential, and will not be published in any form.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I shall raise this question again.

Disturbances in British East Africa.

SIR GEORGE SCOTT ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, how many of the natives of British East Africa were killed or wounded in the late disturbances; and were there any casualties amongst the King's African Rifles, who were engaged in suppressing them.

MR. CHURCHILL: No casualties in the King's African Rifles have been reported in the course of the measures taken for the repression of disorder in the Kisii district. Besides Mr. Northcote who was wounded, two policemen and eleven porters were massacred on the occasion of the outbreak, and one friendly native has since been wounded. It is not possible to state with exactness what the losses of the Kisii tribesmen were, as the fighting took place in dense jungle and broken ground. I have seen an estimate which places their loss as high as 160 killed and wounded; but I should think that such a figure is very likely an over estimate. A political officer was on the spot during the operations, and the moment that the first overtures of submission were made by the tribe, all military measures were stopped, and the governor reports that a very good understanding has now been reached. A very large number of cattle were captured by the troops from the Kisii during the operations. These it is proposed to restore to the tribe gradually during the next few months as the pacification of the district proceeds, and also in return for the making of roads by the tribesmen under their tribal chiefs, which will add to the future security and accessibility of the country.

Dinizulu's Trial.

MR. ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether, having regard to the fact that the telegram from Mr. Colenso to Dinizulu, urging him to surrender and assured him of fair trial and assistance in his defence, was transmitted through the Colonial Office, any specific steps have been taken by that Department to secure these ends; and, if so, what is their nature.

MR. CHURCHILL asked for a further postponement as the Governor of Natal was still on tour, and until his return there could be no opportunity of conferring with him.

Indians in British East Africa.

SIR GEORGE SCOTT ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies how many of His Majesty's Indian subjects are counted in the estimate of the native population of British East Africa; how many of them are soldiers and police; how many are farmers, agricultural labourers, or coolies; and how many are traders or land speculators.

MR. CHURCHILL: I have no exact figures of the number of British Indians in the East Africa Protectorate, but the number of alien and resident strangers exclusive of Europeans, was given in the Blue-book for the year 1905–1906 as 10,763. I have no information in regard to the number of Indians employed in the various capacities mentioned, except that there are no Indian soldiers in East Africa, though in Uganda there are 200 Indian troops.

Sir Harry Maclean.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if Kaid Maclean, when released by the money provided by the Government, was informed that for the future the Government considered itself free from any responsibility with regard to him.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): No communication of this nature was made to Kaid Maclean on his release; but His Majesty's Government do not necessarily admit any responsibility in any such cases, and reserve the right to deal with each according to circumstances.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if Kaid Maclean is a British subject, seeing that he has been for many years past in the service of the Sultan of Morocco.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Kaid Maclean has not forfeited his British nationality by having taken service under the Sultan of Morocco.

MR. FELL: But is the responsibility of the Government towards him the same as in the case of any other British subject?

SIR EDWARD GREY: He has not, I say, forfeited his British nationality.

Mr. Abbott's Ransom.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when the £9,000, part of the ransom paid for Mr. Abbott's release, was recovered from the brigands; and when it got into the hands of the Ottoman Government.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The brigands were captured in August last, and part of the money which had been paid as ransom was then recovered. In December the Court which sentenced the prisoners, ordered that the money recovered should be paid into the Treasury until it should be decided who was the proper person to receive it. Sir N. O'Conor has now been instructed to request that it may be paid to His Majesty's Government forthwith.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the £9,000, more or less, recovered by the Turkish Government from brigands for the ransom of the British subject, Mr. Abbott, has been handed over to the British Government, or whether it is still retained by the Turks; and, if so, will he press for the repayment of this sum as an instalment to the British Government.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I have, at present, nothing to add to the answer I have just given to the hon. Member for Great Yarmouth. As soon as I hear from Constantinople, I shall be ready to give the information.

Privileged Cabs.

MR. WILES (Islington, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, having regard to the petitions sent to him signed by a number of the inhabitants, as well as the local cab-drivers of the district, he will consider the advisability of opening to all cab-drivers Wimbledon Station and the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway side of Clapham Junction.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): These questions are under consideration, but I am not yet in a position to give a definite reply.

Census and Franchise.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state approximately the adult male population of the United Kingdom at the end of 1905; the number of persons on the Parliamentary registers of the United Kingdom on 1st January, 1906;

and the number of persons who voted at the general election, 1906.

MR. GLADSTONE: The figures will be found in the following table:

	England and Wales.	Scotland.	Ireland.	United Kingdom.
Estimated adult male population on 1st January, 1906	9,023,877	1,205,834	1,213,466	11,443,177
Number of persons on the Parliamentary registers for 1906	5,824,884	750,401	691,423	7,266,708
Number of persons on the Parliamentary registers for constituencies in which there were contests at the General Election, 1906	5,442,774	742,937	164,049	6,349,760
Number of persons who voted at the General Election, 1906	4,880,073	585,691	135,282	5,601,046

Eight Hours (Mines) Bill.

MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can give any indication as to the date or stage of the session when the Second Reading of the Eight Hours (Mines) Bill will be taken.

MR. GLADSTONE: I hope not later than the end of next month.

Convent Laundries.

MR. BEAUMONT (Sussex, Eastbourne): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that cases of cruelty and sweating have been proved to be carried on in certain religious institutions recently expelled from France; whether he can inform the House what occupations are carried on by the inmates of these institutions since they have settled in this country; and whether the wages paid them in any way approach the rate of trade union wages; and, if not, what steps he proposes to take.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am aware of the reports which appeared some years ago in the Press on this subject. I am not in possession of exact information as to the occupations carried on in institutions belonging to the Order mentioned in those reports, but I believe both laundry work and needlework are done. I have no information as to the wages paid, if any. All industrial work by inmates of charitable institutions is now brought under regulation by the Factory Act of last year. I am not proposing to take any further steps.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) asked as to a letter written by a bishop declaring that the girls in these institutions now domiciled in England worked longer hours than was allowed by the civil law.

MR. GLADSTONE asked to be supplied with a copy of the paper.

Factory Inspection.

MR. H. J. TENNANT (Berwickshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he proposes to make any increase in the staff of the Factory Department, either of His Majesty's inspectors, His Majesty's women inspectors, or His Majesty's inspectors' assistants; if increases are contemplated in any of these branches of his Department; and whether the general staff of the Home Office will be strengthened.

MR. GLADSTONE: During the autumn I made careful inquiry into the work of the Factory Department, and came to the conclusion that a strong case was made out for strengthening considerably both the organisation and the inspecting staff of the Department. A scheme was accordingly prepared and submitted to the Treasury, which, subject to a few modifications, has now received their assent. I cannot within the limits of this Answer enter into the details of the scheme, but it involves the following very substantial additions to the headquarters and general inspecting staff during the next financial year. The headquarters staff will be strengthened by the addition of a second deputy chief inspector and a second medical inspector; the general inspecting staff by a superintending inspector, sixteen inspectors, eleven inspectors' assistants, and five lady inspectors. Further provision is also made for clerical assistance both at headquarters and in certain districts where the clerical work is heavy. At the same time I have had under consideration the industrial work of the Home Office proper, and decided that, in view of its great growth, the branch of the office which deals with this work should as soon as possible be relieved of the other important duties which are now assigned to it, and should devote itself exclusively to administration of industrial law and the study of industrial questions. The Treasury have agreed to an addition to the staff to enable this to be done.

MR. H. J. TENNANT: Has any decision been come to as to the new part of the Bill relating to religious institutions?

MR. GLADSTONE: I cannot add anything to what I said last year. A great deal depends on the wishes of the institutions themselves.

Insurance Gambling.

MR. JOHN RUTHERFORD (Lancashire, Darwen): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the remarks of His Honour Judge Hans Hamilton, at the Blackburn County Court, on Monday, 10th February, 1908, with regard to the gambling in human lives, also remarks of the same Judge on the same subject in the Preston Court, on 22nd October, 1907; whether, in view of the amount of business done by some assurance companies in a class of policy rendered illegal by an Act of George III., c. 14, passed some 125 years ago, upon lives where one person insuring has no insurable interest in the person insured; and whether he will consider the desirability of advising His Majesty to appoint a Royal Commission, in the interests of the industrial classes, to inquire into the way life insurance business is being carried on.

MR. GLADSTONE: My attention had not been called to these remarks until the hon. Member kindly sent me a copy of them. I will consider the matter, and communicate upon it with the Treasury, which is the Department primarily concerned.

Colliery Enginemen's Hours of Labour.

MR. SNOWDEN (Blackburn): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if his attention has been called to the case of Henry Jenkinson, a colliery engineman, who was fined £1 and costs at the Rotherham police court, on the 17th February, for being asleep at his post, in contravention of Special Rule 63, and to the statement of Jenkinson that he had been twenty-eight hours on duty; and whether he will cause inquiry to be made into the accuracy of this statement, and, if it be found to be correct, will he take steps, by legislation or otherwise, to prevent enginemen being worked such long hours without relief.

MR. GLADSTONE: I have made inquiry, and I find that the statement as to Jenkinson's employment is incorrect. He had been employed for nine or ten hours in the morning, then had a rest of six hours, and the offence took place an hour or two after he came back to special duty at 9.45 p.m. He has now admitted that his statement was false, and has apologised. Jenkinson was an underground worker, working a haulage, not a winding, engine, and the Eight Hours Bill, which I have introduced, would apply to him. Quite apart from this case my attention has been drawn to the long hours worked in many cases by colliery enginemen, and I have specially referred the matter to the Royal Commission.

Usworth Colliery Accident.

MR. J. W. TAYLOR (Durham, Chester-le-Street): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been drawn to a case of overwinding at Usworth colliery, in the county of Durham, whereby one man was thrown down the pit and killed and several others injured; whether his attention has been drawn to an act of bravery by the onsetter, Moses Howarth, who, by his presence of mind and at great risk, prevented the descending cage, which was full of men, from being thrown into the sump; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

MR. GLADSTONE: As regards the first part of the Question, I obtained a report of the facts as soon as the hon. Member's notice appeared on the Paper. As regards the second part, whenever a case of special personal gallantry in saving, or attempting to save, life, in mines is reported to me, I will give it my full and careful consideration. I submit, however, to my hon. friend that it would not be right for me to answer Questions in this House as to whether a recommendation should, or should not, be made to His Majesty in such a matter.

Imprisonment for Debt.

MR. MACLEAN (Bath): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether his attention has been drawn to the remarks of Judge Amphlett, K.C., at Birmingham, on Monday last, condemning the imprisonment of a lad of sixteen for a debt of 16s. in respect of clothes; and whether he can inform the House if the hope held out by the Lord Chancellor of legislation to remedy the existing evils in connection with imprisonment for debt will be fulfilled this session.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether his attention has been called to the statement made by Judge Amphlett at the Birmingham County Court on Monday, that he had found a youth of sixteen, who had been earning 12s. or 14s. a week in a cycle factory, in prison at Worcester for a debt of 16s., in respect of an order given to a traveller for clothes; and can he say when it is intended to appoint the projected Committee to consider the existing law of imprisonment for debt.

MR. GLADSTONE: My attention had not been previously called to the case mentioned, but as I have already stated in answer to a Question in this House, the Government have decided upon the appointment of a Select Committee on the Imprisonment of Debtors, and this Committee will be appointed in a few days. Pending the Report of that Committee I cannot make any statement as to legislation.

Children Bill.

MR. H. J. TENNANT asked the Home Secretary when the Second Reading of the Children Bill would be taken.

MR. GLADSTONE: I am afraid I cannot say, but I hope to secure an early opportunity for it.

Ships' Drill with Life Saving Apparatus.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state whether boat drill and testing of life-saving apparatus is fairly ensured by the provision that such proceedings shall be officially logged, or whether there is any reason to believe that on certain ships the injunction is ignored.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport): I would remind my hon. friend that the section of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1906 to which he refers only came into operation on 1st June last. At present I can only say that I have every reason to think that it is working well and will have a good effect, but the matter is being most carefully watched.

Dues on Pleasure Yachts.

MR. SUMMERBELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if the owners of pleasure yachts pay no lighthouse, port, or harbour dues, no fees on engaging or discharging men, that they are allowed to have their stores of dutiable goods free of duty, and that merchant vessels only have the latter privilege in restricted measure, and on over-sea voyages; and, if so, would he state whether it is the intention of the Government to restrict in any way the special privileges granted to owners of yachts.

Mr. KEARLEY: Pleasure yachts, unless they are under five tons register, pay light dues of 1s. per ton per annum, and also port and harbour dues, except at a few ports where they are exempted by special Act or otherwise. No engagement or discharge fees are charged to any yacht or other vessel in the United Kingdom. Any such fee chargeable abroad is imposed upon all vessels alike. Owners of pleasure yachts are not allowed to ship dutiable stores free of duty unless the yachts are proceeding on oversea voyages, and such stores may only be shipped then under exactly the same conditions and restrictions as apply in the case of merchant vessels. The use of dutiable stores free of duty in British waters is only allowed in the case of foreign yachts.

Motor Car Import Statistics.

Mr. HORNIMAN (Chelsea): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether motor cars leaving or entering Channel and other ports for purposes of private travel appear as though exported and imported, each car appearing under both headings; and, if so, whether means can be taken to render such Returns more accurate by differentiating such cars from true exports and imports, so as to prevent the inaccurate inflation of the same.

Mr. KEARLEY: Motor cars taken abroad for touring or racing purposes and subsequently brought back to the United Kingdom are not included in the export or import statistics.

Opium Duties.

Sir H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what is the amount of duty, adjusted in sterling figures, levied by the Customs authorities on every chest of opium exported from India at the ports of the following countries where opium is consumed in the Far East, viz.: Ceylon, Siam, Cochin China, Straits Settlements, Netherlands, India, Natunas Islands, Sarawak, Labuan, the Philippines, Japan, and China.

Mr. KEARLEY: My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. Opium is free of duty in Siam, the Straits Settlements, Sarawak and Labuan. Its importation is prohibited in Cochin China, and, except so far as regards Government importations, in Japan. The duties levied in the other places mentioned are as follows: Ceylon, 5s. 4d. per lb.; Netherlands India, 3s. 5d. per lb.; the Philippines, 7s. 7d. per lb. on crude opium, 9s. 6d. per lb. on opium manufactured or prepared; China, 2s. 7d. per lb. After 1st March next, the importation of opium into the Philippines, except by the Government and for medicinal purposes, will be prohibited. The Board of Trade have no information as regards the Natunas Islands, but presumably the duty would be the same as that stated for Netherlands India. I understand that a chest of Indian opium weighs about 140 lbs.

Unemployed Masons in London.

Mr. T. F. RICHARDS (Wolverhampton, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board, whether he is aware that 30 per cent. of the members of the Operative Stone Masons Society are unemployed in London alone; and whether he can hold out any hope that the Government will facilitate the passage of the Unemployed Workmen Bill down for Second Reading on 13th March.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. John Burns, Battersea): The society referred to does not furnish the Board of Trade with figures as to the extent of unemployment amongst its members, and I am not in possession of particulars on the subject. As regards the latter part of the Question, I do not think I can say anything in anticipation of the debate which will take place on the Second Reading of the Bill.

London Poor Law Infirmaries.

Mr. O'GRADY: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government

Board whether he is aware that in the two Poor Law infirmaries at Southwark and Camberwell the accommodation is overtaxed, at the Newington infirmary 859 patients having to share accommodation provided for 786, and at Camberwell 862 are crowded into wards having accommodation only for 819; and, if so, whether, having regard to the fact that these inmates are ailing mainly from lack of food arising from unemployment, it is the intention of the Government to give facilities for the passing of the Unemployed Workmen Bill down for Second Reading on 13th March.

I beg also to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware that there is not room for another male inmate in any of the London workhouses without exceeding the certified number, the overcrowding on the men's side of the workhouses of Christchurch, St. George's, Newington, Renfrew Road, and Prince's Road, amounting to 454; whether this state of overcrowding is due to unemployment; and whether it is the intention of the Government to give facilities for the passing of the Unemployed Workmen Bill down for Second Reading on 13th March.

I beg further to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he is aware of the overcrowding in the Lambeth, Southwark, and Camberwell unions, there being 435 in the workhouses above the certified number for which accommodation is provided; whether, in addition to this overcrowding, the three unions named have 672 persons boarded out or temporarily accommodated in other unions; whether this overcrowding and increase of the recipients of pauper relief is due to unemployment; and, if so, whether it is the intention of the Government to give facilities for the passing of the Unemployed Workmen Bill down for Second Reading on 13th March.

MR. JOHN BURNS: I regret to say that there is some overcrowding in the particular workhouses and infirmaries mentioned in these Questions, although the numbers supplied to me do not in all cases agree with those given by my hon. friend. I may, however, state that, taking together all the workhouses and infirmaries under the London boards of guardians, there are vacant beds for upwards of 900 inmates and some of these would be available for males. As regards the Unemployed Workmen Bill, I would refer to the Answer I have just given to the Question put by my hon. friend the Member for West Wolverhampton.

Post Office Sanatoria.

MR. ALDEN: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, whether any financial or other support has been given by his Department to the voluntary scheme which is to provide sanatoria for the Post Office employees suffering from consumption.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.; for Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON): There is no fund at the disposal of my right hon. friend's Department out of which regular financial support could be given to the voluntary scheme referred to by the hon. Member. But he has sanctioned contributions to the building fund of the sanatorium from the accumulated "Fine" funds at certain post offices. The scheme has his sympathy and support, and assistance is afforded to it by means of an arrangement for facilitating the collection of subscriptions of members by deductions from their official salaries, and in other ways.

Postal Rates to Shanghai.

MR. HOLT (Northumberland, Hexham): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, seeing that commercial papers are sent to Shanghai by French and German packets at an estimated cost of 4s. 3d. and 4s. 10d. per pound respectively, and that the estimated cost of forwarding *via* Siberia, which saves about ten days in transit, is 6s. 8d. per pound, he will allow commercial papers to be forwarded *via* Siberia subject to a payment of postage of 50 per cent. higher than that charged on commercial papers forwarded by French and German packets.

CAPTAIN NORTON: The rates which the hon. Member quotes do not refer to commercial papers, but solely to letters and postcards. My right hon. friend sees strong objections to adopting a special rate and so abandoning the uniformity of charge which at present exists in the postal union. He proposes, therefore, to endeavour to secure a reduction in the very high charges made by the East of China Railway Company for the use of the Siberian route.

Lord Rosebery and Child Patriotism.

CAPTAIN J. CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether his attention has been drawn to the action of Lord Rosebery in presenting a number of Union Jacks to young children attending public elementary schools, and to the speech he made on that occasion; and whether he will consider the advisability of having the speech printed and issued by his board to all public elementary schools in the United Kingdom, with a view to promoting and encouraging a patriotic sentiment in the youth of the country.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): No, Sir.

CAPTAIN J. CRAIG: Has the right hon. Gentleman read the inspiriting words of the noble Lord?

MR. MCKENNA: Yes, Sir.

Teachers' Salaries.

MR. F. E. SMITH (Liverpool, Walton): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether the Code contains any conditions as to the rate of salaries payable by a local authority to teachers in public elementary schools; whether he proposes to insert any such conditions in the Code; whether, in the absence of any such conditions in the Code, the requirement of the Education Bill, that voluntary schools which contract out of the national system shall satisfy the conditions of grant imposed upon public elementary schools, will have any application to the payment of equal or sufficient rates of salary to teachers in voluntary schools.

MR. MCKENNA: The Code does not prescribe any conditions as to the rates of salary payable to teachers, except that the salary provided for by the teacher's agreement must not be subject to variation according to the amount of grant payable in respect of the school. I do not propose to insert any new conditions on this point, and having regard to the wide divergence in the scale of salary for teachers, even of the same grade, in different parts of the country, it would be impossible for the Board to prescribe equality or to determine as to the efficiency of salaries. The Board's duty is to see that a proper standard of efficiency is reached, as a condition of the payment of Exchequer grants.

Non-Provided Schools in Single School Areas.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education what is the total number of non-provided schools in England and Wales in single-school areas; which of them are held by trustees upon tight trusts; and to what denominations such schools belong.

MR. MCKENNA: I am preparing a Return, which will shortly be laid before Parliament, giving the names of all schools in single-school parishes as defined in Clause 3 (6) of the Education Bill. So far as is possible, the Return will indicate the nature of the religious instruction at present given in the school, and whether the school is held on "limited trusts" as defined by the Bill.

Welsh Agricultural Inspection.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether it is proposed to make Welsh a subject for appointment to the post of agricultural inspector in Wales.

THE TREASURER OF THE HOUSEHOLD (Sir EDWARD STRACHEY, Somerset, S.): We fully recognise the advantage of having in our service a certain number of inspectors who speak Welsh, and they will naturally be employed in Wales as far as practicable. But the amount and character of the work to be done fluctuates considerably, and it is not possible to lay down any hard and fast rule on the subject. I may say that two appointments of Welsh-speaking inspectors have recently been made.

Sale of Diseased Cattle at Glasgow.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he is aware that cattle dying of tuberculous and other diseases are often disposed for public sale in public yards; that, out of 2,967 carcases condemned in Glasgow as being diseased and unfit for food, not one was condemned alive; and whether, in view of the danger to life, especially infant life, involved in the spread of disease by meat and milk, he will consider the question of scheduling tuberculosis as a contagious and infectious disease.

Sir EDWARD STRACHEY: Representations have from time to time been made to us to the effect indicated in the first part of the Question, and I believe that the figures cited by my hon. friend are correct. But the exposure for sale of an animal which is diseased or unfit for the food of man, is an offence under the Public Health Acts which falls to be dealt with by the central and local authorities under those Acts and not by the Board of Agriculture. We have, therefore, no official information on the subject. The suggestion that tuberculosis should be dealt with under the Diseases of Animals Acts has frequently been considered, but it has never hitherto been found feasible to give effect to it. My noble friend is, however, in communication with my right hon. friend, the President of the Local Government Board, on the subject.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: Will the right hon. Gentleman suggest to the Local Government Board that the police might well be employed in looking to this matter?

The Cunard Subsidies.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury what are the advantages received by the nation in return for the payment of £150,000 annually as subsidy to the Cunard Line for the steamers "Lusitania" and "Mauretania"; for how long a time is this arrangement to continue; and is it possible for the nation to cease making these payments.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury): As regards the first part of my hon. friend's Question I must refer him to the agreement made between His Majesty's late Government and the Cunard Steam Ship Company in 1903, and approved by the House of Commons on 12th August of that year (cd. 1703). The Agreement is expressed to run for twenty years from the date of the first sailing of the "Mauretania." So long as the terms of the Agreement are complied with by the company, His Majesty's Government are, of course, bound by its provisions.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): How much money has been lent or advanced to the Cunard Company for the purposes of these ships?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: I think the whole amount provided for under the Agreement.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: How much was it?

Mr. RUNCIMAN asked for notice.

Mr. SUMMERBELL was understood to ask if, in view of the immense amount of the subsidy, the company would be called upon to run these as British ships from British ports.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: I do not see how that arises out of the Question on the Paper.

Mr. HOLT asked if the company had satisfied the requirements of the Government in regard to these steamers?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: No final settlement has been arrived at.

County Magistrates.

Mr. HENRY (Shropshire, Wellington): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will give, approximately, the number of county magistrates appointed last year, who would not have been eligible to such appointment previous to the passing of the Act of 1906 abolishing the property qualification.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Sir W. ROBSON, South Shields) said he was afraid it would be very difficult for him to get this information; it would be difficult to ask magistrates for details of their personal property, and private means, and if he did ask he was not quite sure the answer would be given.

MR. HENRY: But before this Act came into force were they not compelled to state their qualification?

SIR W. ROBSON: Yes, but there is no such requirement now, and I do not know how such a question would be received by the gentleman appointed.

British South Africa Company.

MR. B. S. STRAUS (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether he is aware that the British South Africa (Chartered) Company is about to issue fresh capital on purely gambling terms, *i.e.*, they are offering to their shareholders 1,000,000 shares of £1 each at par, notwithstanding that their present market value is about 15s. only, but those taking these shares are to be entitled to purchase a like number of shares in two years' time at par and again a similar number at the same price in 1912, which simply means a call on such shares for four years at par; whether he can put a stop to such an apparent gambling transaction, seeing that the company holds a charter from the Government; and, if this does not come under the heading of a lottery or gamble, will he suggest legislation to prevent this kind of thing occurring in the future.

SIR W. ROBSON was understood to say that the transaction did not appear to come within the Gaming Act, though it involved some degree of risk to the public in holding out the hope of a contingent profit. Speculation, deplorable though it might be, was not necessarily the same thing as gaming according to the Acts dealing with that practice; otherwise many useful commercial transactions would be affected.

MR. BOTTOMLEY asked whether, having regard to the financial methods adopted by the Chartered Company, the hon. and learned Gentleman would consider the propriety of advising a cancellation of the concession and of placing the Government of Rhodesia under some control free from Stock Exchange influence.

SIR W. ROBSON said that he had no knowledge of the methods adopted by the company.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: I am surprised at that.

Perjury in the Birmingham County Court.

MR. T. F. RICHARDS: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether his attention has been called to the statement made by His Honour Judge Bray in saying good-bye to the bar and solicitors at the County Court, Birmingham, recently, in which he said that the amount of perjury committed in the court was deplorable, and previous Judges had complained of it, and he wanted to place it on record that it still prevailed; and whether he intends taking any action in the matter.

SIR W. ROBSON was understood to reply that if any cases of perjury were brought under the notice of the Public Prosecutor they would be considered, but he was afraid he could give no general undertaking as to perjury.

Motor Speed Limits.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he can state how many applications for a speed limit on motors have been received from local authorities; how many have been granted; and how many declined.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): Applications for a speed limit have been received since the Act came into force on 1st January, 1904, from seventy-five local authorities, and in twenty-eight cases orders have been made, while in twenty-seven cases the application has been refused, withdrawn, or allowed to lapse, and twenty cases are at present under consideration.

Illegal Trawling in the Moray Firth.

MR. SUTHERLAND (Elgin Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, whether it was owing to insufficient evidence or on other grounds that, out of nineteen vessels reported from July, 1907, to the end of January this year for illegal trawling in the Moray Firth, only one prosecution took place.

MR. SINCLAIR: The reason why prosecution has not followed detection of trawlers engaged in fishing in the Moray Firth is in many instances that the persons so engaged were not British subjects.

Convict Joseph Hume.

MR. ANNAN BRYCE (Inverness Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland in connection with the case of Joseph Hume, sentenced to be executed at Inverness on Wednesday next:—(1) Whether he has received from Inverness a petition for reprieve signed by nearly 4,000 persons—or a sixth of the population—including many prominent citizens. (2) Whether the case for the Crown required that the murder, if committed by Joseph Hume, must have been committed on the evening of 24th September, while several witnesses deposed to their belief in having seen the murdered man on the following day; (3) Whether it is true that, although the verdict was said to be unanimous, the jury were absent from court for a whole hour, whether this long absence was due to some of them having held out for a recommendation to mercy, and only given way on an assurance from the foreman that there was no likelihood of a death sentence being carried out; and (4) Whether the evidence having been entirely circumstantial, he is disposed to give favourable consideration to the petition in view of the recent notorious case where reprieve was granted although the crime had been committed in the presence of witnesses.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am aware of the strong public interest which this case has aroused; and I can assure my hon. friend that it is now under anxious consideration. The petition to which he refers has been received. I am unable to follow my hon. friend into a discussion of the remaining points now raised by him.

Mullingar Labourers' Cottages.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland if he is aware that three men named respectively Hugh Duck, Mike Donnelly, and Michael Coleman, occupiers of labourers' cottages near Rathowen, in the Mullingar Union, under the Labourers Acts, have been served with notices to quit by the Mullingar Rural Council, the offence charged being that they have continued to work for two owners of property who have incurred unpopularity by refusing to sell their land on terms demanded; and if the Local Government Board are prepared to sanction such action of the rural council.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): I am informed that notices to quit have been served by the Mullingar Rural District Council upon the three men mentioned in the Question, but I have no information as to the grounds of the action of the council other than a newspaper statement that the council did not feel bound to provide cottages for the servants of landlords or their agents. The tenancies of the labourers' cottages referred to are regulated by agreements which enable the council to terminate them after due notice. The Local Government Board have no power to interfere with the action of the council in the matter.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): Is it not the fact that proceedings have been taken against these men because one of them has not been in occupation of the house for a considerable time, another has not cultivated the plot of land allotted to him, and the third is not an agricultural labourer at all?

MR. CHERRY: I have no information.

MR. MOORE: Will the right hon. Gentleman inquire the reason for this action by a so-called public body? Is it not part of a general conspiracy to boycott these men and turn them out on the roadside? Will he take steps to protect them?

Mr. CHERRY: If any evidence is brought before me showing breach of the criminal law I will prosecute.

Captain J. CRAIG: Is it necessary for the tenant of one of these cottages to cultivate the ground as a condition of occupation?

Mr. CHERRY: I really do not know what the conditions imposed by the guardians are.

Galway County Inspector's Report.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, when, in accordance with his undertaking, the Report for the East Riding of Galway, made by the county inspector in the month of October last, will be in the hands of Members.

Mr. CHERRY: The Report in question will be laid upon the Table to-morrow. I should state that, when giving the undertaking referred to in the Question, I omitted to notice that a portion of the Report was of a strictly confidential nature, which cannot be made public without injury to the public service. This portion I propose to omit from the copy laid.

Royal Irish Constabulary.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Government has come to a decision with regard to the recommendations of the Committee appointed in 1901 to inquire into the position of the Royal Irish Constabulary requiring legislation, and more particularly those dealing with augmentation of pay by length of service.

Mr. CHERRY: Yes, Sir, and it is the intention of the Government to introduce legislation on the subject, at the earliest possible opportunity.

Irish School Building Grant.

Mr. JOHN O'CONNOR, (Kildare, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he state what steps have been taken to use the £40,000 per annum for three years granted in respect of school buildings in Ireland; in how many cases have new school-houses been approved by the Commissioners, and in how many have they advanced money, and, if any, how much; in how many cases have managers submitted special plans, and in how many cases have the Board of Works submitted special plans; has there been any delay in the consideration of the former and in the preparation of the latter; and, if so, what is the cause of the delay; and whether, if there are any arrears in prospective school building, steps will be immediately taken to clear off the same.

Mr. CHERRY: Since the month of April last, when a settlement was arrived at upon the general questions affecting school buildings and grants, new plans for seventeen types of schools and the specifications thereof have been settled between the Commissioners of National Education and the Board of Works. The Commissioners have provisionally approved of the erection of new school-houses in 266 cases, and have sanctioned grants to the amount of £26,571 in fifty-six of these cases. In these latter cases leases of the sites have to be prepared and executed before advances can be made, and the work is being proceeded with as rapidly as possible. The advances are made by the Board of Works by instalments as the work of building proceeds. Since 1st April advances have been made in eighty-three cases, the amount advanced being £3,981. In fifty-four cases special plans have been submitted by managers to the Commissioners of National Education. The Board of Works do not submit special plans, but they prepare and issue to the managers the standard official plans and specifications. No avoidable delay has occurred in the examination and consideration of special plans. Any delay which may have occurred is due to the fact that in very many cases the plans have had to be returned to the managers' architects for revision. Full provision has been made in both Departments for dealing without delay with the work in connection with school building.

Motor Speed Limits in Ireland.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state how many applications for a speed limit on motors in Ireland have been received from the local authorities; and how many have been granted and how many refused.

MR. CHERRY: Three applications have been received from county authorities for a speed limit under Section 9 of the Motor Car Act, 1903—one from the Belfast County Borough Council for a speed limit of ten miles an hour, upon which the Local Government Board have not yet adjudicated; and the other two from the county councils of Wicklow and Kildare for speed limits of six and eight miles an hour, respectively. In the two latter cases the Board pointed out that they would be prepared to consider a reduction to ten miles an hour as contemplated by the Section, but these councils have not proceeded further in the matter.

Fair Rents in County Galway.

MR. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a number of tenants in the Mountbellew, county Galway, district have served notices with the object of having fair rent fixed upon their holdings; and will he see that the Sub-Commissioners hold a court there with as little delay as possible.

MR. CHERRY: The Land Commission inform me that a Sub-Commission sitting for the Mount Bellew district was held last October when all cases which arose prior to 1st September were listed for hearing. Since then only thirteen applications to fix fair rents have been received from that district. A further sitting will be held at as early a date as may be consistent with the claims of other districts, but the Land Commission cannot at present fix a date.

Necessitous Schools in Ireland.

MR. N. J. MURPHY (Kilkenny, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether in the case of schools in necessitous districts or in districts where, owing to local circumstances, it is extremely difficult to obtain funds for educational purposes, there is any provision to empower the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland to award to the managers of such schools grants sufficient to cover the entire cost of the erection of new buildings; and whether buildings so erected may be vested in local trustees.

MR. CHERRY: In needy and congested districts the Commissioners of National Education may, when in a position to certify that no local aid can reasonably be expected or that a less contribution than one-third will be forthcoming, be empowered to grant a larger proportion of the cost of the erection of new buildings than two-thirds, provided that in the case of localities not officially scheduled as congested districts, the Commissioners of National Education and the Board of Public Works, with the aid of the Local Government Board, agree upon a suitable criterion of poverty for determining what districts should be put in this category. Conferences are being held between representatives of the Boards referred to, but a final decision has not yet been arrived at on the subject. Buildings for which grants in excess of two-thirds of the estimated cost are allowed must be either vested in the Commissioners or leased to trustees for school purposes, the Commissioners being in every case a party to the lease.

Irish Primary Education Grant.

MR. N. J. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is in a position to state the amount of the proposed new grant for primary education in Ireland; and whether the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland have yet submitted to the Irish Executive proposals for the allocation of this grant.

MR. CHERRY: My right hon. friend is not yet in a position to make a statement on this subject.

Irish Teachers' Pension Fund.

MR. N. J. MURPHY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is the intention of the executive Government and the Treasury to remedy the financial condition of the Irish Teachers' Pension Fund, as disclosed by the report of the auditors who investigated this fund in 1906; and whether, in the case of any revision of the scale of pensions awarded under this fund, he can give any assurance that these pensions will be substantially increased.

MR. RUNCIMAN: It is not the intention of the Government to take any steps in the matter at present, but the assets and liabilities of the fund will be carefully watched, and its solvency will be safeguarded. The state of the fund does not permit an increase of the scale of pensions.

Irish Land Stock.

MR. HAYDEN: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the disproportionately low price of Irish Guaranteed Land Stock is in some measure due to its lack of a free market and infrequent circulation; and whether the Lord Chancellor of Ireland might influence the Court of Chancery in Ireland, who invest about £500,000 annually, mainly in Consols, to make a practice of ordering investments to be made in Land Stock, a security equally good to all intents, and paying a higher interest.

MR. T. L. CORBETT asked whether the fall in the price of the Stock was not really due to the attitude of the Government towards Home Rule.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): As regards the supplementary Question, the Stock has been steadily rising in price for some months.

Guaranteed 2¾ per cent. Stock is included in the list of authorised investments for moneys under the control or subject to the Order of the Supreme Court of Judicature, Ireland. The selection of the particular investments to be made in each case is within the discretion of the Courts themselves, but I will take care that the hon. Member's suggestion shall receive consideration in the proper quarter.

Ireland and the Education Bill.

MR. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, having regard to the fact that an additional grant of £1,400,000 per annum is provided for elementary education in England and Wales under the Education Bill lately introduced, and to the need for increased expenditure under this head in Ireland, he will take steps to allocate, by way of equivalent grant or otherwise, a corresponding and adequate grant-in-aid of Irish elementary education.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): To what purpose will the corresponding equivalent grant for Scotland be applied?

MR. ASQUITH: I do not recognise any question of equivalent grant in either case. The new grant in England will not have effect until the year 1909–10. It would therefore be premature to consider the question on the basis suggested, at present. The requirements of elementary education in Ireland are, however, receiving the most careful consideration of His Majesty's Government upon their own merits.

Belfast Sub-Post Offices.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he can state under what circumstances the exhibition of a sign showing that telegraph business is conducted at town sub-post offices has been discontinued in Belfast.

CAPTAIN NORTON (for Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON): It was decided in 1905 to discontinue in general the supply of notice plates indicating the various classes of business transacted at post offices, as it was found that such plates had ceased, except in cases where the circumstances are abnormal, to serve any very useful purpose. Window notices are in use in all offices. Existing plates, however, were to be allowed to remain, and this course, I understand, is followed at Belfast.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

John Lloyd Morgan, esquire, K.C., for the County of Carmarthen (Western Division).

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES AND CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had nominated the following Members to serve on the three Standing Committees for the consideration of all Public Bills, not relating exclusively to Scotland, which may be committed to a Standing Committee—

Standing Committee A.

Mr. Arthur Allen, Sir William Anson, Mr. Ashley, Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Godfrey Baring, Sir John Bethell, Mr. Boland, Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Cave, Sir Frederick Cawley, Mr. Evelyn Cecil, Mr. Clive, Mr. Cobbold, Sir William Collins, Mr. Charles Corbett, Mr. Charles Craig, Mr. David Davies, Mr. Ellis Davies, Mr. Timothy Davies, Mr. Devlin, Mr. Arthur Dewar, Sir Walter Foster, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Goulding, Mr. Gwynne, Mr. William Edwin Harvey, Mr. Holt, Mr. William Hope, Mr. Hudson, Sir John Jardine, Lord John Joicey-Cecil, Mr. William Jones, Mr. Joyce, Mr. Lambton, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Maclaren, Mr. Mansfield, Mr. Lloyd Morgan, Mr. M'Killop, Mr. Morrell, Mr. Nussey, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, Mr. Parkes, Mr. William Pearce, Dr. Pollard, Mr. Raphael, Sir John Randles, Mr. Walter Rea, Mr. Rendall, Mr. Thomas Richards, Mr. Thomas Frederick Richards, Mr. Ridsdale, Mr. Charles Roberts, Earl of Ronaldshay, Mr. Rose, Mr. Rothschild, Mr. Herbert Samuel, Mr. Seaverns, Colonel Seely, Dr. Shipman, Mr. Smeaton, Mr. Smyth, Mr. Waldron, Mr. Walrond, Mr. John Ward, and Mr. Cathcart Wason.

Standing Committee B.

Mr. Akers-Douglas, Mr. Beauchamp, Mr. Bennett, Mr. Black, Mr. Bridgeman, Mr. Bright, Mr. Burns, Mr. Butcher, Mr. Byles, Viscount Castlereagh, Lord Robert Cecil, Mr. Cleland, Mr. Cochrane, Dr. Cooper, Sir Edwin Cornwall, Sir Henry Cotton, Mr. Courthope, Mr. Cowan, Mr. Curran, Mr. Ferens, Mr. Flynn, Mr. Gill, Mr. Haddock, Mr. Leverton Harris, Mr. George Hardy, Mr. Harwood, Mr. James Haslam, Mr. Lewis Haslam, Mr. Hazleton, Colonel Sir Ivor Herbert, Mr. Higham, Mr. William Johnson, Mr. William Jones, Mr. Kelley, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Kettle, Sir Henry Kimber, Mr. Lane-Cox, Sir Joseph Leese, Sir Maurice Levy, Sir Francis Lowe, Dr. Macnamara, Mr. M'Arthur, Mr. Meehan, Mr. Mond, Mr. Mooney, Mr. Murray, Mr. Nannetti, Mr. Nicholls, Mr. Nolan, Mr. Paulton, Sir Francis Powell, Mr. Charles Price, Mr. Rainy, Mr. John Robertson, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Soares, Mr. Solicitor-General, Mr. Austin Taylor, Mr. Theodore Taylor, Mr. David Alfred Thomas, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Walton, Mr. Whitbread, Mr. Llewelyn Williams, Mr. Wiles, and Mr. Wyndham.

Standing Committee C.

Mr. William Abraham, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Alden, Mr. Harmood-Banner, Mr. Barran, Mr. Beckett, Mr. Bowles, Mr. Brace, Mr. Bramsdon, Mr. Branch, Mr. Carlile, Mr. Cave, Mr. Cheetham, Mr. Herbert Craig, Sir William Cremer, Mr. Cullinan, Mr. Hart-Davies, Mr. Dickinson, Sir Frederick Dixon-Hartland, Mr. Duckworth, Mr. James Duncan, Mr. Clement Edwards, Sir Frank Edwards, Mr. Denison Faber, Mr. Findlay, Mr. Harrison-Broadley, Mr. Hayden, Mr. Healy, Mr. Howard, Mr. Kearley, Mr. Lehmann, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. Long, Mr. Lynch, Sir Philip Magnus, Major M'Micking, Mr. Jeremiah MacVeagh, Viscount Morpeth, Mr. John Murphy, Mr. Myer, Mr. Napier, Mr. O'Grady, Earl Percy, Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. William Priestley, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Rees, Sir George Scott Robertson, Dr. Rutherford, Mr. Abel Smith, Mr. Seddon, Mr. Soames, Sir Edward Strachey, Mr. Thornton, Mr. Verney, Mr. Vivian, Mr. Walker, Mr. Warner, Sir George White, Mr. Whitehead, Mr. Osmond Williams, Lord Willoughby de Eresby, Mr. Wills, Mr. Tyson Wilson, and Mr. Young.

Scottish Standing Committee.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported, That the following Members representing Scottish Constituencies are appointed to serve on the Standing Committee for the consideration of all Public Bills relating exclusively to Scotland and committed to a Standing Committee:—The Lord Advocate, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Robert Balfour, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Beale, Sir Arthur Bignold, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Buchanan, Mr. Caldwell, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Cleland, Sir Thomas Glen-Coats, Mr. Cochrane, Mr. Cameron Corbett, Sir Henry Craik, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Cross, Lord Dalmeny, Viscount Dalrymple, Mr. Dalziel, Mr. Arthur Dewar, Sir John Dewar, Mr. Robert Duncan, the Master of Elibank, Mr. Erskine, Mr. Esslemont, Mr. Munro Ferguson, Mr. Findlay, Major Anstruther-Gray, Mr. Gulland, Mr. Secretary Haldane, Mr. Leicester Harmsworth, Mr. John Henderson, Mr. John Deans Hope, Sir John Jardine, Mr. Laidlaw, Mr. Lamont, Mr. Murray Macdonald, Mr. M'Callum, Mr. M'Crae, Sir Lewis M'Iver, Major M'Micking, Mr. Menzies, Mr. Molteno, Mr. Secretary Morley, Mr. James Murray, Mr. Morton, Mr. Pirie, Mr. Charles Price, Sir Robert Pullar, Dr. Rainy, Mr. Edmund Robertson, Mr. Sinclair, Mr. Smeaton, Mr. Halley Stewart, Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Tennant, Mr. Mitchell-Thomson, Sir Andrew Torrance, Sir John Batty Tuke, Captain Waring, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. Watt, Mr. Weir, Mr. Dundas White, Mr. Wilkie, Mr. Williamson, Mr. M'Kinnon Wood, and Mr. Younger.

Chairmen's Panel.

Sir **William Brampton Gurdon** further reported from the Committee, That they had selected the following Eight Members to be the Chairmen's Panel, and to serve as Chairmen of the Four Standing Committees to be appointed under Standing Order No. 47:—Sir Francis Channing, Sir Thomas Esmonde, Mr. Laurence Hardy, Sir William Holland, Sir David Brynmor Jones, Mr. Stuart-Wortley, Mr. Eugene Wason, and Mr. John William Wilson.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Order for Second Reading upon Monday 6th April read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

NEW BILLS.

HYPOTHEC ABOLITION (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To abolish the landlords' right of Hypothec for rent in Scotland," presented by Mr. Dundas White; supported by Mr. Crombie, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Murray Macdonald, Mr. Findlay, Mr. Smeaton, Mr. Cleland, Mr. Wilkie, Mr. Gulland, Mr. Watt, Mr. M'Callum, and Mr. Charles Price; to be read a second time upon Monday, 6th April, and to be printed. [Bill 125.]

FACTORS ACT (1889) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend The Factors Act, 1889," presented by Mr. Dundas White; supported by Mr. M'Crae, Mr. Younger, Mr. Beale, Mr. M'Callum, and Mr. Smeaton; to be read a second time upon Monday, 6th April, and to be printed. [Bill 126.]

INCEST BILL.

"To provide for the punishment of Incest," presented by Colonel Lockwood; supported by Sir John Kennaway, Mr. Crossley, Mr. Henry Wilson, Mr. Goddard Clarke, Mr. Maclean, Mr. John Wilson, and Mr. George Hardy; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 127.]

PUBLIC HEALTH OFFICERS BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the qualification and tenure of office of Medical Officers of Health; and for other purposes," presented by Sir Walter Foster; supported by Sir John Tuke, Sir Francis Sharpe Powell, and Mr. Cooper; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 12th March, and to be printed. [Bill 128.]

EDUCATION BILL.

"To provide for more effectual public control in regard to Education in England and Wales," presented by Mr. Verney; supported by Sir Francis Channing, Sir George White, Mr. Bennett, and Mr. Morrell; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 129.]

MERCHANDISE MARKS (No. 2) BILL.

"To amend Section 16 of the Merchandise Marks Acts, 1887," presented by Mr. Claude Hay; supported by

Major Coates, Mr. Goulding, Mr. Remnant, and Sir Howard Vincent; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 130.]

CHARACTER NOTE BILL.

"To make it compulsory upon employers to supply a Reference Note to a person leaving their employment and desiring one," presented by Mr. Bell; supported by Mr. Thomas Frederick Richards, Mr. Seddon, Mr. Hudson, and Mr. Wardle; to be read a second time upon Friday, 27th March, and to be printed. [Bill 131.]

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend The Licensing Act, 1872, and The Habitual Drunkards' Act, 1879," present by the Marquess of Hamilton; supported by Mr. Fetherstonhaugh, Mr. Barrie, and Mr. Moore; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 132.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).

Ordered, That the proceedings on the Licensing Bill have precedence this day of the Business of Supply.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (LICENSING BILL.)

Ordered, That the proceedings on the Licensing Bill, if under discussion when the Business is postponed, be resumed and proceeded with, though opposed, after the interruption of Business.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

LICENSING BILL.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.), in asking leave to bring in a Bill to amend the Licensing Acts, 1828 to 1906, said: Although I am afraid it may be my duty to occupy the attention, and perhaps to exhaust the patience, of the House by a somewhat detailed explanation of the provisions of a necessarily complicated measure, I must—and I think in the long run it will prove a saving of time—preface what I have to say with one or two observations of a more general character. I shall not on this occasion dwell on the magnitude and gravity of the evils which, by universal admission, confront us in the sphere which will be dealt with by this Bill, nor, except incidentally, on the inadequacy of the attempts which Parliament has made in recent years to provide a remedy. Everybody who is interested in social progress, in whatever quarter of the House he may sit, will, I am certain, agree with His Majesty's Government that effective reform of our licensing laws is now long overdue. What do we mean by effective reform? In the opinion of the Government, reform, to be effective, must aim at the attainment—and its success will be judged by the measure in which it effects the attainment—of two main purposes. The first is an immediate and a progressive reduction in the excessive facilities which are now allowed for the retail sale of intoxicating drinks. The second—not less important though, perhaps, less easy of attainment—is the gradual but complete recovery, with due regard for existing interests, by the State of its dominion over and its property in a monopoly which has been improvidently allowed to slide out of its control. Upon the latter of those two points so much misapprehension still prevails that, although I may seem to be reiterating that which is familiar, I will, nevertheless, venture at the outset to restate one or two elementary propositions. By the Statute law of this country ever since, at any rate, the reign of Edward VI. no one has been able to set up or to carry on the retail sale of intoxicating drink except with the express permission and licence of the State. The power of granting that permission was always vested, until the Act of 1904, in the local justices, who had knowledge of local conditions, and who might be supposed more or less at any rate, to represent local opinion and local sentiment. The justices, in the exercise of an unfettered discretion, could multiply the grant of licences at their will; and again, until the Act of 1904, in the exercise of the same discretion and the like freedom they could refuse to renew licences which they had previously granted. So far as my knowledge goes, there was no case in the annals of our law over now more than three centuries and a half in which any court has assumed to compel a body of justices against whom there was no charge of corruption and dishonesty to regrant a licence which, in their discretion, they had refused to renew. That is the law of England, and always has been the law of England — plain, simple, indisputable, and, at this time of day, not by any competent authority disputed. How, then, has that which we are accustomed to call the monopoly value in licenses in private hands come into existence and been allowed to grow up? How have these enormous values, which I see variously estimated—though I am not disposed to accept any of the estimates myself—at from 100 to 150, or even 170 millions sterling—some people say even more—how have these enormous values been allowed to come into existence? The answer is very simple. The State has received nothing, unless, indeed, the very small licence duty that is exacted from the owners of licences of public-houses can be regarded as anything—and, as everybody knows, it is a mere drop in the ocean. The State has received nothing, or nothing that can be described as in any sense a substantial or even partial equivalent for the monopoly value with which it has parted. What the monopoly value really means is this, when it comes to be analysed. It means what people have been ready to pay, not for a right—there never was any right—but for an expectation, or to speak with strict accuracy, for a double expectation. What do I mean by a double expectation? I mean, in the first place, the expectation that licences once granted would, in the absence of misconduct, be periodically and indefinitely renewed; and, in the next place, an expectation that the justices would not allow effective competition with those to whom they had once granted it. I say—and it is most important that this should be clearly understood and laid down at the very opening of our debates—that those were mere expectations. As regards the first of them the justices, as I have said, might and very often did—the law has been administered at one time with greater stringency and at another time with greater laxity—but the justices might and very often did, refuse to renew a licence without any suggestion of misconduct on the part of the licensee. And as to the second expectation, it is also true that the justices could establish and sometimes they did establish, as in the well-known case of the licensing bench at Liverpool, complete free trade in drink within the area of their licensing jurisdiction. It follows that in either case, without any violation of the law, without inflicting any wrong for which any single human being could seek any legal redress, either or both of the expectations upon which the monopoly value rests might be frustrated, and the whole fabric of the monopoly value itself brought down to the ground. I will just notice in passing—not to deal with it in detail—an argument often put forward and as often refuted, that the State by levying death duties upon the value of licences, as though they were perpetually renewable, has given some implied recognition to an assumed right of property which the law has never created or acknowledged. Well, that argument rests upon a fallacy of the most obvious description. When a man dies and when the State takes toll of his property it takes everything of which he died possessed, considers what is its market value, and exacts the toll upon it. Very often his property is of a highly speculative nature. It may consist of a licence. It may consist of a racehorse. The question, and the only question for the State when it is levying death duties is, what anybody in the market will give either for the one or the other. And it no more guarantees when it takes 10 per cent. or whatever the percentage may be of the market value of a licence, that that licence will last for ever than when it takes a corresponding proportion of the value of a racehorse it guarantees that the horse will live to fulfil its engagements and satisfy the anticipations of its trainers. But it is not necessary to labour this point, because we have before us the legislation of 1904, and if it could have been alleged with any show of reason or even of plausibility that for the State to withdraw from the holder of a licence the renewal of that licence at the end of the term, was for the State to take away a right of property upon whom would that burden of compensation have been thrown? Obviously upon the State. When we emancipated the slaves, one of the most nefarious and discreditable forms of property the English law has ever recognised, this House did not hesitate to vote public money for the purpose. When a Conservative Government, the traditional and hereditary protectors of the doctrine of property, came to reduce licenses, upon whom did they throw the burden of compensation? Not upon the community, but upon the trade. I think it is necessary to lay down these propositions in the plainest possible terms. I want to deal with this matter, if I can, not controversially. [OPPOSITION laughter.] I have not said anything hitherto which anyone acquainted with the history and law of the subject can describe as controversial—I want to deal with it, not controversially, but in a fair, and, as far as possible, in a judicial manner. The law being perfectly plain, as I have tried to define it, interests have been allowed to grow up outside the domain of the law, interests created, or at any rate fostered, by expectations which for so many years were so widely entertained, and, I will add, so commonly realised, and it is impossible for any statesman who has to deal with the matter now to ignore them or to leave them out of account.

Now, Sir, having made that preliminary statement as to the nature of the problem with which we have to deal, I will ask the House, and I am afraid I must make some draft upon its patience, to accompany me while I proceed step by step to show how the Government propose to act in the matter. I said a few minutes ago that the first thing is effective reform of our licensing laws based upon the necessity for immediate and progressive reduction in the facilities for the sale of drink and the provision of some really practical means of bringing that about. How do we stand in regard to that matter? On 1st January of the present year there were in England and Wales 95,700 on-licenses, or a proportion of 27·62 per 10,000 of the population. That figure compares with 99,478 on-licences, or 29·13 per 10,000 of the population, on 1st January, 1905, and shows, therefore, a substantial diminution in those three years. [OPPOSITION cheers.] I say so—a substantial diminution. But the diminution began before 1905. Indeed, all of us who followed the debates in 1904 know that the fact that what is called the trade was becoming alarmed at the reviving and formidable activity of the licensing justices in exercising their discretion to get rid of redundant licenses was one of the main causes of the Licensing Act of 1904. I agree that the process of reduction has been accelerated by the provisions of the Act of 1904, but it is wholly inadequate to the needs of the case, and I beg the House to note, if you have regard to all the conditions which surround the case, that it is on the whole more likely to diminish than to grow. Why do I say that? In the year 1907 1,716 licences were extinguished, and the holders were entitled under the Act of 1904 to compensation. The average cost to the compensation fund per licence was £919. The total compensation levied for the year was £1,099,000, which, at that cost of £919 per licence, would only have paid for the extinction of 1,194 licences. The justices were only able to make the reduction which they did—something like 500 or 600 more than the compensation levied for the year would have provided for—by the fact that there was a balance in hand from the fund for the previous year. If you add to that the facts that the smallest and cheapest houses have really been the victims in these first two or three years and that the survivors to some extent—I do not say to what extent—have been raised in value, that there are at this moment thirteen compensation areas in which the maximum levy is not raised and six compensation areas in which no levy is made at all, and, lastly, that you have no guarantee whatever that the licensing authorities who are acting now will continue to show the same rate of activity in the years that are to come, I venture to say you may well look forward with apprehension lest the rate of reduction, inadequate as I believe it to be even now, should slacken in the future. In view of these facts, the Government propose in this Bill—this is the first clause of the Bill—to provide for the compulsory reduction within a specified period of a number of on-licences in the country on a uniform scale operating throughout the country and based mainly on the ratio between licences and population. We have taken as our general guide in fixing that ratio the recommendations of the minority Report of Lord Peel's Commission. That Report recommended that the statutory maximum should be one on-licence to every 750 people in towns, and one on-licence to every 400 people in the country. Now, Sir, when you come to work that out in practice, as we have tried to do, you will find the distinction between town and country is almost as difficult to draw as the impalpable boundary line that separates day from night. When you look at social and economic conditions, it does not follow with anything like strictness the technical division between urban and rural areas, and a sudden jump, whether it be a jump upward or a jump downward, when there is little difference in the actual condition of the locality, is a thing that it is quite impossible to justify. We have given a great deal of thought and attention to the subject, and after much inquiry, and examining the test results in a number of sample cases, we have adopted as the basis of our scale density of population—in other words, the number of people per acre. I will show the House how that works out. We begin with the density—whether it be in a rural parish or an urban area it does not matter for this purpose—of two persons or less per acre. Where that state of things exists we propose that on-licences should not exceed one for 400 persons. That covers practically the whole of what are commonly called the rural districts of the country. Our next step is between two persons and twenty-five persons per acre. Where that condition of population exists we propose that the maximum shall be one to 500. It will be found in practice that that covers the great bulk of some urban parishes and districts. The next step in the scale—and the three minor stages cover practically the same class of population—is between 25 and 50, one to 600; between 50 and 75, one to 700; and between 75 and 100, one to 800. These three stages, which, as the House sees, go from 25 per acre to 100 per acre, comprise the ordinary town areas. Therefore, in an ordinary town you have a statutory maximum of from one to 600 to one to 800. Then you get to the highest stage in the scale 100 to 200 persons per acre, one licence to 900, and over 200 persons per acre, one licence to 1,000. Those are the poorer and crowded quarters of the great cities of the country. That, Sir, is, after a great deal of consideration, the best practical method that we have been able to discover of applying the principle laid down—which we have accepted—in the minority Report of the Peel Commission. We quite recognise, and the Bill recognises, that in the otherwise rigid application of that scale you must allow a certain amount of latitude to meet certain special conditions of common occurrence. Let me point out to the House by way of illustration what I mean. First of all, where the number of licensed premises in a parish or area does not exceed two, and it does not seem expedient for the licensing authority to reduce it to one, which would give a monopoly to that one particular public-house, no reduction need necessarily take place. Next, where there are two or three scattered hamlets which are technically and legally within the area of a single parish, or where, as sometimes happens, there is an isolated roadside public house, we would allow the authorities to make special conditions applicable to that case. Again and this is important, because it is of wider application, in the case of premises that have an on-licence, but have been constructed and are intended to be used in good faith for purposes for which an on-licence is merely an auxiliary, a restaurant, a railway refreshment room, or some classes of hotels, we allow exception from the strict application of the proportionate scale. Finally, and perhaps this is the most important of all, we have to deal with places whose normal and resident population is no index of their real requirements. That may be so in two cases. First, there are places resorted to only in special seasons by holiday makers and seekers after rest, like seaside places; and, secondly, there are the business quarters of great towns, like the City of London, where the day population is very considerable, while the night population is relatively very small. I find in the Market Hall Ward of Birmingham that the strict application of our scale would require the suppression of no less than 141 out of 158 licences. In the central ward of Cardiff, our scale would require the suppression of no less than eighty-five out of 108. In the Market Ward of Nottingham it would require the extinction of sixty-nine licences out of seventy. These are obviously places that require exceptional treatment, and accordingly the rigid application of the proportion or ratio will be allowed in these cases to be mitigated or modified by the licensing authorities. The general result will be this—that applying the scale with due allowance for the modifications I have indicated—the House will take this as a mere rough approximation—we estimate it will lead to the suppression within the specified term of from 30,000 to 32,000 on-licences, or in other words to more than one-third of the whole. It will be the duty of every licensing authority to prepare by the early date named in the Act a scheme for carrying out the statutory reduction according to the ratio I have described in their own district. The scheme so prepared by the licensing authority will show the effect, in the way of reduction, of the application of the scale to each area within their district, and it will provide for a reasonable distribution of the reductions over the whole of the statutory period. As schemes of this kind must be more or less tentative and experimental, the widest powers are given the licensing authority to revise their schemes from time to time. These schemes, whether original schemes or revised schemes, will be submitted for approval, not on grounds of policy, but on grounds of finance, to a central Licensing Commission, in whom, as I will presently explain, the compensation fund will be vested. Assume that a scheme has been prepared, submitted, and approved, as, of course, it will be if the financial exigencies of the case allow, it will then be the duty of the licensing authority to give effect to it by selecting the particular licences to be extinguished. We leave the selection entirely in their hands. In order to provide for the possible case of licensing authorities making default, either in preparing a scheme or in carrying it out, or in the selection of the licences to be suppressed, we provide that the Licensing Commission can act in their stead.

The next point is one of very great moment. Reduction according to the statutory scale is a duty which the licensing authorities are compelled to perform. But their performance of that duty is not to affect their power, during the period of reduction, to extinguish licences still further, subject, of course, in cases where extinction involves compensation, to the sufficiency of the compensation fund. That power we call in the Bill the power of optional reduction. It is a power vested in the authority in addition to its statutory duty. We restore in this Bill—reversing the policy in this respect of the Act of 1904—we restore to the licensing authority the discretion which was taken away from it by that Act with regard to the refusal, renewal, and transfer of all existing on-licences, and we repeal the provision in the 1904 Act vesting such power in the quarter sessions. As I pointed out a few moments ago, until 1904 the local licensing justices have always been regarded as the proper persons to deal with these matters, and we think this power ought never to have been taken away from them.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): Subject to compensation?

*MR. ASQUITH: During the compensation period. We add a special provision which we propose to make with regard to Wales, where opinion in these matters is more advanced and more ripe than in England generally. It is proposed in Wales—and for this purpose Wales will include Monmouthshire—to give by vote to parochial electors in a licensing district power to declare by a direct vote whether a reduction of licences beyond the statutory amount should be made, and upon an affirmative vote the Commission will authorise such further reduction provided during the statutory period that the existing levy gives sufficient funds for the purpose.

Now I come to the question of compensation for licences suppressed, and I use the word with a caveat, because it does not accurately express what I mean—but licences which are suppressed on the ground of redundancy during the statutory period, whether compulsorily under the scale or in the exercise of the further power which I have just described as optional reduction, will be compensated for. We propose to make no change in the source from which the compensation money is to be derived. The compensation money will continue to be raised as under the Act of 1904 by a levy from what is called "the trade." But it follows from our decision to make reduction compulsory and uniform, which it is not under the existing system, that the area of the levy should cover the whole of England and Wales, that the whole of the authorised levy should every year be raised, and that the fund should become a national fund and should be vested in the central authority, the Licensing Commission. For the purposes of the levy we adopt *prima facie* the scale of charges in the schedule of the Act of 1904, subject to one or two qualifications which I will proceed to enumerate. In the first place, the annual value of the premises is for the future to be taken as the annual value given for the purpose of Schedule A of the income-tax. In the next place, power is given to the Licensing Commission to raise the charges subject to their being graduated in the same proportion as the rates shown in the scale, but to raise them only for the purpose of compulsory suppression, not for the purposes of optional, for reasons which will soon appear. That is a power which probably will not require to be exercised. Again, the Licensing Commission are not to sanction an optional reduction if it would involve raising the rates in the scale. The Licensing Commission can borrow on the security of the compensation fund, and they are to exercise their powers under the Act so that, so far as possible, the assets and liabilities of the fund may balance at the end of the reduction period.

I come now to the much more important point—namely, the amount of compensation to be paid. It is when we come to deal with the great problem of fixing the amount of compensation that we find ourselves compelled to part company from the Act of 1904, and still more widely from the judicial interpretation which has been put upon that Act—an interpretation contrary to the intentions of the framers of that Act and of Parliament—in what is commonly known as the Kennedy judgment. What is the provision in Section 2 of the 1904 Act? Substantially it says that the amount of compensation payable must be a sum equal to the difference between the value of the licensed premises and the value which the premises would bear if not licensed. The Inland Revenue, when the Act first came into operation, proceeded to deal with the cases generally that came before them on what, I venture to think, was the natural construction of those words. They estimated what would be the annual value of the premises with the licence and the value of the same premises without the licence; then they subtracted the one sum from the other, and multiplied the result by the number of years purchase. But the Act of 1904 gave what was in fact a freehold interest to the licence-holder, as though he was entitled to the perpetual renewal of his licence. I pause here to point out that the very fact that in our scheme we adopt a reduction period, a term of years during which, and during which alone, compensation is paid, as a necessary corollary it involves a modification, even if the Act of 1904 had been strictly interpreted. It follows as a necessary incident of our scheme that the amount payable as compensation shall only be such a sum as will purchase with interest of course—at the proper rate, 4 per cent.—an immediate annuity for the unexpired years of the reduction period and equal in amount to the annual value of the licence. We add to that a further sum, and this is very important. I think the interests of the tenant, of the actual licence-holder, the man who is carrying on a public-house were very insufficiently considered. The licence-holder got very little out of the compensation; the great bulk of it has gone into other pockets. We add, and we keep this separate throughout, both in the assessment and in the payment of compensation, such a sum as the Commissioners of Inland

Revenue may think just to add, as compensation for the licence-holder's loss of business.

Now I come to the crucial point—what is to be taken as the annual value of the licence. We are going to ask Parliament to go back to what we believe to have been the intention of the Act of 1904, and what, whether it was the intention of the framers of that Act or not, ought to be the rule of common sense and common justice. What is the problem? The licensing justices give to a particular house, in a particular street, a privilege which no other house in that street can acquire, without their consent, of becoming the scene, day and night, of the retail sale of intoxicating liquor. The house next door—precisely similar in structure, having cost the builder the same, standing upon land of exactly equal value, and therefore, before the licence was granted, let presumably at the same rent—is occupied by a grocer or butcher, or whatever tradesman it may be. The problem to be solved is this. What is the additional rent which a person would pay for the house with the privilege of the licence as compared with the rent which he would pay for the house next door, carrying on in that house an unlicensed trade, and not enhanced, therefore, in value by a monopoly price? That is the problem. It is a problem which can be solved with the greatest possible ease when you are dealing with a free house, a house that is to say, which is let to the publican at a rack rent, because you have only got to compare the rent which he pays with the rent which his neighbour pays for the unlicensed premises in immediate contiguity, to find out the additional monopoly value given by the possession of the licence. The difficulty, of course, comes in when you are dealing with the tied house, because, as everybody who is familiar with these matters knows, the rent or so-called rent, which is exacted by the brewer or distiller from the tenant—again I must say the so-called tenant—of the tied house, is a rent which in the majority of cases, at any rate, bears no relation whatsoever to the actual value of the premises. Where the brewer comes in and makes his profit is in invoicing his goods—the only goods which this tenant, sitting, as it appears, at a very moderate rent, is allowed to dispose of—at a far higher price than the same class of goods, or perhaps better class of goods are supplied for to the tenant of a free house. Therefore, it is quite clear that, in the case of the tied house, the rent actually paid is not a criterion of the monopoly value, and you must find out what the monopoly value is, as every rating authority in the country does, by having some reference to the business which is done in the house. Yes, but the business done by whom? The business done by the occupier of the house; and the fundamental vice—if I may use such an expression in speaking of the judgment of a learned Judge—what seems to us to be fallacy of the Kennedy judgment, which reversed the whole practice of the Inland Revenue Department, and which added to the sum payable for compensation in the case of these tied houses 50 or sometimes 100 per cent.—consisted in taking into account, not the profit made by the trade retailer, but the profit made by the manufacturer in regard to the drink which he supplied to the house. In other words, you have to deal with the house not as though it were a place simply of retail trade, but you have to consider also its value as an outlet for the wholesale business firms, and for the trade in which they were themselves engaged. And the result is most striking. In the first place, it has vastly inflated the figures which are given by way of compensation, and it has established a most inequitable and indefensible distinction between tied houses on the one side and free houses on the other. It is possible under the law, as laid down in this judgment, and necessarily followed by the Inland Revenue, for the owner of a tied house to get half as much again, and sometimes twice as much, in the shape of compensation as is got by the owner of a free house. Well, we do not think that that is right, because in addition to its obvious injustice it gives an encouragement to the tied house system, which in our opinion is contrary to public policy. We are going to provide—this will be the rule laid down in the Bill—that the annual value of the licence is to be taken to be the sum by which the actual annual value of the licensed premises, adopted for Schedule A. of the income-tax, exceeds the amount which the Commissioners of Inland Revenue determined would be that annual value if the premises were not licensed. That is a perfectly simple rule which the Commissioners of Inland Revenue are thoroughly capable of applying for themselves, and it avoids the expense and complication of a special enquiry *ad hoc*, in regard to each particular case which arises; and we propose that in regard to it there shall be no appeal to a Court of Law, and that the decision of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue shall be final.

I come now to the question of the length of the statutory period, or what is commonly called the time limit. The question of the expediency of laying down a time limit is a question which formed the subject of frequent and anxious debate in the last Parliament. The Government of the day, and the right hon. Gentleman opposite, notwithstanding our insistence, and notwithstanding an Amendment moved in the same sense by the Archbishop of Canterbury in another place, refused to insert any time limit in their Bill. Now I should like to quote one or two things that were said in the course of those debates. I quote one passage, a remarkable passage, from a speech of a supporter of that Bill, who is unfortunately no longer in this House, and whose lofty eloquence and great Parliamentary ability those of us who were in the last Parliament miss almost every day—I mean Lord Hugh Cecil. He said—

> "This Bill did not interfere in the least with the future right of Parliament to set up whatever time limit it might think proper under which licences might cease altogether, after due notice given."

And I find that in another place—I am glad to be able to quote him—my noble friend Lord Rosebery used these very remarkable words, words which I entirely adopt—

> "I do not care what your limit is, but I am certain of this, that the only way in which you will ever achieve a real temperance reform is by fixing a date at the expiration of which all interest in the licences shall be held to be exhausted, and the nation will then resume its claim, its absolute dominion, over the interests which have been created at the expense of the State and no other than the State."

Mr. Asquith.

The notion put forward frequently in records of those debates that a time limit was inconsistent with the payment of compensation by the trade during that time limit was, I think, over and over again exploded. I quite admit that the enactment of the time limit involves a double insurance on the part of the trade—an insurance, that is to say, in regard to the risk of being extinguished during the currency of the time limit and an insurance against the general and universal change which will take place when the time limit has come to an end. Before I mention the length of the time limit, I would like to mention one or two facts. Everyone interested in the trade has known, at any rate since the celebrated case of "Sharpe v. Wakefield," which laid down no new principle, but which made notorious and a matter of common knowledge that which had for three centuries been the law—everyone has known since that case was decided, now nearly twenty years ago, that the prospect of continuous renewal was no more than an expectation, not founded on any legal title, and in no way guaranteed by the State. But further, since the debates on the Bill of 1904, everyone has known that the expectation of perpetuity was certain not to be realised, that the imposition of some time limit was inevitable, and that the only question was how soon it would be imposed and what would be its duration. What inference do I draw from these two facts? Why this, that for the best part of twenty years probably, and for the best part of four years certainly, every prudent trader engaged in this traffic has been, or ought to have been, setting his house in order by insurance, and, as many of them have done, by strengthening his reserve fund. To us who sit on this side of the House—more particularly those of us who took part, as I and many of my friends did, in the strenuous opposition to the Bill of 1904 — it is a matter not only of justice and expediency, but of political honour that there should be a time limit. We pledged ourselves to it then, and we pledged ourselves to it again at the time of the General Election, and we had then, as I believe we have now, in support of the proposal for a time limit, the sympathy and the active advocacy of every temperance organisation, even the most conservative, including, if I remember rightly, the bishops of the Upper House of Convocation of the Province of Canterbury. The question now is not whether a time limit shall be imposed, but what shall be its duration. However that question is decided I may say two things about it. Most certainly the decision will not please everybody, it is probable that it will not please anybody. On the one hand, whatever the duration we prescribe for the time limit, we shall be charged, I daresay to-night, and quite certainly to-morrow morning, with confiscation and spoliation. On the other hand, however short our time limit may be, I am not sure we shall escape the criticism of some of my hon. friends behind me that we are showing an over-tender regard for interests whose antecedents are doubtful and whose title is precarious. It is a very difficult situation. In a difficult situation it is generally desirable, if you can, to found yourself on some principle that will stand the test both of common sense and common justice. If I may recall to the recollection of the House for a moment the exposition I endeavoured to give of the real condition of the problem in the early sentences of my speech, what, having regard to the legal situation on the one side and to the up-growth of these expectations and interests on the other, is the principle we ought to adopt? I say, then, that your time limit should be as long as and not longer than the time which will suffice for a prudent trader who has carried and is carrying on his business with due regard to its special character and its peculiar risks to make adequate provision against the disappearance at the close of the time limit of that part of his profits which is to be attributed to the monopoly value of his licence. I say it ought to be as long as that, because, though there is no question of legal title, there has grown up, as I have shown, a claim for equitable consideration which I think the State ought not to, and cannot, ignore. I say it ought to be no longer than that, because at the earliest possible moment compatible with equitable regard for existing interests the State ought on every ground of policy to recover possession of the monopoly value which it ought never to have parted with. Well, after much consideration, we have come to the conclusion that these conditions will be satisfied by a term of fourteen years. The community will at the expiration of that term recover complete dominion over licences and unfettered freedom of dealing with them, and in that unfettered freedom I include the power of the locality by a popular vote to deal either by way of prohibition or reduction with the state of things for the future.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: This is a very important point, and perhaps the House would like to have it made clear. Does the right hon. Gentleman provide in his Bill for the establishment of local option?

*MR. ASQUITH: Yes, Sir, local option as regards either prohibition or reduction, but we do not and, indeed, it would be impossible at this moment to lay down the precise conditions, the machinery, procedure, and so forth, subject to which, fourteen years hence, that right ought to be exercised. But the right itself is clearly stated in the Bill.

As regards authorities. Under the Act of 1904 counties and county boroughs were taken as the compensation areas. Now that we make the area not local but national, we must create a central authority, and accordingly we substitute for quarter sessions and borough justices a Licensing Commission. The Commission will consist of three persons—the Chairman and two other Commissioners appointed by His Majesty on the recommendation of the Home Secretary. Their powers will continue in force until the end of the reduction period and may, if necessary, be continued by Order in Council. The expenses of the Commission will be paid out of the compensation fund. I do not think it will be a very serious charge. As regards the licensing authorities, a much more difficult question arises—a question which deserves and has received much consideration—namely, whether the local licensing authority shall be wholly or in part, directly or indirectly, elective. Personally I confess I was very strongly predisposed in favour of the introduction of an elective element; but there is grave objection to it. It would almost certainly tend to make local elections for general administrative purposes turn on a single issue which was not relevant to them. That is a very grave evil, and when you take that into account and remember further that the first duty imposed on the justices will be to bring about the statutory reduction in their district, as they are bound to do, there seems less reason than there otherwise would have been for making them directly responsible to the ratepayers, and, on the whole—I confess not without doubt—we have come to the conclusion it would be best to retain the licensing jurisdiction in the hands of the justices. We have, however, made some not unimportant changes in the large boroughs. A large borough for this purpose means any borough with a separate commission of the peace, which is a county borough, or which has a population of over 25,000. In such boroughs the licensing justices will exercise their powers through the borough licensing committee appointed under the Act of 1872, seven being substituted for three as the minimum number of the committee. In all such boroughs, whether county boroughs or not, there will be set up an appeal authority. In quarter sessions boroughs it will consist of the Recorder and four justices chosen for the purpose by the whole body of justices, and in a large borough not having a separate quarter sessions and, therefore, no Recorder, it will consist of the mayor and four justices appointed by the whole body of justices. A member of the appeal authority will be incapable of acting as a member of the licensing committee. The powers of the appeal authority will be twofold—first, the power of confirming new licences granted by the licensing justices; and, secondly—and this is important—exclusive jurisdiction in appeals against refusal to renew or transfer licences. Such appeals in large boroughs will no longer go to quarter sessions. Licensing justices may pay to their clerk, in addition to his salary, such remuneration as they think fit for special work performed in connection with the Act. Finally, under this head, we remove a grievance which has sometimes operated very harshly, by providing that in cases where the decision of the licensing justices has been appealed against, whether by *mandamus*, *certiorari*, prohibition or otherwise, the Court shall direct the local treasurer to pay to the justices a sum sufficient to indemnify them for all costs properly incurred and not recoverable.

Now I come to a totally different topic—namely, new licences. As regards new licences, the Act of 1904 contained in its fourth section what I consider a most invaluable enactment—that which secures to the public the monopoly value in the case of new licences. Experience shows that that provision needs amendment in two particulars—first, payment for any year in respect to monopoly value ought not to exceed, and we propose it shall not exceed, the licence value for the year as estimated by the justices. I have a large number of cases here, which I could quote if necessary, in which a very considerable lump sum of money has been paid down as a condition of the grant of new licences, and when that is the case, obviously, however you like to describe it, it fetters the discretion of the authority in years to come. It is much better, we think—and most of the licensing benches agree—that we should provide, as we do, that for any year the payment is not to exceed the licence value for that year; and, secondly—a very important provision—we propose as a condition for securing the monopoly value to provide for the revision of the payment on the renewal of the licence either annually or periodically. It is impossible very often prospectively to estimate what the monopoly value of a new licence will be. In regard to this question of new licences, we introduce at once a new machinery altogether. There is no question here of frustrated expectations or compensation. The monopoly value is declared by the Act of 1904 to belong to the community, and the possibility of the upgrowth of parasitic interests is effectively prevented. It is, in our opinion, not sufficient that the public should be secured in the enjoyment of the monopoly value of any new licence the justices may think fit to grant. We think the people of the locality ought further in such case to have the power of saying, just as the owner of the soil if he pleases may say, that no new licences shall be granted at all. Our Bill by its second clause confers this power on the parochial electors in every licensing district. Upon a requisition signed by not less than one-tenth a poll may be taken on a resolution prohibiting the grant of new licences, and that resolution may be carried by a simple majority. It remains in force until revoked by a rescinding resolution, similarly required and similarly carried.

AN HON. MEMBER: At what interval?

MR. ASQUITH: Three years. Where a poll has been taken on either a prohibitory or a rescinding resolution a further poll is not to be taken until the expiration of three years. Powers are given to the Local Government Board to regulate procedure in regard to such resolutions, and to apply to them the enactments relating to Parliamentary or local government elections. While the prohibitory resolution is in force no new licences, in the ordinary sense, on or off, may be granted in the district. This will not prevent the licensing justices dealing with business premises constructed, fitted, and intended to be used in good faith for any purpose to which the holding of an on-licence is merely auxiliary. We shall grant for the first time electors the power of saying whether or not no new off- or on-licences shall be given. That I believe to be a valuable and necessary provision. No one can contend that this interferes with any interest either equitable or otherwise, and there is no reason why it should not come into force at the earliest possible moment.

Now I will say a word with regard to off-licences. The statutory reduction does not apply to off-licences. We propose to repeal the exceptions allowed in Section 10 of the Act of 1902 in the case of spirit dealers and wine merchants, and to provide that a justice's licence should be required for every Excise licence for retail and consumption off the premises. In regard to new off-licences, we propose that they should be brought under the provisions of Section 4 of the Act of 1904, and should also be subject to the power of prohibition vested in the inhabitants of the district. Further, we apply Section 22 of the Act of 1874 in regard to provisional licences to premises to be constructed for off consumption.

I come now to deal with the still more important matter of registered clubs. Between 1st January, 1904, and 1st January, 1907, the number of registered clubs—clubs in which intoxicating liquors could be supplied—increased from 6,371 to 6,907, and after the expiration of another year they have probably reached the number of 7,110. I need hardly say that there is no intention on the part of the Government to interfere with the freedom of the *bona fide* club. I need hardly say also that all clubs in which liquor is supplied, whether to the rich or the less fortunate in the community, stand on precisely the same footing. Under the Act of 1902 such clubs already require to be registered, and any club may be struck off the register which is not conducted in good faith or where certain objectionable practices or specified acts are proved to be committed on the premises. We propose to strengthen the law by providing that the registration of such clubs should be annually renewed to afford an opportunity for notice of objection to be submitted and considered by the licensing justices. That sounds at first sight an annoying provision; but since I have had this matter in hand in the last few weeks and months, there have been brought to my notice cases in which the suppression of a licence under the right hon. Gentleman's Act of 1904 has been followed by the upgrowth of clubs, not in the same premises, but next door, carrying on the same business, often tied to the same brewer, who is financing the whole affair, and frequented by the same class of persons. No licence duty is paid, and there is no restriction as to hours. The place is occupied during the whole of Sunday, sometimes in betting and gambling, as well as in drinking, and there is no effective police supervision. That is a monstrous evil. It is a bad thing in the interests of the community, and thoroughly unfair in the interests of the trade. I can understand the indignation, the perfectly legitimate indignation, which is felt by those who are interested in the trade and have contributed compensation to the levy fund for the suppression of publichouses, and yet see that the moment one of these institutions is suppressed, its place is taken by a club carrying on the same business. I might almost here appeal for the unanimous support of all sections of opinion in the House with regard to this question, anxious and eager as we are not to interfere with the *bona-fide* club. But this provision for the registration of clubs being annually renewed is urgently needed. If an objection is made on the ground that a club is used mainly as a drinking resort, or on any ground specified in the Act of 1902, and it is upheld by the justices, they may make an order directing that the premises shall not be used for the same purposes any time during the next five years. This order is subject to appeal. To secure an enforcement of the law we propose that power should be given to any chief constable, inspector, or superintendent of police, or an officer of superior rank specially authorised by the chief constable to enter and inspect the premises of any registered club. That is a provision to be applied to all registered clubs alike—in Pall-mall and St. James's Street as elsewhere. The conditions are carefully framed so as to prevent any possibility of offence or any legitimate cause of irritation. We are dealing with an admitted and growing evil. Anxious as I am from the point of view of both sides not to interfere with political and working men's clubs, with *bona fide* institutions to promote social intercourse and political and economic discussions, we cannot fail to recognise that under the guise of clubs there are springing up in this country a set of ill-regulated public houses, and that it is quite time the law stepped in.

There is one other serious provision in the Bill to which we attach the greatest importance. I classify them under the general head of conditions. Experience has shown various abuses in connection with the use of licensed premises which, apart from any question of compensation or monopoly value, ought to be dealt with in one of two ways or by both—either by increasing the stringency of the general law or by reviving and enlarging the powers of the licensing justices attached to the conditions relating to the renewal of the licence. I will take the first question—namely, that of the Sunday opening of public houses. We propose to apply the Welsh Sunday Closing Act to Monmouthshire, but we do not believe that public opinion in England is ripe for a measure of universal compulsory Sunday closing. On the other hand, there is little doubt that the hours during which public houses are open on Sunday are, as a rule, excessive, in the interests both of the persons engaged in the trade and of the community at large. Both the majority and the minority of the Peel Commission were of opinion that a case was made out in this respect for further curtailment. We propose that outside the metropolis, where the state of things is quite exceptional, no public-house should be open on Sunday more than one hour in the middle of the day or more than two hours in the evening. Further, the justices are empowered to attach as a condition to the renewal of the licence any particulars either of total prohibition or of further restriction on the sale of liquor in particular premises on Sunday. Where the justices attach that condition and convert a licence practically into a six days licence, the Bill provides that the licence-duty shall be reduced by one-seventh. [AN HON. MEMBER: Any compensation?] No compensation.

Another evil of a cognate character arises in connection with the definition of the *bona fide* traveller. At present under Section 10 of the Act of 1874 a person satisfies the definition if he has spent the previous night three miles away. We propose—again following the recommendations of the Peel Commission—to substitute six miles for three miles in all cases. ["Oh, oh."] Here, again, we empower the justices to attach by way of condition to the renewal of the licence any further restrictions in regard to particular premises in this respect that seems to them to be reasonable. There are cases where some such restrictions might be reasonable.

There are a number of other matters which require elasticity in their treatment and as to which therefore, while making no change in the general law, we give the widest discretion, subject to due notice to the owner and to appeal, for the justices to attach conditions to the renewal of licences. First, as to the exclusion of children from the bars of licensed premises. I will read the proposed clause—

> "In the case of any licensed premises to which this section is applied, the holder of the licence shall not allow a child to be at any time in the bar of the licensed premises except during the hours of closing. On the grant a renewal of licences in respect of premises other than railway refreshment-rooms, etc, the licensing justices may order that this section shall be applied to those premises, and may, for the purpose of the operation of the order in those premises, fix any limit of age under which a child shall be deemed to be a child."

That gives considerable latitude for local conditions, and no doubt, as a rule, the justices will fix a sufficiently high age to prevent this terrible and growing evil of keeping young children in bars. Next, we propose to give the justices power to make conditions as to the employment of women or children on the licensed premises, as to the arrangement of any part of the premises open to the public, as to any access to them, as to the supplying to any person of the measure of liquor exceeding that asked for, as to the closing of the premises at specified hours on particular days, and as to closing the premises completely or for a specified time on polling days, during Parliamentary or municipal elections. If the holder of the licence makes default in any of the conditions so attached to it the justices may, on the next application for its renewal, refuse renewal, and refuse it without compensation. There are a number of other minor provisions in the Bill dealing with special branches of the law which I am sure, after the length at which I have detained the House, I shall be excused if I pass over. I have explained as clearly as I can the main provisions of the Bill; and, whatever be its merits or demerits, the House will see that it is a large and comprehensive scheme. All its provisions are directed, and directed solely, to securing the two objects which I indicated at the outset—first, an immediate improvement, not only by the reduction of licences, in the conditions under which this traffic is now carried on; and, secondly, the ultimate recovery by the State of complete dominion of its property and freedom of action. The Bill is not conceived, I say once again, in a spirit of vindictiveness or hostility to any particular interest. It is not proposed by us at this moment as incapable of amendment. We invite criticism upon it and, as long as that criticism is honest—and by "honest" I mean loyal to the general and governing purposes of the scheme—we shall welcome it; and, if we are convinced of its justice, we shall be ready to defer to it. I beg to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Licensing Acts, 1828 to 1906."—(*Mr. Asquith.*)

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Nobody is likely to complain of the length of the speech which the right hon. Gentleman has just delivered. He had to deal with an extremely complicated measure. He has dealt with it not only with admirable lucidity, but, as I think, with great conciseness and a mastery of the art of compression, which is not always easy for those who have to deal with great and complex subjects of legislation to exhibit when they are explaining their proposals to the House. I shall have no excuse for trespassing at great length on the time of the House, and do not intend to do so on the present occasion. Manifestly the great mass of the questions with which the right hon. Gentleman dealt are more questions which we shall have to discuss on the Committee and the subsequent stages; they do not touch the fundamental and main principles, and it is those to which I shall address myself. I am quite ready to give the right hon. Gentleman credit—a kind of credit which he has in past times been very reluctant to bestow upon his political opponents—that in bringing forward this measure he is endeavouring to further the great cause of temperance. I agree with him that no greater cause exists. I agree with him that among all the social evils which meet us in every walk of life, every sphere of activity, the greatest of all the evils is the evil of intemperance. But let it be remembered—as a general observation which I am sure must have been present to many minds while the right hon. Gentleman was speaking—that what this House or any Legislature can do to deal with vice—for intemperance is a vice—is relatively unimportant. It can aid, but it can do no more than aid, those other great social forces exercised by the preacher, lay or clerical, exercised by public opinion, by the changed and, as I believe, the improving views on this subject which are gradually dominating all classes of the community. All we can do in our capacity as legislators is to aid these other great and fructifying forces upon which we must in the main rely for any great and beneficial change in the habits of our countrymen. And, therefore, the question that we have to ask is not whether a measure of this kind is going to produce some enormous advance in the practice of temperance, I doubt whether the right hon. Gentleman himself supposes it. I was one of the authors of a Bill, much abused, which at all events, it is admitted, has had the effect while in operation of largely diminishing the number of licences, and that was the object of it. And in connection with it I at the time and have since examined what statistical evidence or scientific proof can be adduced that there is any clear and close connection between the number of licences in any district, and the temperance of that district, and I think everybody who has endeavoured to carry out the investigations of which I speak will come to my conclusion, namely, that it is very hard indeed to trace that close connection, and that, since it is hard to prove it, we should be rash indeed to base upon any scheme which merely had in view the reduction of licences any too high hopes of any amelioration in the morals of the community in respect of intemperance or excessive indulgence in alcoholic drinks. Therefore, when the right hon. Gentleman tells us that his two great objects are to diminish the number of licences and to give to the community the monopoly value of them, I have to observe that the first of those objects is one which, desirable as I quite agree it is, is not one upon which we ought to build too great hopes, and that the other is merely a financial rather than an ethical matter. We have given in the past by reckless legislation this monopoly value; we have created this vast amount of property; we should, I agree, cease to create it; but we should deal with it, where it has been created, in a spirit of fairness and equity. But the control of the community over this monopoly value is after all not an ethical, but a financial question, and it therefore falls into a much lower category in importance, and appeals to much humbler motives than the larger issues to which the cause of temperance so rightly and so properly appeals. With this preface I ask the House to consider what the Government's plan really is. The right hon. Gentleman is going, as I understand, it, to make an enormous reduction in licences, and he is going to do it by destroying what is now the legal, practical, and equitable property of a large and, as far as I am aware, a not undeserving class of the community. I do not think that can be right, even if some great moral end is to be gained by it or appears to be likely to be gained by it; because I do not think that morality can be founded upon immorality, or that you are likely really to advance any great cause, whatever it may be, by basing your whole apparatus upon a foundation of injustice. You are not going to advance any great cause in the sense in which I am speaking. I wish I could believe you were. At all events, it would be a consolation, if the Bill passes in its present form, for the injustice which I think it is going to inflict on a minority of the population to feel that the majority of the population were being substantially and practically relieved of a temptation to which they are now subjected, and that we might look forward to an entirely different spirit pervading our whole population with regard to temperance. But if the Bill passes in its present shape there is no such prospect, and the right hon. Gentleman does not pretend that there is such a prospect, and not one word in his speech suggested that he entertained these vain and illusory hopes. What we have to reflect is that, for no great moral object, with no prospect of some enormous improvement in the morals of our people, you are going to commit what I shall show in a moment to be a gross injustice to a small part of the community; and I am not sure, when I come to discuss another part of his scheme, whether I cannot show that even such machinery as the right hon. Gentleman has in view for diminishing drunkenness is not going to break down under the growth of clubs with which this Bill deals, but with which it certainly does not deal in a manner from the temperance point of view which is likely to be effective. I have said that this Bill is, on the face of it, going to inflict great hardship and injustice on a certain class of people. I listened with some pain, I admit, to the exultant cheers with which hon. Gentlemen opposite greeted every proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer which had for its object the injury of existing licence-holders—[AN HON. MEMBER: Not licence-holders, but brewers.]—the owners of property connected with licences, whether they be shareholders in breweries, or publicans managing public-houses. I am not a shareholder in a brewery, but I believe that the shareholders are a most respectable class. They are certainly a widely diffused class, and I have no reason to believe that they are less reputable citizens than the shareholders in any other industrial concern. At all events, I think this House owes them an equal meed of justice to that which it would exercise in favour of any class in the kingdom. The right hon. Gentleman went into a long legal disquisition, admirably stated, with regard to the statute law governing the sale of intoxicating liquor in this country. I have not a word to say against that legal disquisition. No man is a greater master of the law, and no man in this House is better qualified to expound it than the right hon. Gentleman. But we have to deal, not with statute law, but with admitted equities. We have to deal with what is treated by every class in the community at the present time as property, saleable, exchangeable, taxable, rateable property which has to bear all the public incidence of property, property which can be exchanged, which can be bought, in the open market, and which has a market price. The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well, and has never denied, that the Inland Revenue of which he is the head, exacts from the estate of those who have property in licensed buildings a proportion not based upon the vaule which he is going to give compensation for, but based on the market value of the property. The right hon. Gentleman has invented a new scale by which this property is to be estimated. He does not pretend for a moment that the scale which he proposes as legislator is the same scale on which he is acting as administrator. He does not for a moment pretend that any licence-holder under this Bill is going to retain the amount of property from which every day he is extracting a tax in his capacity of Chancellor of the Exchequer. I frankly admit I am wholly unable to explain or understand the ethical basis of that proposition. I believe that my right hon. and learned friend beside me can expound it much better than I can. I was told the other day—I am not going into the figures—of a case in which the Secretary of State for War got an enormous price—for the country—by the sale of licensed premises. I cannot conceive that the value of those premises will, after this Bill, and on the scale which the right hon. Gentleman is going to put upon them, sink from the sum which the right hon. Gentleman as administrator obtained for them to the level which the right hon. Gentleman as legislator thinks ought to be given for them. How are you going to find any equitable theory on which a transaction like that is based? There is no such theory. Observe, if I understand the right hon. Gentleman rightly, what the Government are going to do is to inflict the following hardships on the existing owner of licensed property:—You are, first of all, going to put all the compensation levy, not into the hands of quarter sessions or of the local authority, but into the hands of the central authority. The result of that will be that those who have paid the compensation in consequence of which the houses in a district have diminished will not gain by that diminution. The gain will or may go to some far distant part of the country, and one of the sets-off against the compensation levy will be taken away from existing owners of licensed premises. The second hardship is that you are going, as I understand the proposition of the right hon. Gentleman, to value this property upon a wholly new and, as I think, an entirely arbitrary valuation. I admit that the whole subject is full of technical difficulties, and if I were to embark on an elaborate discussion of the relations of tied houses to brewers, and how that affected rent and valuation, I might puzzle the House, but I do not think I should enlighten them. But I will put a quite simple case to the right hon. Gentleman and those who approve of this Bill, which, I think, will illustrate my point as to the inequitable character of the right hon. Gentleman's estimate of this property. Let us not consider the case of the tied house at all, but of a free house, of the man who owns the licence of premises where he has liberty to buy from whom he likes. You are going, as I understand the matter, to estimate the value of his property upon methods which are far removed, and which will give totally different results from any plan on which either the Inland Revenue would proceed in taxing his property for death duties or others would act in estimating the capital value of the property for purchase. You are not going to try to get the market value; you are not aiming at paying the man back a sum equal to that which he would get in the market. We spent yesterday in discussing, under the guillotine, the question of substituting for all rating purposes in Scotland the capitalised value of some things of which it is very difficult to get at the capitalised value. Here, you are going to deal with what ought to be capitalised value, and it is quite easy to get at it. But you refuse to get at it in the only fair way by estimating what a purchaser would give in a free market, if the thing were put for sale, before this legislation was brought in or threatened. That is the fair value. Anything short of that is robbery, and I cannot believe that it is right or honest of this House to make themselves collaborators in a scheme which, under various specious names, is no less than a plan for diminishing the number of licences by depriving a lot of innocent victims of property to which they have an equitable title. There is a third grievance produced by this Bill, and I am not sure it is not the most serious of all. The right hon. Gentleman is going to have a time-limit. He turned round to his followers and said, in impassioned and eloquent terms, that it was a matter of honour with his colleagues and himself to impose a time-limit. In other words, they made so many speeches in favour of a time-limit in 1904 that, whether a time-limit were just or unjust, it was quite impossible for them to avoid imposing it. I appreciate the right hon. Gentleman's difficulty. I think it would have been rather hard on him to swallow everything he said on the subject in the impassioned debates which took place three or four years ago, and I suppose he is almost driven to adopt some form of time-limit in regard to his own consistency, if not in regard to the equities of the case. But observe how you are going to work the time-limit. You are going to say that, at the end of fourteen years, a whole class of property now in existence shall cease to exist. You are going to say that, during that fourteen years the owners of the property are to spend annually the sum of money settled under the Act of 1904, known as the compensation levy, and that, in addition, they are to pay a second insurance for themselves which is to be on such a scale that at the end of the fourteen years the whole of their property is to be returned to them in the form of insurance. That seems to me to be a grotesque proposal. Under the name of insurance you are going to require a man or a company so to deprive himself or themselves of his or their annual income that practical bankruptcy must stare him or them in the face. I do not see how you can possibly justify that. Take the case of a man who has, since 1904, been paying compensation. He owns, we will say, a house which is admirably conducted, and which is, probably, the last house which the magistrates are likely to interfere with or to destroy. That man will now have to go on paying up to the fourteenth year all the compensation levy by which his fellows in the trade are to be compensated when their licences are removed, and, at the end of his time, he is either to be beggared, to be turned out in the world without a shilling, or else he has to deprive himself of what must be the bare necessaries of life in order that, within the fourteen years, he may pay, not merely the existing compensation, but the new insurance which is to equal the whole present value of his property. There is no use in quoting bishops to me in a matter of that kind. It surely is a really quite plain matter of common financial equity. It is a perfectly simple case of not depriving a man of that which he owns under the name of compelling him to insure. You call it insurance. It is robbery, and I do not see what dexterity will get over that. I have never supposed for a moment, nor did the other authors of the Act of 1904 suppose, that the owners of licensed property had a freehold in that particular property, and I can quite conceive that after a term of years, during which there was no disturbance, you might say: "You have had time to insure, you have had a security of tenure which is less than freehold, and we gave you ample time in which to make the necessary provision for the moment at which the State will resume the licence." But that is not the proposal of the right hon. Gentleman. The Government are, in the first place, proposing a period which is preposterously short—[MINISTERIAL Cries of "No."]—and, in the second place, they are requiring the unhappy man not merely to insure against the extinction of his own licence, but to insure against the extinction of that of everybody else—a double insurance which seems to me to be absolutely outside any conceivable defence upon broad grounds of justice or of equity. I turn from that to what seems to me an even more important aspect of the case. I do not know whether the House was as much impressed as I was by the statement of the right hon. Gentleman to the effect that, as soon as, or soon after, licences were suppressed under the Act of 1904, clubs sprung up to take their place. The right hon. Gentleman told us the two great objects of this measure were the reduction of facilities and the recovery of control. How are you going to reduce facilities if you are going to leave it free to any body of persons in this country, when you have deprived them of the power of going into licensed premises, to form themselves into a club? The right hon. Gentleman is going to introduce a very excellent provision by which any club in which there is gross drunkenness or immorality may be suppressed. Well, that is quite right. If the right hon. Gentleman thinks anything is to be gained by it, send in your inspectors. For my part I do not object to his sending an inspector, even in uniform, into the clubs both in Pall Mall and in the country. I do not think anybody has a right to have their feelings offended, nor do I think their feelings would be offended. But that is not the real difficulty. The real difficulty is that many public-houses are not merely places where people get alcoholic stimulants; they are places where people also get an opportunity of smoking their pipes and enjoying the society of their friends as well as having their glass of beer—perfectly innocent amusements. Very well, you do by this Bill deprive the classes that use public-houses of the power of obtaining those perfectly legitimate social enjoyments in the public-house. They immediately start a club, by which the want which you have caused may be supplied. That is perfectly legitimate. That is not a bogus club, it is a perfectly respectable and proper club. Men meet together and they say: "Very well, the public-house that we have frequented has been suppressed. Let us form a club. We do not want to encourage intoxication; but we are prevented from playing innocent games at the public-house" [laughter]—there are innocent games at the public-house—"but at a club we shall be able to play what games we like. We were turned out of the public-house at 10 o'clock, or whatever the hour is; nobody will be able to turn us out of a club. A wise Legislature has decided that we should only go on Sundays to a public-house to obtain a glass of beer for an hour in the afternoon and two hours in the evening, except in Wales; let us start a club where, if we desire it, we may have Sunday entertainments, innocent entertainments, undisturbed by police, adorned perhaps by the occasional presence of a sergeant in plain clothes, but otherwise unimpeded and untrammelled." How are you going to prevent that sort of club? I was convinced before, but I am doubly convinced by the speech of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that the only result of carrying too far this policy of diminishing the number of licences will be not that you will diminish the amount of alcoholic liquor which is consumed, but that you will diminish the amount of alcoholic liquor which is consumed under conditions which are subject to law and the perpetual supervision of the guardians of the law, and where you have a control which, sergeant or no sergeant, you will never be able to get for a working man's or any other club in this country. Does anybody think that the picture I have drawn is exaggerated? Well, have not I got the justification for it in the right hon. Gentleman's own Bill? He told us that even under the Act of 1904, the limited effect of which (though I should have thought it was a considerable effect), is the subject of derisory attack by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite—that Act which only abolished 1,400 licences in the year—very well, even under that Act, small as has been its effects in the opinion of its critics, these clubs have sprung up. That is admitted by the Government. Have they shown in the description of their own Bill the smallest indication that they are going to provide any safeguards against that process going on? They not only provide no safeguards, but they know that it is not possible to provide safeguards. They know as well as I do that men will not submit to these interferences. The idea of telling Englishmen that they may not hire premises to form a club and do in the poorer districts of the country what their richer brethren are allowed to do every day in the rich districts—why, it is ridiculous. Therefore I say that even the limited temperance effects which part of this Bill might be supposed to produce would be more than counteracted by the augmentation of the unlicensed premises which it does nothing to diminish or control. The two objects which the right hon. Gentleman sets out to pursue he himself is defeating. He tells us he is going to reduce facilities, and it merely turns out that he is going to destroy a great many quite innocent licence-holders. That does not mean that he is going to reduce the amount of facilities which citizens of this country have for obtaining liquor. He tells us he is going to recover the control of the licensed trade; but nobody can recover the control of that part of the liquor trade in which the consumption takes place not upon licensed premises but upon premises belonging to clubs. The second part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech exposes the hollow fallacy of the first part, and we are thus left in this unhappy position, that the Government, in consequence of their many speeches and pledges, are driven to bring in a Bill which violates what I regard as in many respects the fundamental equities which should govern our legislative proposals. That is in itself a great evil. But when we ask what compensating advantages the authors of these predatory proposals have to offer us, it turns out that you are not going to diminish the amount of liquor consumed, you are going to transfer the consumption of that liquor from premises over which the magistrates and the police have control to premises over which they have no control. That is a deplorable result, which certainly will not conduce to temperance; and I believe that this Bill is neither honest as regards the property of the licence-holders, nor is it likely to be effective in the great cause in which it is nominally introduced.

SIR THOMAS WHITTAKER (Yorkshire, W.R., Spen Valley): I desire in the first place to thank very warmly the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Government for the Bill which they have introduced. It is a very comprehensive Bill, it is a courageous Bill, and it is a Bill which will obtain the support of all lovers of temperance in the country. I will dwell very briefly on some of its provisions before I venture to reply to the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. The principle of this Bill the right hon. Gentleman told the House covered two points. The first was to secure a great reduction in the facilities for the supply of intoxicating drinks, and secondly, and in my judgment mainly, to recover for the nation full control of its own licences in regard to the sale of intoxicating liquors. No one can expect, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer has told us that he does not expect to satisfy everybody, and on one or two points of detail I would that the Bill were different; but whether he will satisfy everybody or not, I am prepared to say that, taking the Bill as a whole, it satisfies me. It does not do all I should like to see done, but I hope that I recognise a genuine, a bold, and a courageous effort to deal with one of the most difficult of our modern social problems. May I say one word about the time-limit of fourteen years, which is much longer than some of us want, but I am willing to wait fourteen years, which is a long time in the life of an individual, but a short time in the life of a nation? I am prepared to wait fourteen years to get control of the licensed trade, rather than by rejecting it run the risk of prolonging the period of delay in legislating and then have to accept a still longer time-limit. With regard to the question of the licensing authority the Government have come to the decision that they will leave the authority in the hands of the justices. That is a point upon which you will find there is a considerable difference of opinion in various parts of the country, and that opinion varies very much according to the way in which the law is administered in the locality in which people live. You will find that in some cases the bench will be the best authority, and in other cases representatives of the local council would be more satisfactory. I do welcome very much indeed the extension of self-governing powers in this matter of compensation from county boroughs to non-county boroughs with a population of 25,000 and upwards. There are a number of non-county boroughs in this country where the compensation levied is as large as it is in some counties, and this provision will free them from the incubus of quarter sessions, which have hung like a millstone round their necks when they are endeavouring to administer the licensing law. Then the power to give a veto on new licenses is a principle which some of us have fought for very long. We recognise the difficulty which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has found in doing everything in the direction which we desire, during the period of this time limit, but there can be no objection to giving the people of the district power to say that they do not want any additional licences. Just a word about clubs. We hear a great deal from the members of the liquor trade about clubs, but the first thing I ask when the brewers talk about clubs is, who supplies the clubs as well as the public-houses? Who finance these clubs and then complain that they are the bane of their existence? In the Grand Committee of 1902, when some of us on this side of the House desired to strengthen the regulation of clubs, who was it who fought us? It was the members of the liquor trade and the brewers. In the City of Bradford there are 276 fully licensed houses and 160 clubs. A point which was not touched on—I recognise its difficulty—and which seems to be important, is the entertainments given by these clubs and the admission of visitors. Anybody who reads the club papers will see that in many of them on Sunday twice a day, and sometimes three times a day, there are music-hall or theatrical entertainments. Two or three times a week also there are these entertainments and free visiting among the members of the union. A charge of 1d. or 2d. is made for programmes, which merely means that charge for admission, and drink is freely sold. We have now two points of policy on which there is widespread agreement—one, that it is undesirable that liquor should be sold in music halls, and, two, that it is undesirable that music licences should be granted to public-houses; but here you have the clubs with these entertainments going on and liquor being freely sold and this free visiting. That is a very serious matter. With regard to the Sunday closing, I could have wished that the Government had seen their way to have gone somewhat further. We are to have a reduction in the hours of selling and power is to be given to the local justices to close public houses in their locality. They need only allow one or two to be open. I wish it had been the other way, and I earnestly plead now that it may be so—that the law should not allow them to be open but should compel them to close, giving power to the justices to allow one or two of them to open. The result then would be very different. But these are minor criticisms. I regard the measure as a great measure, and I hope we shall be found in most hearty and earnest support of it.

Now if I might say a word or two in reply to the criticisms of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, he seems to think we shall be able to do very little by Act of Parliament. In Ireland, Scotland, and Wales we have been able to do something by Sunday closing. If there was a sober man in those countries on Sunday last who would have been drunk but for Sunday closing, that man was made sober by by Act of Parliament. He says that we can do but little. If we can do but little, let us do what we can. The Majority Report of the Royal Commission dealing with this point said—

> "It is undeniable that a gigantic evil remains to be remedied, and hardly any sacrifice would be too great which would result in a marked diminution of this national degradation."

If we are to take the right hon. Gentleman as the spokesman of the trade, I am afraid there will not be much sacrifice. Even the liquor trade themselves recognise this evil. They speak of the "Temptation inseparable from the trade in intoxicating liquor." Does not that mean that the facility itself is a temptation to the people? They themselves recommended a reduction of a number of public houses and set themselves to work out a scale of compensation. Though we are told we can do but little, we want to go further and do more in the way of reductions. We want largely to revise the Act of 1904. That Act gives a vested interest that did not exist before. The right hon. Gentleman said he recognised that a licence was not a freehold. It certainly is not if it can be taken away for misconduct, but the Act of 1904 practically makes it so. I noticed last week in the *Telegraph*, which usually sets itself up to defend the liquor trade, that they said, in reference to that Act, that the effect of the Act is to create a vested interest in licences. It put the trade in a much stronger position than before. It did that with great injustice to the nation. We cannot have complete control of the licences unless we get complete possession of them, and by giving the holder a right to claim compensation the Act created a dual ownership in them. We cannot do as we wish until we get complete possession, and in order that we may do that compensation must entirely cease. We do not wish to do an injustice to anybody. We wish to secure the interests of temperance, and we must in this matter satisfy the public. The right hon. Gentleman objects very much indeed to the resumption of any of these licences at the end of the time limit. He acknowledges, and no one more than he, the folly of the arrangement under which we gave an extremely valuable monopoly to a limited number of individuals for an absurdly small payment. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the folly of the legislation which allowed these interests to grow up, and said we ought to do our best to prevent them growing up in the future. But surely we must go further than that! We must recover the value of the monopoly. That is the object of this Bill. If that be not done the position will grow worse and worse. As you decrease the licences the value of the remaining ones increases. They must become more valuable the fewer they are. If these licences are really the property of the licence holders, under what plea of justice do you make a levy for compensation? It is adding insult to injury to make a man pay money to compensate himself for the loss of his own property. Therefore by that alone you recognise that the licences are not the property of these men. The licence is not their property. It is an expectation. The other day the trade published a manifesto in the papers in which they said—

> "What we have always relied on is not the right to renewal. . . . We relied on the expectation of renewal."

If that is true, that at once gets rid of the property claim. It is a speculation —you put money into an expectation. Lord Selborne said it was a *locus standi* for renewal. All that implies that it might be refused. I now pass to this point, that all these good people who have put their money into the liquor trade have put it in on expectation. That is not new law. Eighty years ago Lord Brougham declared the position as clearly as it could be stated. The nation has been made aware that these licences are subject to refusal at the end of any year, and it was with that full knowledge that people put their money into the trade. I looked up the figures in a recent Stock

Exchange Year Book and I found 360 brewery and distillery companies given in the volume. Of those 360, 345 were registered and put before the public after the year 1882, that is the year of the decision of the "Over Darwen" case—that well-known case which made it perfectly clear to everybody that these licences were subject to refusal at the end of any year. It was in that year that a letter appeared in one of the trade papers writted by Mr. Nash, counsel to the liquor trade. In that letter, Mr. Nash said—

> "I am sorry to say, having looked into this question most exhaustively and compared notes with many of my brethern well-versed in these matters, that there cannot be the smallest doubt that in the strict sense no such thing as a vested interest exists and that, subject to appeal, the magistrates can refuse to renew the licence of the largest, most useful and best-conducted hotel in England. I daresay this will stagger many owners, but it is high time that the trade fully realised their position and did not remain an instant in a state of false security."

It was after that knowledge that 345 out of 360 brewery and distillery companies were registered and went to the public for their capital. Therefore I say that the people who put their money into them did it with the full knowledge of the position and that they are not entitled to so much sympathy as they now ask for. When we see documents such as have been circulated in the House to-day are we to understand that these men—these bankers, trustees, directors—of trust companies and the rest—deliberately invested the funds in their charge in debentures in these concerns and during all this time have not adopted the precaution of creating a sinking fund or writing down the value of these properties? If so, they have been guilty of negligence and unpardonable recklessness, and there has not been ordinary commercial prudence in dealing with an investment of that kind. I know that some gentlemen have invested their own money in this way, but it is a speculation all the same. You are at liberty to put your own money into it no doubt, but you are not at liberty to invite other people to put their money in without telling them that half, two-thirds, or three-fourths of the security depends on an annual licence. You are not justified in asking people to put money in unless you can protect their interest by setting up a sinking fund, and I think that the time allowed to enable that to be effected is substantial, liberal, generous and reasonable. The right hon. Gentleman cannot understand the reasonableness of the proposal under which the owner of a licensed property is to pay towards the levy for compensation, and also to set up a sinking fund. But it is an ordinary every-day occurrence. Any man who owns a leasehold house in London, for instance, knows that at the end of a certain time the lease will fall in, and the property will pass from him. If he is a prudent man, he sets up a sinking fund during the time of the lease, and he also insures against fire. It is the same with a ship. Any man with a ship sets up a sinking fund against the time when the ship will be practically of no value, and he also insures against risk of loss. Under the time limit, we give to the trade a definite fixed period during which the holder will be in the full enjoyment of the licence, and he can set up a sinking fund to redeem the value of the licence; the compensation contribution is merely an insurance to protect him in case of the loss of the licence during the currency of the time limit. It seems to me quite a reasonable proposal. Another important point is that the reduction of the number of houses will add to the value of the remaining houses, and practically the sinking fund would do almost alone for what they want. A house sells, say, a thousand pounds' worth of liquor. The gross profit upon that is about £400, and the net profit about £200. Take an area in which there are twelve of these houses, each making a net profit of £200. That gives £2,400. Supposing you abolish three of the houses, reducing the number to nine. These nine may make £200 each as before—£1,800; but it is probable that two-thirds of the trade which had been done in the other three houses would go to the remaining nine houses. Two-thirds of the gross profits of those three houses had been £800, and practically that additional trade would go to the remaining nine houses without extra cost of working; that is to say that the gross profit of the three houses would practically be the net profit of the nine houses, and that additional trade would be done by these nine houses without extra working expenses. Therefore, if the gross profit of the three houses is added to the £1,800 of the nine houses you have a profit from these nine houses of £2,600. They would be making more profit in those nine houses than they did in them when there were twelve houses. ["No!"] Well, answer it then. Deal with it. They even make more profit in the nine houses than in the twelve because of the reduction of working expenses, and that would go a long way to help them to provide the compensation. Then the right hon Gentleman objects to this fund being made national, because it would be used to compensate for licences that are removed in areas where those who make the payments receive no benefit. That is what takes place now. The compensation fund of the right hon. Gentleman is levied over quarter sessions areas, and quarter sessions areas are often counties. They pay to this compensation fund in all parts of the county without any reference to the fact that there will be no reduction of houses in some parts of the areas from which the payments are derived. Many owners of public-houses pay to this levy without any reduction taking place in their particular locality. The fact is that it is recognised that this is an arrangement for the whole trade—a kind of compulsory insurance, and there is no difference in that respect in the arrangement now proposed. They pay the levy whether or not there be a reduction in their locality, and they will do the same under the arrangements of this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman made a very useful admission in accepting the Chancellor of the Exchequer's statement of the law. The right hon. Gentleman's statement of the law was wonderfully clear, and seemed to me to be exceedingly powerful—the absolute legal right of the nation to do what it likes with its own licences. The right hon. Gentleman admits that. Then he comes to what he is pleased to call equity and rights of property. But can a man have a right of property in expectation and not in law? An expectation cannot be a permanency. An expectation is capable of being liquidated by a term of years. That is what the Bill proposes to do. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer dealt with the question of the death duties. The Inland Revenue levies the death duties upon the market value of the estate at the time of death. It does not in any sense or in any way go into the question of the wisdom or justice of that method. People put a value on all kinds of things—race horses, old china, pictures, licences, but the Inland Revenue does not go into the reasonableness or permanence of that value; it takes the market value. If people put an extravagant value on the expectation of the renewal of a licence, the duty is levied upon it. But it does not mean that the Inland Revenue justifies that value. In 1895, British South Africa shares (Rhodesia) were sold at £9, and death duties would be paid on £9 if anyone holding them died at the time they were at that price. To-day they stand at 14s. 6d. By charging death duties on £9 the Inland Revenue did not in the least indicate that the shares would stop at that value, still less did they indicate that they would refund if they went down. They took them at their market price. But the Leader of the Opposition thinks it very wrong indeed that these licences should be compensated on the value at which they are taxed, and he thinks that it would be wrong to tax them at their market value. The annual value of the premises should be a fair representation of the market value of those premises, the market selling price. The community is being defrauded. The fact is that a number of houses are not paying a fair amount of rates and taxes. They have not been properly assessed. If they were properly assessed, the basis which the right hon. Gentleman suggests would provide a fair and equitable estimate of value and compensation. I expect that we shall have a very curious anomaly when this Bill is passed, as I hope it will be. We shall have owners of public-house property going to the public assessment authorities and wanting them to put up the assessments. We have had this year, and the Return giving full particulars will be published within a day or two, the case of a public-house in the city of London the licence of which was refused, and in regard to which the owner was awarded 100 years' purchase on the gross assessment to property tax. In other cases sixty, seventy, and eighty years' purchase was given, while the owner still has the property. He loses the licence and he is compensated for it a hundred times the annual value at which the whole lot has been assessed. Then there was a case where the house was assessed at £68, and in which the owner got £7,700 compensation for the licence alone, and he is still left with his property. I say that the public are being defrauded. These people have not been paying their fair share of the rates and taxes, and because they have not been doing that, their property has a higher market value. It seems to me that the robbery is rather the other way. I want to renew my thanks to the Government. When Sir William Harcourt introduced his Bill, now more years ago than some of us care to remember, he said he was aware that he was venturing on a sea the shores of which were strewn with many wrecks. An old official of this House some time ago told me that his experience had shown him that the most dangerous subjects for a Government to touch were drink and religion. This Government has enough courage to touch both of them. We have got a strong Government. [OPPOSITION laughter.] Yes, and it takes a strong Government to have the courage to do this. We have had strong Governments who have bowed the knee to the liquor trade. This Government does not do that. It is a strong and courageous Government; and I venture to appeal to the temperance people of this country, to the Liberal Party of this country, and to the Labour men of this country, to support them in taking a substantial step towards removing a gigantic evil which is a national degradation.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle): I think that when we are brought face to face with this question one may be permitted to express the hope that as far as possible it may be considered free from the spirit of partisanship. It seems to me that a measure dealing with this great social problem ought to be considered as dispassionately and fairly as ever we possibly can consider it, having regard to the relationship of this great question to the whole nation. Keeping that view before me, I desire to offer my sincere congratulations to the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Government for what I conceive to be a legitimate attempt to deal with a very difficult problem. Taking the scheme as a whole, I do not know that during the time I have been associated with the House I ever heard a scheme unfolded which gave me such general satisfaction. I congratulate him in the first place upon the application of the principle of trusting the localities themselves, a question upon which those associated with the Labour Party feel strongly. Far too long in connection with licensing have the people who were most affected by the licences been ignored. There has existed for a long time a power resting with the individual in the case of the landlord to veto licences on his estate, but so far as the great wage-earning section of the population is concerned, they have been exposed continuously to the danger of the licensing authority placing licences even in redundancy in their areas, and exposing them to all the danger that that involves. I recently pointed out to the right hon. Gentleman on a deputation on the subject that during the last twenty-five years there had been tremendous improvements in connection with the life of a great number of the wage-earners of the country. They had taken advantage of increased facilities of transit, they had gone to live in entirely new districts. Many of them had put into practice that spirit of thrift that is constantly being preached to working men, and through building societies and other agencies they had become the owners of their own little property in the shape of the cottage in which they reside. But what have we found from experience? As soon as these new districts have become sufficiently populated the working men who have made this investment have been subjected at the hands of the licensing justices to an entirely unjustifiable lack of consideration, and at the instigation of some brewery company licences have been planted down in the midst of this new property, exposing the families living thereon to social and moral deterioration and the property to depreciation in value. Therefore, I congratulate the Government that they have had the courage to recognise the value of trusting the people in the localities with a direct vote upon the issue of new licences. I hope I am right in concluding that the principle of the veto will apply to all licences immediately after the expiration of the time limit. If that is so, on that particular point it increases my satisfaction. I believe no truer word was ever uttered than when the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham said—

> "The attempt to deal with this subject for the people and without the people has been a conspicuous failure. Acts have been passed, tried and thrown aside, and the evil remains unabated. I do not wonder that good and earnest men should despair in the presence of the persistent continuance of the evil, of being able to find any successful remedy; but when statesmen have only made matters worse, and Parliament has legislated to no purpose, I am still sanguine that the people themselves, if wholly trusted, would do something to mitigate the plague and stay its ravages."

I think the Government have chosen the right line in applying the principle of the veto to new licences and to all licences at the expiration of the time limit. I think the Leader of the Opposition deplored the fact that the Government had selected so short a period as the time-limit. I deplore the fact that so long a period has been chosen. The right hon. Gentleman's speech seemed to run upon the assumption that this position which was going to be dealt with had been practically for all time as his Bill of 1904 created it. The position that he created in 1904, however, was one which had never obtained in the whole history of licensing in this country. Those of us who may be found generally supporting this measure are not alone in holding the opinion that that was an entirely new principle. I should like to quote one opinion from an organ of the Press generally very loyal to the Conservative Party, the *Pall Mall Gazette*, which at the time that Bill was before Parliament said—

> "Neither Mr. Balfour nor any other authority has been able to disprove the obvious fact that the Bill as it now stands will give the publican a vested interest which he has never possessed in law, in equity, or in the calculations of the trade."

There is at any rate one opinion that ought to have some weight with the supporters of the right hon. Gentlemen. May I further show, in order to prove what has really been practically for all time, until his Act passed, the legal position. As far back as 1828, Lord Brougham declared—

Mr. Arthur Henderson.

> "The justices have everything at their absolute discretion, and no one has any control over them in these matters. It is in their absolute power to give a licence to one of the most unfit persons possible, and it is in their power to refuse a licence to one of the most fit persons possible. They may continue a licence to some person who has had it for a twelvemonth and during that time has made his house a nuisance to the whole of the neighbourhood, or they may take away the licence from a house to which it has been attached for a century and which has not only been attended by no evil but has been productive of great public benefit."

Then further repeated attempts have been made in the Law Courts to alter this legal position. In the Darwen case which dealt with the tenure of off-licences, Mr. Justice Field said—

> "The Legislature recognises no vested right at all in any holder of a licence. Every licence is a new licence, although granted to a man who has had one before, for it is only granted for one year."

Mr. Justice Stephen concurred, and said—

> "The justices can either refuse or confirm these certificates on any ground they like, and whether the application is for a new certificate or made for the twentieth time, and whether the applicant is of unblemished character, as in this case, or of bad character."

These legal opinions have been upheld in every case that has been brought for the purpose of upsetting the law, and it has been clearly and thoroughly established that there was nothing more than the mere right of expectation of having the licence renewed right up till the passing of the Act of 1904. Keeping that in mind, surely to be told that a time limit of fourteen years is too short appears to me to be carrying the argument altogether too far. We who think fourteen years rather too long have more argument in our favour than have those who object to the time limit as being too short. Then I congratulate the Government for having been sufficiently able to deal with the question of clubs. Everybody knows, especially those who move in great industrial centres, that this evil has been growing during the last few years at a tremendous rate. I was glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman say that any legislation must apply equally to the clubs of the rich as to those who are not so rich. On this point I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman one question. I did not quite understand whether the clubs are to be allowed to enjoy unfettered liberty as to the hours of opening.

MR. ASQUITH: The Bill as it is drawn at present does not contain any provisions as to the hours of closing. In regard to the whole of this matter I am very open to suggestion.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON: I thank the right hon. Gentleman for that observation. It seems to me that it is almost useless to attempt to remedy the evils associated with club life as many of us know it to-day if there is to be this full discretion as to the hours of opening and closing. In fact, in many cases I do not know that it comes to be a question of opening, because I doubt whether they are ever really closed, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will very seriously consider this. His provisions for dealing with the clubs seem to me to be based very largely upon a desire to remove an injustice from the licence holder. If that be so, if the licensed holder is restricted in his hours of sale we are not doing anything like full justice if we allow the club unlimited hours. The right hon. Gentleman must recognise the point of my argument that he ought to do justice to a fuller extent than he hinted in his speech. Another observation which I should like to submit to the right hon. Gentleman is this: He gave us to understand that so far as the Metropolis is concerned there is to be no difference in the hours in regard to Sunday sale. Do I understand from that that any restrictions which he is going to impose against clubs will also apply to the whole of the clubs in the Metropolis.

MR. ASQUITH: Oh, yes.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON: There again that will mean that there will be a differentiation if he accepts my suggestion about the restriction of the hours of the clubs in the country, and there will be too wide a distinction between the provisions as applied to clubs in the country and clubs in London. If he restricts the hours of the clubs in the country, they would I suppose be restricted on Sunday; at least I should sincerely hope so. Then we should have that distinction between the hours that clubs can open on Sundays and the hours they would open in London.

MR. ASQUITH: Perhaps I had better make the point clear in order to avoid a misapprehension. We propose to alter the general law on Sunday as regards the whole of the country, giving the magistrates certain discretionary powers.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON: Again I have to thank the right hon. Gentleman. I was anxious to get this point made clear. I am pleased to learn that the powers to be given to the justices are to apply to the Metropolis. That was one of the most disappointing parts of the speech, when I heard him say that no difference was to be made in the hours of opening and closing as they obtained in this great Metropolis. During the few years I have lived in London, I have learned a great deal, in fact I have learned more than I ever did before upon this question, and I must say that if there is a place that appears to me to have an unanswerable case for curtailment of hours on Sundays, it is this great Metropolis. I saw within half an hour at the "Elephant and Castle" more people go in for liquor during the opening hours of Sunday than I have ever seen in any single week before during the whole of my life. The more you go about London, whether at mid-day or evening on Sunday, the more evidence you can find of a strong case being made out for a reduction of the hours of opening on Sunday. I regret that the Chancellor of the Exchequer has had to admit that in this England of ours we are not as far advanced as the country from which I came. I do not agree with the statement made with regard to Scotland as to increased drinking there. From what I know of it, I believe that Sunday closing has been to that country as it has been to Ireland and Wales, an immense benefit. I only wish that the Government had gone the whole hog and given us entire Sunday closing. It is, however, a satisfaction to know that we can use all our influence with our local authorities, and if the local authorities are at all in earnest it will not be long before a great limitation, if not an entire closing, of public-houses takes place in many districts. In regard to the children, I was not quite clear as to whether in the Bill any age at all had been fixed at which children could be taken into a public bar and supplied with liquor.

MR. ASQUITH: No.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON: Then that is a source of regret to me, for I believe there is no subject upon which there is in this country to-day such a volume of opinion in favour of restriction and a limitation of age—say the age of sixteen—at which children shall not be permitted, either to receive liquor in the bar or to enter a public bar, or that part of the public bar where liquor is usually supplied. I believe there would be an almost unanimous note of congratulation to the Government, if they could see their way clearly to accept an Amendment stipulating that sixteen should be the age limit. I venture to express the hope that before the remaining stages of this Bill have been got through, the right hon. Gentleman will be willing to receive an Amendment on this point on the lines I have indicated, because unless we make up our minds to protect the children from the demoralising atmosphere of many of our drinking bars—and I say this, having read recently those terrible facts brought to light by Mr. G. R. Sims—the probabilities are that in years to come we shall have to deplore much of the evil we deplore to-day, which arises from the sale of intoxicating liquors. In conclusion, let me say that I am delighted that the Government have given us what I would venture to call a comprehensive measure. I hope there will be no weakening of the main principle; if anything, let us strengthen the Bill. I was a little surprised to hear from the Leader of the Opposition that we could not do much good by legislation of this character. What we can do, however, is to lay down such conditions as will prevent a tremendous amount of harm being done.

*MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, S.): I regret that I must dissociate myself from the hon. Member who has just sat down and the hon. Member who preceded him in felicitating the Government upon the measure they have to-day introduced to the notice of the House. I will preface my observations with the hope that it may not be assumed that because any Member of this House, more especially if he happens to sit on this side, entertains that view, he therefore is in any way lacking in the enthusiasm or the interest of the most earnest temperance reformer. There is a fundamental difference between us on the question of method. I find there is a certain party in this House which stands aghast at the magnitude of the drink evil, and confessing itself helpless to grapple with it, deifies the State, canonises the Government, and prostrates itself before the Chancellor of the Exchequer and asks him to endeavour to accomplish by Act of Parliament something which only human and social evolution can do. That being my view, I am amazed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer on behalf of the Government should respond to such an appeal. I am surprised that with all the great financial and social problems with which he has to deal, and pledged as he is up to the hilt to raise more funds for all kinds of pressing social need, he should now deliberately tamper with his principal source of revenue, and abandon that which I hold to be the legitimate symbol of his office, the rake of the croupier, for the crook of the Good Shepherd. However that character may become him in his private capacity it is certainly out of place in his official character. I now venture to ask him with great respect, and I would also ask any hon. Member who supports this Bill, one or two simple questions, to which I think I am entitled to receive an answer. Why is this Bill introduced? Is the evil of intemperance on the increase? Is the consumption of alcoholic drink on the increase? Has there been any increase in the number of licences granted? Is there any increase of crime attributable in any way to drink? If none of these questions can be answered in the affirmative, then the substratum of this measure has gone. [Cries of "Oh, oh!"] If it be the fact that intemperance in this country is an ever lessening evil, if the licences are being automatically reduced, and if the class of crime attributed to drink is decreasing, (except in those districts which enjoy the blessing of prohibition legislation) if all this be true, then the foundation of the Bill is gone. The right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer says the two-fold object of this Bill is a reduction in licences and the resumption of State control. ["Hear, hear!"] An hon. Member says "Hear, hear," but I would like to remind him what the late Mr. Gladstone said upon the matter. Speaking of the reduction of licences Mr. Gladstone said—

> "If the reduction of licences aspires to the honour of a remedy, it seems to me that it is little less than an imposture."

That is the dictum of the late Leader of the Liberal Party and I leave my hon. friend who interrupted me to reconcile it with the first principle upon which this Bill is based. As regards the resumption of control, if I understand the English language at all I am at a loss to understand how the State can resume the ownership of something which it never possessed. I also want to know how certain Members of this House who regard the drinking habit as the greatest curse in the world are going to reconcile themselves to a position which arises under this Bill when every man in this House and every citizen of this country will become a licensed victualler and an owner of licensed premises. For myself I decline to take any such responsibility. It is quite enough for me that the law entails upon me a certain responsibility in regard to the internal affairs of the Church of England, and whilst I object to be made sober by Act of Parliament I also object to being made a licensed victualler by Act of Parliament. I am going to make myself responsible for a comprehensive statement, and then I will leave my hon. friends to dispute it. So far as the whole history of restrictive legislation goes there is no part of God's earth to which any hon. Member can point to-day and say "Here it has done good." Take general statistics of drunkenness. If you take Ireland it is 18 per 1,000; Scotland, 10 per 1,000; Wales, 10 per 1,000, and England 6 per 1,000. A few weeks ago a meeting of the City Council of Glasgow was held for the purpose of considering "the recent large increase of drunkenness." While in England drunkenness has been steadily decreasing, in Scotland and Wales it has been steadily increasing. These are facts vouched for by official documents in the possession of every Member of the House. [Cries of "No!"] Will any hon. Member get up and say in what respect I have misrepresented the facts? The "Licensing statistics of England, Scotland and Wales" are my authority for these statements. They show that in 1904 there were 13,500 convictions in Glasgow; in 1905, 15,000; and in 1906, 20,000. These figures if they tell you anything tell you that you cannot by a mere reduction of drinking facilities reduce drunkenness and that you must trust in the wisdom of what was said by Mr. Gladstone that a reduction of licences is an imposture if it aspire to the dignity of a remedy. I observed that the other day a speech was delivered by a great American whisky magnate—the chairman, indeed, of the great whisky Trust. He was addressing the shareholders, and referring to the great extension of prohibition areas he said that it would make no difference to the whisky trade; that men would have liquor if they wanted it, and that it is only the area of distribution which will be altered by legislation. Then I observe, coming nearer home, that the chairman of the Preston bench of magistrates asked the chief constable whether he could explain why it was that with a continual reduction of licenses in that town drinking was going up. The chief constable could give no explanation except that the weather had been rather unsettled of late. Speaking therefore from the argument of experience, I ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if it be a fact that in Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, the drink statistics compare every year more unfavourably with those of England, if it be a fact that prohibition legislation has never lessened the consumption of alcoholic liquor—then at least to dismiss the theory that the reduction of licences is a remedy. Leaving that point I wish to ask one or two questions. We are told that a fourteen years limit is to give sufficient time to everybody engaged in the trade to make provision for the ultimate loss of his property. I thought that one object of the Bill was materially to lessen the consumption of drink. In fact if the Bill is to have any effect at all in the course of the fourteen years the drink evil ought to have disappeared altogether. If its effect is to be that, what is the good of telling the licensed dealer: "We are taking away your trade on the one hand, and on the other, if you be a prudent man you will be able to save sufficient to compensate yourself." I am told that there has never been property in a licence. I am told it has been only a matter of "expectancy." I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether property in this country does not rest upon the foundation of "expectancy"—the expectation that there will be no alteration in the fundamental basis of the law. What does a reversion rest on but expectancy, not only of the death of the life tenant but of the sanctity of contract, and the justice of our laws? What does a solicitor rely on for his annual Certificate except the expectancy that if he is honest and respectable—and some solicitors I have heard are neither—he will get his Certificate renewed as a matter of right? Having read the judgment in the case of *Sharpe* v. *Wakefield* I have to say that I do not agree with the construction put upon it by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, which was swallowed by the hon. Member for the Spen Valley Division as such a grand exposition of it—from his own particular point of view. To my mind it decided the opposite. The judges said that there had grown up such an expectancy of renewal that the justices were bound to exercise "judicial discretion" before taking away a licence. That strengthened rather than weakened the contention of the licensed victualler that he should have his position recognised. If we look at it from another point of view we find the Chancellor of the Exchequer saying that in charging death duties on licensed property, we must have regard only to the market value of the day. The right hon. Gentleman gave the instance of an unfortunate man who might die possessed of a racehorse. The animal was taxed up to its full market value although there was no assurance that it would fulfil the expectation of the trainer, or (what is more to the point) the secret intentions of its owner. I confess if I had any prospect of impending dissolution, and that having the misfortune to possess a few quadrupeds courteously called racehorses, and if there was any chance of the Government stepping in and saying: "We will resume possession of the racehorses, for all horses originally belonged to the State," I think I would enact that the poor animals should be taken to a convenient place and shot, and thus put both them and my heirs out of their misery and suspense. Every licensed victualler has invested his money in the belief that this expectancy was a real thing. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition has said that surely the shareholders and general investors in licensed property were worthy of some consideration. A few days ago I visited the joint stock registry of this country. I have taken out these sheets of names and addresses of ministers of religion of all denominations, mainly ministers of the Established Church I admit, who, believing in the permanency of that expectation, have invested some of their hard-earned savings in licensed and brewery property. Here are the names of 1,280 ministers of religion whose little all is to-day represented by their shares in breweries and other licensed undertakings. If any hon. Member is anxious to know the particular inclination of his rector in these matters, he may have full access to these sheets. The Chancellor of the Exchequer also referred in a casual sort of way to the fact that there may be £100,000,000 or £150,000,000 invested in the licensing trade. I would say that there are £300,000,000 invested in it. There is £100,000,000 in mortgages and debentures stock alone, and I could produce a list of names showing that they are held largely by widows and in trust on behalf of minors throughout the country. The hon. Member for the Spen Valley Division may say that the shareholders had invested their money in these concerns with their eyes open. I have looked at the prospectuses of a number of the undertakings and I venture to say that not one contains a special clause calling attention to the decision in the cases to which he referred. Leaving the time limit may I say a word about the extraordinary proposal in relation to Sunday closing? If there is one aspect of licensing legislation which has been the most dismal of all failures it is the attempt to deal with Sunday closing. An hon. Member has said that he did not admit that in Scotland it had been a failure. If he will refer to the statistics, he will alter his view in relation to arrests for drunkenness on Sundays. I asked the right hon. Gentleman the Home Secretary a few days ago to give me information as to arrests in the Metropolitan district for drunkenness. In round figures the arrests were: On Saturday, 4,000; on Monday, 2,000; and on Sunday, 946. With all the facilities for drinking on Sunday, when working-men had time on their hands, there were only 946 arrests. [An Hon. Member: There are less hours on Sunday.] The hon. Member seems to forget that some working-men really do go to work on week-days. On Sunday in London working-men have six or seven hours absolutely available to do nothing but drink, and yet on ordinary week-days when they have their working hours intervening, there is the immense disparity in arrests which I have pointed out. If the object of the Bill is to promote temperance, why does not the Government introduce two clauses—one to close the public-houses on Saturday and the other to close them on Monday? As it stands, one is led to suspect that it is a Church and Chapel Relief Bill as regards closing of public-houses on Sunday. I am encouraged to take that view when I read a dismal moan by the hon. Member for Finsbury in which he points out that of the 6,000,000 of people in London no more than 15 per cent. of them attend places of worship. The number of places of worship, he tells us, is 4,000, and the average attendance is 194; while the number of public-houses is 14,000 and these have a daily attendance of many hundreds if not thousands. And then the hon. Member goes on to urge that legislation for Sunday closing should be introduced. I also find a paper called the *Christian*, which I do not pretend to take in or read regularly, bemoaning that "the result of the recent Welsh revival has now disappeared owing to the popularity of licensed premises." In view of the fact that there is on Saturday four times and on Monday twice as much drunkenness as on Sunday, why has the Chancellor of the Exchequer singled out the Sabbath Day in this Bill for closing? And where has Sunday closing anywhere in any way diminished the evils of intemperance? Turning to the question of Clubs, I confess that I feel very strongly on that subject. I listened with real amazement to the unfolding of the right hon. Gentleman's plan. I remember that the Prime Minister attributed the death of the late Government to an over indulgence in tactics; but I cannot help feeling that a total abstinence from tactics will prove equally fatal. Tactics! Why, Mr. Speaker, the present Government is throwing them to the winds. The licensed trade as a body always has been, is, and probably always will be, the enemy of the Liberal Party. But hitherto that Party has been able to rely to a large degree upon the counteracting and counterbalancing influence of the working men's clubs of the country. Now they are to be flouted and insulted. Surely the proposal to allow an ununiformed police officer to enter a working men's club to see whether the members are misconducting themselves or are guilty of improper practices is an overdose of tactics of the stupidest kind. [An Hon. Member: All clubs are to be treated alike.] My acute friend below me reminds me that this measure is to apply equally to all clubs whether working men's clubs or clubs in Pall Mall. I wonder if this Bill becomes law what he would say if he met a plain clothes constable in his club every night. Sir, since I heard that specious argument I confess that I have been wondering what is the Parliamentary phrase for "spoof?" I have been unable to find an answer to the query, and I have come to the conclusion therefore that the proper phrase to use is that the right hon. Gentleman has been "pulling our legs." The hon. Gentleman who speaks for the Labour Party spoke as if working-men went into their clubs solely for the purpose of getting drunk. I always understood that before joining a club, even a working man's club, the applicant had to give satisfactory references. [Cries of "No."] I only speak from my own experience. That, at all events, is the rule in South Hackney. And if a policeman is to be allowed to enter a club in this manner it is a monstrous invasion of the liberty of the subject; and from the point of view of tactics it is one of the most foolish things that the Government has done during its career. Looking at the general provisions of the Bill it has to be remembered that the reduction of licences can never have and never had the effect of producing a reduction of the drink consumed; and, secondly, that the State had never the right to claim the property of licences. I know I shall be told to-morrow by my friends that I always oppose licensing reform and temperance legislation. I remember the right hon. Gentleman the Under-Secretary for the Colonies paying the hon. Member for Preston the magnificent compliment that he had an intellectual predilection for unfashionable causes. I am quite prepared to be put in that category. I, however, repudiate the suggestion that I am not desirous to do everything I can to alleviate and diminish this great evil of intemperance. But all statistics point against the proposals in the Bill as dangerous and useless. That is not all. I think it was the First Commissioner of Works who told a deputation that they should take what they could get now. They might not be able to obtain all they desired in a single session, but "the more they could get now the more support they would get for a more drastic measure in a future session." The Prime Minister himself said that we should pave the way for "effecting in after years those reforms which temperance workers had at heart." Therefore this Bill is only the beginning of a policy of drastic restriction. I regard this measure as indicating the drift of the Liberal Party on to the rocks. The First Commissioner has denied that the Local Veto Bill of 1895 was the cause of the utter annihilation of the Liberal Party. May I say that at that time he was a very young man and had probably not contracted what the Leader of the Opposition would describe as the bad habit of reading the newspapers. But if he will refer to the papers of those days he will find that of fifty odd Liberal candidates for election who were then successful forty-six said that they had managed to win even despite the disadvantages of Sir William Harcourt's Bill; and of 136 unsuccessful candidates 130 attributed their defeat to that particular measure. The late Sir William Harcourt himself lost his seat on that occasion, as did Mr. Caine, whilst Sir Wilfred Lawson only just managed to keep his seat. I say that the Government are therefore by introducing this Bill getting on very dangerous ground. If I thought that any provision in the Bill would reduce by one iota the evil of intemperance I would sit up night and day and devote myself heart and soul to furthering the passage of the measure. Although temperance reformers will not give me credit for it, I am as keen as they on the subject. It is not those who talk most about temperance who are most interested in it. It is not necessarily those who obtain a reputation for being great temperance agitators who do the best for the temperance cause. While I honour every earnest man who takes a deep interest in temperance—my honest conviction is that there is an even greater asset even than temperance—especially when made by Act of Parliament, and that is the robust manhood and sturdy independence of a self-reliant people.

*MR. F. E. SMITH (Liverpool, Walton): In spite of the speech of the hon. Gentleman, I confess that I do not share his surprise or indignation at the nature of the proposal which the Government have submitted to the House. The real fact is that any one who read the speeches which were made by the Leaders of the Opposition at the time my right hon. friend introduced the last Licensing Bill would have been able to forecast with accuracy what the nature of the plan of the present Government would be in regard to licensing reform. The Opposition of that day founded themselves upon certain facts and certain inferences which they drew from these facts. I maintain that every fact and every inference drawn from the facts has been proved by the experience of the last three years to have had no foundation at all. We have had the Chancellor of the Exchequer, in introducing the Bill, saying that, without putting precise figures, he would take £100,000,000 as representing the capital value of the licences of the country. An hon. Member opposite put forward as an alternative figure £300,000,000. But will it be believed that the present Lord Chancellor, at the time of the introduction of the last Bill, said that—

> "If the discretion of the justices is to be limited, if compensation is to be provided for licences to be suppressed, as this Bill proposes, the value of all the licences proper which is estimated to-day at £300,000,000, and which I believe to be below the mark, would be £600,000,000 the day after the Bill is passed."

Is there any man sitting on that side of the House who will get up and say that the whole case on which that prediction was based has not been completely falsified by the events? The extraordinary statements that the value of brewery companies was to be so increased by the compensation to be given that it would be doubled in a comparatively short time have also been falsified. The hon. Member for Spen Valley spent his time in a disinterested and noble eulogy on His Majesty's Government which must have been very gratifying to them. The hon. Gentleman said in the debate on the last Bill that he put the value of licences at £150,000,000.

SIR THOMAS WHITTAKER: I did not.

*MR. F. E. SMITH: I took it that the hon. Member stated so in the debate, and I will give him my authority, but of course if he says he did not, I accept his statement. A few days ago, however, the hon. Gentleman, writing to *The Times*, put the present value at £100,000,000, and I must take that statement. I venture to lay before the House a proposition which everyone will accept. There has been, during these few years in which we have had an opportunity of testing the Act of my right hon friend, one tendency, and that is that instead of increasing the value of licensed property—I do not say by reason of the Act but subsequent to the Act—the securities have depreciated enormously in value, and far more rapidly than any other class of security. At the present moment no expert valuer will come forward, nor can any temperance reformer cite one who will, and deny that there has been a great depreciation of the value of licenses since the time when my right hon. friend introduced his Bill. I refer the House to a quite impartial organ, the *Statist*, which gave statistics on this question. It took seventy-eight typical companies as fairly representing the largest and most prosperous brewery companies in the Kingdom, and it found they had a total capital of £90,000,000. Of this £41,000,000 were debentures, £25,000,000 were preference shares, and £23,000,000 ordinary shares. The net profit on that total sum of £90,000,000 was £3,556,000, the return varying between 5 and 9 per cent., a very considerably lower interest than the interest which was shown in respect of the same companies in the previous five years. If it is true that we wantonly introduced a Bill which has endowed the brewers, will anyone in the course of this debate inform us why every brewery security has depreciated, and why the total value of licenses is smaller than it was at the time that so-called Endowment Bill was introduced? That is not consistent with the case put forward in the House and in the country at the time when the last Bill was introduced. But that was not the only prediction by which that Bill was opposed. We were also told on every platform and in this House that the Bill which we were introducing would not have the effect of diminishing the number of licences. We do not hear much to-night of that, although I do not fail to observe that many of the same hon. Members are still in the House. So vehement was the protest which was raised on those Benches that my right hon. friend was actually interrupted in the course of his speech, as the pages of *Hansard* will show, when he ventured to predict that the result of his Bill would be enormously to increase the speed with which licences were reduced. He was received with such dissent from those benches that he had to ask the indulgence of hon. Gentlemen opposite to be allowed to proceed. What are the facts? They deserve a little more attention than the Chancellor of the Exchequer or any other speaker has given them. During the eight years before the Act, the average reduction of licenses was 218. That was all that could be done by temperance reform up to then, and I might even go a little further and point to the action of the Liberal Party who had an opportunity of showing whether they knew any better method of reducing licenses, but did not avail themselves of it. I have given the figures of the new licenses which were granted before the Act. Take the eight years before the Act was passed, there were 218 new licenses granted. I take the three years since the Act, and the annual average was fifty-six. So far at any rate the temperance measure introduced by my right hon. friend very considerably reduced the number of new licences granted, and for the first time in our history of this question secured the monopoly value to the State without injury to anyone. Now let us take the case as far as the renewals of old licences are concerned. From 1894 to 1902 the average annual reduction of old licences of all kinds was 296, but from 1902 to 1904 the annual reduction was 644. The Chancellor of the Exchequer founded some observations upon that circumstance and said that the licensing justices were then beginning to show for the first time that they were prepared to refuse the renewal of licences on the ground that they were not required by the neighbourhood.

Mr. ASQUITH: I said it was one of the reasons for introducing the Bill.

*Mr. F. E. SMITH: I by no means dissent from that, and may I venture to remind the hon. Member of another reason for introducing the Bill, and that was that representations were made to the Government by no less than 100 licensing benches in the country that they found themselves in this position, that while there was the sense of injustice which prevailed, it would be quite impossible for them to continue to refuse licences which had been granted in the well-founded expectation of renewals. I take the figures for the two years 1903 and 1904, and the reductions then were 644. I then take altogether the averages from 1894 to 1904, which gives the House a ten years average and shows what you could do before my right hon. friend took the matter in hand. In these ten years the average reduction was 359. What are the figures since this Brewers Endowment Act, which, according to hon. Members opposite, struck the deepest blow at the heart of temperance? The figures since the Act, for 1905 and 1906, for those two years show an average of 1,305; while in 1907 there were 1,507 licences which were refused renewal. That compares favourably with anything the temperance party and previous temperance reformers had been able to do. Who says that that was not a Bill in the direction of temperance? I followed the speech of the right hon. Gentleman with all the care that I was capable of giving to it, and I very much wish that he or someone else will tell us in figures what is the estimate of their desirable annual reductions in these licences. Does he think that 1,500 licences a year is an adequate and satisfactory reduction in the number of licences.

Mr. ASQUITH: Yes.

*Mr. F. E. SMITH: The right hon. Gentleman assents. Let me consider that view with reference to the total number of licences in this country. The right hon. Gentleman said that there were 95,000 licences in this country. We do not share the right hon. Gentleman's prediction, which is not founded upon facts, that the diminution in the number of licences will not be sustained. Such predictions are of very little weight with us as the right hon. Gentleman was one of those who told us that our Bill would produce no diminution at all. We are faced with the fact that there are 95,000 licences in this country. If reduction is made at the rate of 1,500 a year, in twenty years, a very fleeting period as the hon. Member for Spen Valley has reminded us in the social evolution of the nation, 30,000 licences will have disappeared. That is to say one-third of the total number of licences in the country will go in twenty years without injury to anyone. I need not remind the hon. Gentleman of what the result would be at the end of forty years, but if the process was automatic the necessity would arise in time for creating new licences all over England. I now come to consider what is after all the Achilles heel of this Bill. The Government have bound themselves and their followers to one solution only of the temperance problem, and their solution is that if you reduce the facilities for obtaining drink you will at least to some extent have solved the drink problem. I am doing no injustice to the Government when I say that that is the position of the Liberal Party. That position demands one conditional precedent before you can even say that you are giving it a fair trial, and that is that you should draw no sort of distinction between the nature of the premises to which these facilities are extended. Is the legislation likely to succeed in diminishing the number of premises in the country on which drink can be obtained? I do not think anyone in the House will get up and say that if the Government are driven to admit that side by side with the reduction of licences there has gone on in the past, and is likely to go on in the future, an increase in the number of clubs, on their own theory this legislation will be a failure. We, however, have never pinned ourselves to this as the one supreme method for dealing with the licensing problem. We have never pinned ourselves to the idea that you must deal with clubs in Pall Mall and with working men's clubs. It is not our panacea, but it is yours, and if after this Bill you have made no progress in reducing the number of clubs in which drink can be obtained, then your Bill will not be worth the paper it is written upon. What has the Government done in regard to the reduction of clubs? When I listened to the heroic words with which the right hon. Gentleman heralded the proposals of the Government, I thought here at last we have a strong man; here at last we have one who has the resolution to wrestle with a great problem. The right hon. Gentleman reminded us of what he said outside the House, that it was idle to effect or try to effect temperance reforms by preventing the sale of intoxicating liquor on licensed premises if you continue to afford facilities for drinking in clubs. What is his remedy? His only remedy is that he is going to make the registration of these clubs annual instead of being made once and for all. I am sure that no more futile method of dealing with clubs was ever put forward. What a disappointment this will be to those who desire that something effective should be done to limit the drinking facilities afforded by clubs. What was said when the 1904 Bill was introduced by the late Lord Ritchie—or Mr. Ritchie as he then was—when Members of the House made suggestions in regard to this annual registration. Mr. Ritchie said—

> "We regard registration as almost purely ministerial. I do not think it would be right at all to say that the registration should not take place until the registering authority was convinced by re-inspection that the club was a club properly conducted. It would be almost giving to the club a licence, which is not what we desire to give. We regard registration as almost purely ministerial."

So that what the right hon. Gentleman has done is to cause the Pall Mall and other clubs once a year to do a purely formal act of registration, which gives no one any control over them and gives no guarantee that their number will not be multiplied. That is a great revolution. Mark what the position is. The whole Liberal position is that you cannot deal with the drink traffic unless you suppress the places in which drink can be obtained. What is the position between the club and the public-house to-day? Public-houses pay a very large licence duty. That is point number one. Clubs pay a registration fee of five shillings. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will make them pay a fee of five shillings every year.

MR. ASQUITH: I am considering that.

*MR. F. E. SMITH: All I will say is that that fiscal change will really represent the value of the right hon. Gentleman's proposals. In the second place, public-houses contribute to the compensation fund, but clubs do not. Lastly, licensed premises are licensed by the justices who see that they are suitable and are also subject to constant police supervision, which clubs are not. The Government is going to leave these clubs in every town in England, and they may grow up next door to the licensed premises which you are going unjustly to suppress. They are to be allowed to grow up without restriction, except the trivial change which the right hon. Gentleman is making.

MR. ASQUITH: It is not a trivial one. The hon. Gentleman did not do me the honour of listening to my statement. The object of the annual renewal of registration is not merely to go through a repetition of what is purely ministerial. That would be pure folly. The object of the annual registration is to enable anybody to come forward who is so minded and raise an objection to the registration being renewed, amongst other grounds, on that of the premises being mainly used as a drinking club.

*MR. F. E. SMITH: I was not saying anything about misconduct or drunkenness. It is so wonderful that the right hon. Gentleman should not perceive the nature of the case which I am trying to make against him. I am not suggesting that there is a case for saying that every one of these clubs is a drinking club. That is not the case. Many of these public-houses which are being suppressed are also not drinking shops. The case which is being made against the right hon. Gentleman is this, that he comes before the House of Commons and the country and says: "We are going at last to effect temperance reform, and the way we are going to do it is not merely by closing drinking shops, but also perfectly reputable licensed premises, where drink can be obtained under respectable conditions." Side by side with that he will permit the survival and sanction the creation of other clubs where all the people who were previously drinking in the public houses can go and obtain as much drink as they want. The right hon. Gentleman does not even deal with that proposition when he says that any person can come forward and say that they are drinking clubs. I am not saying that they are drinking shops, but I say that they are clubs in which drink can be obtained. The right hon. Gentleman has prepared an elaborate scheme which will cause the greatest injustice and hardship and sense of rankling throughout the country when he permits of the survival of institutions in which drink can be obtained with the same freedom as it can in the public-house. May I say a word about the time limit? I gather that every Member on that side of the House has rather marvelled at the moderation of the Government in allowing the licensed victuallers so long a period of time. The hon. Member for Spen Valley has indicated what his view is of how this time limit may be made effective for the purpose of securing full compensation by the publican. He suggested the other day, in a letter to *The Times*, that the publican by affecting the quality of his beer, might be able to effect economies which would protect him against such a time limit. If the hon. Member will come to my constituency and recommend this particular argument, that the publican should practically extend the time limit by watering his beer, my constituency will listen to him with very great interest, and no doubt other constituencies will also do so. What is surprising in the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman is that he has not given the slightest evidence that he has based this time limit on any actuarial basis at all, when surely from the beginning to the end of the problem it is actuarial. One cannot judge of the reasonableness of the figures brought forward by theories or prejudice, but you test their application in relation to representative companies, and see whether such proposals would or would not be unduly oppressive to the individuals who are either members of a partnership or a company. I have taken some little trouble to obtain some figures, which will, I think, astonish some hon. Members of the House who would like a short time limit, because they show what very remarkable consequences will follow from it. The figures which I give to the House show the annual amount required to be set aside, taking the rate of interest at four per cent., in order to provide the estimated value attaching to the licences in the event of a time limit, first of ten, then of fifteen, and then of twenty years. I think it better to take three figures, because the Government only deals with one, and because if this Bill gets any further I think the time limit will have to undergo considerable modification. This statement that I have deals with fifteen representative companies, and I am quite prepared to give privately to any hon. Member, the names of the companies and the figures and calculations which I now offer to the House. I hope the House, however, will take it from me that they are fifteen of the largest, most reputable, and best known brewery companies in London and the provinces, and I want to know how the time limit such as is proposed in the present Bill will work out in regard to the companies and to the small investors who have taken an interest in them. Taking the whole of the profits of these fifteen companies, the net result is £1,227,123, and this figure, it should be noted, is arrived at before deducting the compulsory levy to the compensation fund, because it was assumed that this levy would not continue to be raised during the currency of the time run—at all events not at the full rate. Deducting from this aggregate profit of £1,227,123 the annual sum required to be set aside to provide for the estimated value attaching to the licences, on a ten years basis the whole profit would be exhausted and leave a loss of £615,907. On a fifteen years basis the profit left would be £122,047, and on a twenty years basis the profit left would be £484,039. The sums distributed in dividends by the fifteen companies during the past year were approximately, on preference shares, £645,274, on ordinary shares £424,631, making a total of £1,069,905. It follows, therefore, that upon a limit of ten years, there would be no dividend to the preference or ordinary shareholders, and there would be a deficiency of £615,907 in the payment of debenture interest. Upon a limit of fifteen years the preference shareholders would receive less than one-fifth of the dividends distributed during the past year, and the ordinary shareholders would receive nothing. Upon a limit of twenty years the preference shareholders would receive about three-fourths of the dividends distributed during the past year, and the ordinary shareholders would receive nothing. I will take the figures of an individual company, and I hope the House will not think them uninstructive. The profit, including compensation levy, is, say £125,000. Upon a ten years basis the whole profit would be exhausted and leave a loss of £107,552. Upon a fifteen years basis the whole profit would be exhausted and leave a loss of £14,438. Upon a twenty years basis there would be a balance of profit of £31,238. What is the position? It will be observed that upon a limit of ten or fifteen years, the debenture holders would go without their interest, and upon a limit of twenty, the preference shareholders would receive about one-half the dividend distributed during the past year, and the ordinary shareholders would receive nothing as against three and a quarter per cent. last year. I venture to ask the House to consider whether in view of those figures they will be able to commend the time limit to the people of this country. The Government should consider how they are going to recommend their proposals and justify them to the small shareholders—poor people who have invested in licensed securities with the same well guaranteed confidence as they invested in railway securities. ["Oh."] If that is challenged, let hon. Gentlemen carry the quarrel to the country, and we will be prepared to meet them on the clearly defined issue of whether there is some special right entitling the Government to deal with investors in debenture stock in licensed securities in a different way from investors in railway securities. That is a quarrel clearly defined, and let them carry it to the country. What is the result of this time limit? Temperance reformers for years have been urging the importance of licensees being men of respectable character, and of the buildings being maintained in a sanitary condition of the highest efficiency. Nobody therefore can say anything against the licensees or their respectability, or the suitability of the premises in which they carry on business. Now by their time limit they are going to give no one any interest in maintaining the character of the licensee or the suitability of the building. I am reminded of a statement made by John Stuart Mill, who was quoted with approval from those benches last night. He says—

> "The limitation of beer and spirit-houses, with the express purpose of rendering them difficult of access, is suited only to a state of society in which the labouring classes are treated as children or savages."

Hon. Gentlemen have listened in one week to the introduction of two highly controversial Bills, and now the Government have introduced a Bill in which they treat the working classes as children or savages. Let me read to them four lines, which may be useful, from the poet Gray—

> "Alas, regardless of their doom,
> The little victims play;
> No sense have they of ills to come,
> Nor care beyond to-day."

*MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln): I desire to express my thanks to the Government for a Bill which, whatever we may think about it in detail, is undoubtedly an act of courageous statesmanship, deserving of our admiration. I would add that it has received the necessary complement of a good Licensing Bill—the opposition of the Member for South Hackney. Before I deal with the Bill, I should like to attempt some reply to the interesting speech to which we have just listened. The hon. Member quoted John Stuart Mill. I would remind him that John Stuart Mill, when he stood for Westminster, said that public-houses were so often public nuisances that he would support measures to make them as few and as little conspicuous as possible; and he did so. Perhaps I might remind the hon. Member of another thing said by John Stuart Mill, which, I think, is applicable to the question before us. He said that, when you are in the presence of great evils, small reforms do not produce small results, they produce no results at all. If, therefore, some hon. Members think this Bill contains large and far-reaching remedies, I say that powerful remedies are really required. The Licensing Commission reported that we remained in the presence of a gigantic evil, and that hardly any sacrifice could be too great which would result in a diminution of a national degradation. What were the hon. Member's points? He had three. First, that we had miscalculated the effect of the Bill of 1904; secondly, that the time limit of fourteen years was unjust; and, thirdly, that the good done by the Bill would be destroyed by the institution of clubs. It has been urged that Government action is powerless to promote temperance. The hon. Member for South Hackney challenged me to name any single case where the diminution of facilities for drinking had remedied the evils. There are dozens of cases which could be quoted both in this country and outside it. Let him read the story of Norway and Canada. Let him go, if he wishes, to Liverpool and see what has been done there by the diminution of facilities, where drunkenness was reduced by half by the well judged action of the magistrates there. If he wants further evidence, let him look into the judicial statistics just published. Since 1903 there has been a reduction in drunkenness, not a great reduction, but a reduction at least as great as one would expect from the small diminution in licences yet accomplished. There has been a marked reduction too in the number of cases of permitting drunkenness. All this betokens that a restrictive policy since 1903 has had a good effect upon the conduct of the trade. I believe it is within the power of Parliament, if it chooses, and if it has the courage to use the proper remedies, greatly to mitigate the existing evils. At all events the Licensing Commission had no doubt about it. They proposed elaborate remedies, a long list of detailed proposals which have been largely incorporated by the Government in their Bill. Then we were told we had miscalculated the amount of reductions under the Act of 1904. It is entirely misleading to compare the reduction effected within the last ten years. I know something about the movement for the reduction of licences which has been going on. It did not begin till 1903. The whole movement was held up by the Licensing Commission. The Licensing Benches were implored to hold their hands until the Commission had reported, and, when it had reported, they were then implored to take no steps until the Government had legislated. It was not till 1902 that the Bill of Mr. Ritchie was passed, and it left over the problem of reduction. The Licensing Benches, finding that this House took no part in the matter, took up the task. They were not encouraged by the Government; they were severely lectured and reprimanded. During the two years 1903 and 1904 the Inland Revenue returns show that there was a gross diminution of 2,088 on-licences of all kinds. In the debates of 1904 Members of the Unionist Government prophesied that under their Bill there would be a reduction of 2,500 on-licences a year. Not half that diminution has been realised. After all, we have not to deal with the merely historical and statistical question whether the reduction in the three years after the Act has been quicker than in the two years before it. There has been no appreciable quickening, although a slight acceleration has taken place. The real question is whether under the Act of 1904, you can get any reduction at all adequate to the interests of the nation. We are limited by the Act to a timid, niggardly, partial, and tentative reduction. I am glad to think that the Government is going to hasten the progress of reduction, but I do not think it is going to hasten it very much. Apparently, we are going to get rid of some 30,000 licences in twenty years. That is about 2,300 a year. In 1904, we were promised a reduction of 2,500 a year. The present amending Bill, so far as the reduction scheme is concerned, is only going to do compulsorily what the enthusiasts among the late Government thought the Bill of 1904 would do. It is not a stiff reduction which we are going to get after all. Then the hon. Member stated that the time limit was far too short. Of course, it is utterly impossible to appreciate the figures which he threw at the House, but I should be extremely grateful to accept his invitation to see them. What about these companies' reserves and their capitalisation? I want to know something about their history. There is, for instance, one brewery company which I could quote where the reserves are higher at the present time than its debenture stock. When I alluded to the fact that Guinness' Reserves stood at £2,900,000 at the present moment, and Bass' at £1,460,000, an hon. Member wrote to the Press to say that Guinness' and Bass' would be "utterly unaffected," or, at all events, "not hardly hit" by the time limit. If you will look through the reserves of the brewery companies, you will see that very largely the companies have already safeguarded their own position. It has been asked whether the monopoly value stands at £100,000,000 or £300,000,000. Three hundred million pounds is the sum claimed to be invested in the trade, including site, structure, breweries, stock in trade, and all the rest; and £100,000,000 is the estimate, which is merely approximate, of the monopoly value of the licences, apart from site, structure, stock in trade, etc. It does not matter to us for a moment what this monopoly value actually is, because, thanks to Mr. Justice Kennedy's judgment, we know that the value is ten years' purchase of the wholesale profits made in the premises concerned. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has said that Mr. Justice Kennedy's judgment gives an exaggerated value to the trade. That is indeed the case. Ten years' purchase of the profits is equivalent to the price with interest of an annuity running for fourteen years. Therefore, taking the market value under the Act of 1904, and Mr. Justice Kennedy's judgment at its face value, what the Government is proposing to give is a commutation of the extreme measure of value, which liquor sellers can claim. It seems to us, therefore, that the time limit is more than is necessary to grant. For Liberal statesmen in 1904 declared that the Act of 1904 had no moral validity, and we decline to accept the Kennedy judgment as a fair measure of value. The Chancellor of the Exchequer stated that he had an open mind on this subject, and would welcome criticism. I am not, therefore, failing in any recognition of the value of the Bill in making some criticism. I hope he will be able to see his way to shorten the time limit; because, I believe, he has gone to the extreme limit. If you give one day longer than fourteen years, you are giving more than the liquor sellers are getting at the present time. You are raising the amount of compensation that will have to be paid on the suppression of licenses and *pro tanto* crippling the power of the State to carry through this diminution. That is my answer when these figures are brought forward. I believe this time limit is as far as you can go, and I believe it has gone too far.

And, it being a quarter-past Eight of the clock, and there being private business set down by direction of the CHAIRMAN of WAYS and MEANS under Standing Order No. 8, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

BELFAST CORPORATION BILL (BY ORDER).

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.) said he rose to discharge what he regarded as an obvious public duty to his constituency—to move the rejection of this Bill. He had consistently supported measures of municipal enterprise that tended to a public ownership, and he hoped the House would not misunderstand his attitude. He opposed this Bill in the interests of a large and important section of the community in Belfast who regarded it as an attempt to secure Parliamentary sanction for a gross and flagrant job. The property for which the Corporation proposed to pay £60,000 consisted of a single line of tramway, from the foot of Cave Hill near Belfast to Whitewell. It had been known as the road to heaven, because so few people travelled that way. There had been no demand on the part of the residents in the locality for an extension of the line nor any appeal from any section of the citizens for its developement, and the transaction for which the sanction of Parliament was asked was merely inspired by a combination of interested municipal agents and the British Electric Traction Company. The Company owning the tramway was established in 1881, with a nominal capital of £27,000, of which £15,000 was issued in £1 ordinary shares. It was a single line, and the cars were drawn by horse traction. It was largely a wealthy and residential locality which had no attractions for working people. In 1900, the tramway company entered into an agreement with the British Electric Traction Company, which had not so long ago acquired some notoriety in Great Britain, and had been the subject of discussion in that House. It undertook to find the money for the electrification of the system and insisted on the tramway promoting a Bill, on the original capital being increased from £27,000 to £67,000, the issued 15,000 ordinary shares being converted into sixty-two preference shares, and on an issue of 45,000 ordinary £1 shares. Section B. of the agreement read—

> "The tramway company shall as and when required by the British Electric Traction Co. enter into contracts with the British Electric Traction Co. or as the British Electric Traction Co. shall in writing direct for the reconstruction and electrical equipment of the tramway."

Section C. compelled the Cave Hill Tramway Company to pay the British Electric Traction Company all moneys provided and costs incurred or charges in their books for time and expense of their staff while engaged in reconstruction work and in addition 10 per cent. of their services as and when required. In the balance sheet of the tramway company for 1906 it was stated that the capital outlay on the old line was £13,523 odd, and that the total expenditure on reconstruction of the permanent way, the electrical equipment of the line, the erection of car-shed and depot, and the obtaining of Parliamentary powers, was £54,639 odd. Why the capital outlay on the old line was set down as an asset was not easy to understand, because it had disappeared, cars and all. The stated cost of electrification was £14,639 in excess of the cost, as stated by the town clerk. It was a single line, three and a quarter miles long. The cost of electrification as set forth in the balance sheet worked out at £16,612 per mile. According to an official return for 1903–4, the average capital expenditure per mile was £11,780, or £5,032 less than the alleged cost of this tramway. The line ran along a level road where there was comparatively little traffic, and through a district which was sparsely populated. He was not an expert in tramway construction, but he put it to the commonsense of the House, whether it was reasonable that it should cost over 50 per cent. more to construct this line than it cost to construct a similar line in any of the great populous centres of great Britain. It was also to be noted that this was not for construction, for the line was already there, but for alteration and electrification. That was one of the reasons why he said the price of £60,000 was exorbitant and why he was opposed to a transaction by which the British Electric Traction Company, or J. C. White & Co., who had carried out the work of electrification, were to extort an exorbitant price, even with the consent of the majority of the corporation, one of whose members was actually a shareholder in the tramway company itself, and the manager of whose trams was until 1904 chairman of the company whose property it was now sought to acquire. A curious thing about the balance sheet of the tramway company was that only £91 2s. 5d. was charged for debenture interest, whereas the interest on £13,000 debentures at 4½ per cent. would be £500. He suggested that this point should be elucidated for the information of the ratepayers of Belfast, who had been most mysteriously dealt with in connection with this transaction. In addition to the tramway the corporation proposed to acquire some 32 acres of land at the Whitewell end of the line on which the company's car-sheds had been built, and which were subject to a rent charge of £130 per annum under the agreement. The total amount set down opposite "rent" in 1906 was £117 17s. 5d.

AN HON. MEMBER: Reading.

MR. J. DEVLIN said it was perfectly true that he was reading, as one must necessarily do in dealing with figures. He could not only write a speech, but could read one, unlike the hon. Member, who recently came down with a written-out speech, and had not the privilege of delivering it to an expectant House. He would not have the slightest objection in the world if those hon. Gentlemen who were so hypercritical in regard to accurately prepared statements would read their speeches to the House, and then they would not so often be the laughing stock of the world. He would be delighted to see hon. Gentlemen turn over a new leaf, because their inaccuracy in statement and their attempts from time to time to misrepresent the cause of truth had become so remarkable that he was told there was a canvass made to keep them away from the debate lest they should spoil the chances of the Bill. He took it that what he had said included all rents whatever, and they were brought face to face with the extraordinary fact that whilst the total of all the rents payable by the company at present was only £117 17s. 3d., the corporation agreed to take over not the whole but only 32 acres of the worst land held by the company, and they had a rent charge of over £13 a year more than the company paid for the whole of the lands at present in their possession. The land which the corporation proposed to acquire had been described as heaps of shingle and quarry refuse of no commercial value. This Bill did not propose to take over the rolling stock of the company which was represented by nine cars, nor the buildings, stables, horses, harness and vehicles which were set out in the balance sheet at a value of £1,368 odd. The Bill did not propose, further, to take over the recreation ground, and this was one of the most important and vital points in his impeachment of the whole policy which had dictated the arrangement and which it was proposed to obtain Parliamentary sanction for. The recreation ground which they had allowed to be retained in the hands of the British Electric Traction Company was what attracted people from Belfast, and that was the only thing that could make the tramway successful. That company retained the recreation ground and it would blackmail the Corporation of Belfast. This was another part of the indecent transaction. The Corporation proposed to tax the ratepayers now to the extent of £60,000 and ultimately at least to the extent of £100,000. Why? In order to provide customers for the recreation ground and the refreshment rooms owned by the company, because, as he had already told the House, the line was of no possible use to Belfast without the recreation ground. Perhaps one of the Unionist Members for Belfast would explain why they did not secure this recreation ground, and why they allowed the British Electric Traction Company to retain it. It had been charged against him that his opposition was purely factious and vindictive. He absolutely denied that charge. He would not sanction anywhere what he called a "scandalous job," but he was ready and willing to agree to a fair and just bargain as between the ratepayers and tramway company. He had proposed this compromise, that for the purchase of the tramway with the recreation ground and the refreshment room thrown in the price should be £40,000. That was not his own valuation, but the valuation put upon the property by the Belfast Corporation surveyor and by the Corporation tramway manager. He submitted to the House that for a bankrupt concern with an overdraft of £262 odd and a balance in hand of only £1 13s. 11d., as set forth in the balance sheet, the compromise he had suggested was of a most generous character. He had made that offer a fortnight ago, and the Unionist Press in Belfast had sedulously and consistently prevented the citizens hearing his side of the question and that of the Progressive Party in Belfast. That Unionist Press suggested to the tramway company that they should not take a single farthing less than had been offered. The fact was that the Unionist reactionary Press in Belfast was more anxious to preserve the interests of the British Electric Traction Company than that company itself. The hon. Member for South Belfast made a canvass in the interests of the Bill and declared that the *plebiscite* was in its favour. There was no urgency for the Bill. The only argument as to urgency arose from the fact that the tramway company promoted the Bill in order to obtain powers to run their cars to the centre of Belfast. The House was asked to believe that the great and wealthy Corporation of Belfast was terrified at the threat on the part of a concern which had an overdraft of £262 odd at the bank and only £1 13s. 6d. cash in hand. The idea of the Corporation of Belfast being intimidated by such a proposal was absurd. One of the considerations put forward in favour of the purchase of this tramway was that the tramway company had withdrawn their Bill on the understanding that the Corporation was to pay them £60,000, and that the company had threatened if the Corporation did not come to terms with them to promote a Bill and then Parliament would give them powers which would wreck the whole civic tramways enterprise in Belfast. They were the friends of civic progress, the agents of unsuccessful enterprise, and the supporters of everything that made for democratic progress, but they could not understand what was the meaning of all this! There was something behind it all; the whole proceeding was sinister from beginning to end. The British Electric Traction Company was behind the tramway company in this matter. The Electric Traction Company, whose £10 shares had recently been quoted at 27s. 6d., would hardly be inclined to throw money away applying for powers to run tramways in opposition to the Corporation of Belfast. Therefore, the argument as to urgency fell entirely to the ground. The Corporation had agreed to pay all the expenses of promoting the Bill. The £60,000 became payable one month after the passing of the Bill. If it was a fair and just transaction, why was the question of price not submitted to arbitration before a fair and impartial tribunal? That was a simple way out of the difficulty. The main argument in favour of this Bill was that at a *plebiscite* recently taken, a majority of the ratepayers had voted in its favour. He denied that that *plebiscite* was properly taken, and he also denied that a majority of the ratepayers were in favour of the Bill. He would point out to the House what occurred at the meeting called to consider this measure. A majority of two to one opposed the Bill and voted against it. This Bill which they were asking Parliament to sanction was an outrage on a large section of the ratepayers. Members of the Corporation had also protested, and Councillor Corley, one of the most careful and experienced members, gave it as his opinion that the Corporation were making one of the worst bargains they had made for thirty years. The manager of the Corporation tramways was understood to have said that it would cost £40,000 to double the line, and Councillor Corley denounced that as absurd in view of the vast population of the district. The Bill was not for the development of the outlying districts of Belfast, or to assist in taking the people out to breathe the sweet fresh air of the country. The passengers would be dumped down outside, not the recreation ground, but the large public-houses. Councillor James Johnson, President of the West Belfast Unionist Association, who voted for the purchase, said he thought that though they were all agreed that they were paying too much, yet it was as well to acquire the line. He supposed there was not a city in the world that was more bleak and barren for the great body of the workers than Belfast, nor so bereft of open spaces, and here, in an outlying district for some sinister purpose, they were asked to spend £60,000 now, and £40,000 in the future, for the purpose of satisfying the British Electric Traction Company. The arguments against the proposal had not been answered. On the division they were voted down by a purely party vote. The tramways would be useless when acquired, until another £40,000 had been spent on doubling the line, and no doubt, if the contract were given to Messrs. White & Co., the £40,000 would run to £60,000 before the thing was completed. The scheme was open to the gravest suspicion, if it were not an outrage and a scandalous and indefensible piece of jobbery. The only point in favour of the Bill was the question of the *plébiscite*. There had not been a single meeting of any section of the citizens in the area covered by the tramway line, which had passed a single resolution in favour of the Bill, with the exception of the Belfast Conservative Association.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): The residents in Antrim road passed a resolution in favour of it.

MR. J. DEVLIN said there were only four of them present at the meeting. If there was such a tremendous interest in the Bill, surely the Belfast Conservative Association could have whipped up more than four or five people at their meeting. If they voted against this proposal the Empire would go down. That was one of the chief arguments adduced in the local Tory Press. Leading Conservative shopkeepers in Belfast had written to him stating that they were sending communications on the subject, as the local Tory Press would not publish their letters. Belfast Trades Council had issued a manifesto against the Bill; it had been condemned by an association representing one of the largest groups of ratepayers in the city and by others. He asked the hon. Member for South Antrim if Mr. H. L. Grant was a Socialist? They were Socialists because they were opposed to the Bill. Was not Mr. Grant one of the most seasoned Tories in Belfast? In addition to being a seasoned Tory, he was an eminently able business man. He had commented unfavourably on the general transaction, remarking that the result of the vote was a very poor compliment to those who were responsible for the purchase. In order to silence criticism and to smother any dissatisfaction with the Bill, when the necessary advertisements for the purpose of having the Bill legally presented were given out to the newspapers, they were given out, at least in the case of some newspapers, with the condition attached that, unless the Bill was passed into law, no money would be paid for the advertisements. He thought he was within his right as a Member of that House in denouncing that as one of the most bare-faced attempts on record to cover up, by bribery and intimidation, the Press of the city, which should have left its columns open and impartial for the citizens to discuss the matters that vitally affected the ratepayers. Yet he had been told—not by Nationalists, Socialists, Labour men, or Liberals—but by leading Conservatives that they were not allowed to insert argumentative communications against this Bill in the local Tory Press. He now knew the reason why they would not publish these communications. He was himself connected with a paper in Belfast, which, although the least wealthy of all the newspapers in that city, would have regarded that offer as an incitement to public dishonesty. The issue was a mere party issue; the Unionist Party and the local wire-pullers made it so. Party spirit rose higher in Belfast than in any other community in the United Kingdom, but, nevertheless, the majority for the scheme was not a very large one. The opposition to it was not altogether well organised, yet out of the total number of voters entitled to take part in the *plebiscite*, 67,000, only 54,000 actually voted and 24,733 balloted in favour of the scheme, and 12,573 against. That was to say, the scheme could only command the support of less than a third of the electors. The manner of taking the vote was also open to grave censure; 13,000 voters were unaccounted for, and he himself had in his possession a large number of voting papers marked against the scheme which had never been collected, and he knew that hundreds of them were left at the wrong houses. He had also been informed that the method of counting the votes was most irregular and that no one was present representing the opposition, while the president and other officials at the counting were notorious partisans for the scheme. It was, he contended, an insult to the dignity of the House of Commons for the Corporation of Belfast to come there in support of a scheme on the strength of the result of that *plebiscite.* If such a thing had occurred in Great Britain, Parliament would have marked its indignation in the most unmistakable manner towards those responsible for the proceedings he had described; but the majority in the Belfast Corporation had long been accustomed to do what they pleased. He trusted that in this instance the Corporation would find out that they had overshot the mark, and that they had mistaken the composition of this great Assembly. He asked the House to reject the Bill, and if that were done he was sure a compromise would be arrived at by which the London Electric Traction Company would accept £40,000 for an undertaking which was worth only £20,000, and the Corporation would be able to obtain the recreation ground which was the only thing that made the tramway worth anything to the city. The alternative was for the Corporation to introduce a Bill for the compulsory purchase of the tramway, the price to be fixed by arbitration. He would support that. At all events, he trusted the House of Commons would vote against this Bill in the interests of civic purity and sound municipal administration and also in the interests of the citizens of Belfast who were already over-burdened with rates. He begged to move that the Bill be read a second time that day six months.

*MR. MULDOON (Wicklow, E.) seconded the Amendment. This was not the first time that what was popularly known in Ireland as a "job" had taken the shape of a private Bill brought before Parliament, and where the game itself was not included in the sections of the measure but was hidden away in a schedule in order to be foisted on the House. He wished to make it clear that they on the Irish Benches supported the proposition that all public utilities like electric lighting, water supply, gas, and tramways, should be managed by the local authority. It was because that in this particular instance the Corporation of Belfast had made a bad bargain which could not stand the light of day that they asked the House of Commons to make an exception to their well known rule. It was usual where a corporation wished to acquire an existing undertaking that it should be done only by Act of Parliament. As trustees for the ratepayers the corporation must show that the bargain they had entered into was a fair one, and that was a proposition in reference to this Bill upon which nobody would be able to satisfy the House of Commons. It did not appear from any information supplied to hon. Members, or from the Bill itself, that there was any valuation of this company's undertaking before the Belfast Corporation offered £60,000 for it. Nor had any accountant investigated the books of the company to ascertain whether the company had earned anything until they had struck this bargain. In fact, the Belfast Corporation had entered into the bargain without any inquiry at all. It was natural that when the Belfast Corporation had extended the boundaries of the city they should include the area served by the Cavehill and Whitewell Tramway Company; but what they should have done was to promote a Bill in Parliament for the compulsory acquisition of that company's undertaking at an equitable price to be ascertained by arbitration. That, however, was not the course pursued by the corporation. The Cavehill and Whitewell Tramway had been running their line, three-and-a-half miles in length, since 1881. The company had been the subject of no less than four local Acts of Parliament previous to the present Bill being introduced. The company had never paid a dividend, and there was no suggestion that it ever had the capacity to earn anything. That was the company for whose undertaking the Corporation of Belfast without any inquiry had agreed to pay £60,000. When the Corporation in the course of its career arranged to extend the boundaries of Belfast, a syndicate from the Strand, London, the British Electric Traction Company, came on the scene and took possession of the Cavehill and Whitewell Tramway Company by the head and shoulders. A syndicate, as everyone knew, was a combination of philanthropists, who took up bankrupt concerns for the purpose of rendering them disinterested service If he was told that this transaction was a *bona-fide* one and that the Belfast Corporation was dealing not with a syndicate of philanthropists but with the tramway company, he would ask those who put forward that suggestion to look at one clause in the Bill, which was expressed in ingenious and legal terms, though perhaps capable of interpretation in English—

> "The receipt of the Cavehill Company shall be a sufficient discharge to the Corporation for any purchase or other moneys paid to the Cavehill Company by the Corporation under or in pursuance of the scheduled agreement, notwithstanding the existence of any mortgage, debenture charge, or other incumbrance affecting the undertaking of the Cavehill Company or any part thereof, or affecting the tramways or other property agreed to be surrendered or sold to the Corporation by the scheduled agreement or any part thereof respectively, provided always that nothing herein contained shall prejudice or affect any rights or claims of any mortgage debenture holder or other incumbrancer of the Cavehill Company against any such moneys."

That was to say that, although they were nominally dealing with the Cavehill and Whitewell Tramway Company, the real company with whom they were dealing was the syndicate in the Strand, who were going to put this £60,000 in their own pocket. What he said was that there had been no inquiry of any kind into this undertaking; that the bargain was an improvident one — and this was the salient feature of their opposition—which could not be sustained by any speaker in support of the Bill, and the House of Commons ought not to carry it out. It was said that the Resolution was approved by the Chief Secretary for Ireland; but he might say at once it was a purely formal matter. The Chief Secretary consented to its being thrashed out, but he had given no assent in the formal way that was suggested. This House was asked to ratify and make legal an agreement which was null and void *ab initio*, absolutely illegal, and would have to be abandoned unless the House supported it. One material point in their opposition was the fact that there was something sinister in this transaction, that the syndicate was found getting its claw on to this company which the Corporation of Belfast ought to have stepped in and bought out, and not allowed the middleman to get in. The price to be paid was three or four times as much as would be paid in England for the same mileage. While they took their stand on the improvident and fraudulent nature of the bargain which had been struck, the Corporation of Belfast had supplied Members with a statement in order that they might support the Bill in this House. Would it be believed that not a word of explanation had been given as to the reason for the payment of £60,000 for three miles of tramway. It was not suggested in this statement that there was any valuation by an independent man. No single idea was put forward in favour of this thing except that a *plebiscite* of the people of Belfast was taken. Under these circumstances that had a most sinister meaning, and the House of Commons ought not to ratify it or pass this Bill.

Amendment proposed—

> "To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months." (*Mr. Devlin.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. WOLFF (Belfast, E.) said he and the hon. Member for West Belfast had been in this House for many years, and during the whole of that time they had seen a great many Bills brought in for Belfast, but whether they were brought in by the Corporation or the Harbour Board or the Water Board, the hon. Member had opposed them all.

MR. J. DEVLIN said he had never opposed any Bill that came into this House proposed either by the Harbour Board or the Water Board.

MR. WOLFF said he apologised if he had misrepresented the hon. Member, but that was his impression. No Bill had been brought in by the Corporation that had not been opposed by the hon. Member. This Bill was opposed on the ground that the sum that the Corporation was prepared to give for the tramways was excessive. It was also said that the *plebiscite* was not a fair and straightforward one. Then the hon. Member for East Tyrone, who seconded the rejection, talked about the fraudulent bargain, though perhaps he did not quite mean what he said. Under these circumstances, he might be allowed to state to the House something about the origin of this tramway. It was built in 1888 from the boundary of Belfast, and went three and a half miles along the road skirting Cavehill on the one side, and on the other it went to a place called Glengormley. In 1896 the Corporation got a Bill which extended their boundaries very much, and a mile and a half of the tramway which had been outside the boundary was brought within it. In 1902, the Electric Traction Company got hold of the line by some financial arrangement, some exchange of shares, and obtained power to electrify it. This was strongly opposed by the Belfast Corporation who had always desired to get the line into their own system, half of it being already within their boundary. They went so far as to offer £20,000 for a line which only cost £13,000 to build in order to get it in their own control. They did not, however, succeed, and the company got the right to electrify the line. From that time on there were constant negotiations on the part of the Corporation to get the line, and on the part of the company to sell it. It was very doubtful if the company would have electrified the line at all except that they hoped to run trams over the Corporation line. Not having succeeded in that they worked the line from Chichester Park to Glengormley, and everbody knew that it was impossible to make a line of trams three and a half miles long pay with only a twenty minutes service. The line which ran up to Chichester Park from the centre of Belfast was one of the best paying parts of the Belfast system. That had a two-and-a-half minutes service; but it stopped at Chichester Park, when the Cavehill and Whitewell tramway ran a twenty minutes service. It was not to be expected that the people would build houses on the land between Chichester Park and Cavehill when there was only a tram every twenty minutes; but if a tram went from the centre of Belfast right through every two-and-a-half minutes many houses would be erected. The hon. Member for West Belfast thought that £60,000 would be an excessive price to pay for this line, but the annual cost would only be £6,150 That was the amount which would pay the interest and principal for thirty years, at the end of which time the line would be free of all charge. The last balance sheet of the Cavehill and Whitewell tramways showed a profit of £1,100, and if that profit was made on a twenty minutes service and the Corporation put on a five minutes service it was quite evident that a very much larger profit would be made, and the establishment charges would at once be removed, because the offices of the present company would be done away with, and the work done in the offices of the Belfast Corporation. The hon. Member for West Belfast had stated that nobody cared about this transaction, and that no meetings had been held in its favour. On the contrary, meetings had been held throughout Belfast and the necessary resolution carried by the statutory majority. The opposition to any great extent came from the liquor trade, and it was a very common thing that almost all the public houses in Belfast were owned by Nationalist Catholics. The strong point in the case for the Bill was the *plebiscite*. The hon. Member for West Belfast had endeavoured to throw doubts on its fairness. He (Mr. Wolff) had never heard any doubt expressed before. The papers were delivered by the police, who did not care twopence about the politics of any man, and were collected and returned by them. The proportion of those who did not vote—12,265 out of a total of 64,800 ratepayers—was a large one, it was true, but in every large town there was always a considerable section of the community who did not take any interest whatever in municipal affairs. There voted in favour of the Bill 24,700 ratepayers and against it 12,570, and under these circumstances it was nonsense to say that there had not been fair play. Everybody in Belfast knew perfectly well the price that was going to be paid, and the question was, could the Corporation have got the tramway for less? He did not himself think that too much had been paid. The Corporation might have been wrong in the way they had gone about the business, but in any case their action had been thoroughly approved by the majority of the electors. One of the great principles of the Liberal and Labour Parties was that the will of the majority must prevail. He hoped they would stick to that principle when it came to voting on this Bill, and that they would vote in favour of what the majority of the people of Belfast had determined should be done.

MR. MOONEY (Newry) said the hon. member who had just spoken, and who was the official spokesman for the Bill, had told them that if the Corporation had made a mistake Belfast had approved of it. If Belfast had approved of it that was no reason why that House should do so, and it was because they said that Belfast had made a mistake that the opponents of the Bill asked the House to reject it. If this was a measure for giving the municipal authorities of Belfast the control of the traction powers inside the City area, he did not think that any member of the Party to which he belonged would oppose it. But it was nothing of the kind. It was in their opinion a deliberate attempt by a Corporation of which they knew a good deal, to blackmail the ratepayers of the city of Belfast. It was a Bill ostensibly to ratify an agreement between the Cavehill Tramways Company and the Belfast Corporation. It was nothing of the kind. The real parties were the Belfast Corporation and the British Electric Traction Company. The Cavehill Tramways Company, Limited, had never paid a dividend. Some years ago it went to the British Electric Traction Company when there might have been a chance of its being acquired at a proper price, and the latter company took forty thousand pounds worth of debentures in the undertaking. It was said that was a free bargain. The Corporation argued that if they did not agree to the Bill the British Electric Traction Company would go to the House of Commons and obtain powers to run trams in the City; therefore they must give a fancy price. Was that the hon. Gentleman's idea of a free bargain? The price to be paid was £60,000. What were the Corporation going to get for this—the capital outlay on the old line as reconstructed was £13,500. Why that should be taken as an asset he was at a loss to understand. The next thing they got was the expenditure on reconstruction of the permanent way, the electrical equipment of the line, erection of car shed and depot, and the cost of Parliamentary powers, which was placed at £54,600. His hon. friend had already dealt with the average cost per mile of equipping a single line of tramways in this country, and had shown how excessive was the sum of £54,000, but the Belfast Corporation did not even go to the trouble of making sure when they made statements in that House that they did not issue public documents contradicting those statements, because the Town Clerk of Belfast had furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland information on those figures, and this was what the Chief Secretary said on the 10th inst., in that House. He said the Town Clerk of Belfast had told him that the last balance sheet of the company showed a capital outlay on the old line of £13,500, but the cost of reconstruction and electrification had been estimated at over £40,000, in addition to the £13,500 paid for the old horse line. It was a curious thing that if they added the £40,000 to the £13,500 they got practically the figure of £54,639. They were therefore charging for the old line twice over. The Belfast Corporation were not, however, even going to get that, because the expense of issuing debentures was put down as an asset. He had yet to learn that that expense was a valuable asset to any company. There were also freehold lands put down as an asset. The hon. Gentleman who had just spoken had talked a good deal about the advantage which would accrue to the workers of the city by being able to get out to Glengormley. In the appeal issued by the promoters of the Bill and sent to every Member of the House, it was stated that 'the acquisition of the line by the Corporation would not only provide accommodation for those citizens beyond the terminus of the Corporation system, but would afford facilities for the population to get out to the suburbs. Then why not buy the Glengormley Gardens? The property of the company was a line three miles long, run out to those public gardens, which were also the property of the company. They were part of those extraordinary assets going to make up the £60,000, but the British Electric Traction Company deliberately cut them out of the bargain with the Corporation. The deliberate intention of the appeal was that if the tramway was taken over by the Corporation it would provide facilities for the working classes to get out there, and that was deliberately misleading. The opposition would never have been heard of if the British Electric Traction Company had agreed to go to arbitration for a fair price and allowed the public gardens to remain open. Under the Bill, if passed, the gardens would be closed, and the public would have no right of admittance.

When they had spent the ratepayers' money on the trams going out to those gardens, which were valued at £2,000, the company would say to the Corporation, "You can have these grounds, but you will pay our price for them." It was a ridiculous argument. It was not often that such a strong step was taken as moving the rejection of a Bill of that kind on Second Reading; it had always been the habit of that House to declare that such Bills should go to a Committee upstairs. He hoped that the Chairman of Ways and Means would not take the usual course that night, for this was a most unusual Bill. He had had some experience of Private Bill Committees upstairs, and knew the careful attention and scrutiny they gave to such Bills, but this was such a carefully framed Bill that under the Standing Orders of the House no single opponent of the Bill could be heard upstairs against it, and they were debarred under the Standing Orders from appearing before that Committee. He hoped therefore the House would reject the measure. This was really a corrupt bargain, detrimental to the interests of the ratepayers. Because the Corporation had not agreed to go before an independent tribunal, he asked the House to teach the Corporation a lesson by throwing out the Bill.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS (Mr. EMMOTT) said he rose with reluctance to intervene in the debate. He did not know the place nor the cost of constructing a tramway line; he did not know any of the things that he ought to know in order to form an opinion as to whether the Bill ought to have a Second Reading on its real merits or not. Therefore, he was afraid he must say that, having listened very carefully to the debate, he did not see that any question had been raised which could not better be considered in Committee, by the right kind of Committee, than it could possibly be done on the floor of the House. After all, whether the price to be given for those tramways should be thirty, or forty, or sixty thousand pounds they could not decide intelligently there. Therefore, it seemed to him distinctly to be one of those questions that ought to go to a Committee upstairs. But he said again that he thought that it ought to be the right kind of Committee. His hon. friend the Member for Newry had said correctly that in the ordinary course, this being technically an unopposed Bill, it would go to the Unopposed Bill Committee.

MR. MOONEY: I said that we who are opposing this Bill could not appear before the Committee, because the ratepayers of a city could not appear against the Corporate Seal.

*MR. EMMOTT said he was coming to that point. The hon. Member was a very valuable member of the Unopposed Bills Committee and would probably agree that in a Bill of this kind, where there was any sort of ground for supposing that an improper bargain had been made and where a considerable section of the ratepayers were opposed to confirming that bargain, the Unopposed Bills Committee was not a very satisfactory tribunal. In that Committee they heard only one side, and that the side of those who were in favour of the Bill, and except by cross-questioning those who came before them to make an *ex parte* statement they could not get at the objections that would be raised by the opponents. That being the case, what other course was there that he could suggest to the House? He must honestly say that he hoped the Bill would be read a second time, for this reason, that it would be most unusual to throw such a Bill out on its Second Reading. If there was anything wrong with it, it would be better to throw it out at a later stage. Such a course as throwing it out now might lead to reprisals, and reprisals in those matters often cut very deep, their effect lasted for a long time, and caused a very great deal of inconvenience to that House, because they took up so much time in being discussed on the floor of the House. He thought it would be his duty to report to the House that the Bill should go to an Opposed Bill Committee, but if it did, as things were, the hon. Member for Newry was right in saying that the opponents of the Bill could not appear. There was, however, a way of getting over that. The House could pass a resolution, and had done so in similar cases, that petitioners presenting a petition so many days before the Committee met should be heard, and so far as he was concerned he should not oppose any Motion of that kind, and if it would lead to general agreement he would be ready to promise to move it. He did not see that he could add anything of use by protracting his remarks, and his suggestion was offered in the interests of peace.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.) said that after the statement of the Chairman of Ways and Means, it was hardly necessary for him to go into details in favour of the Bill, but there were one or two items in the speech of the hon. Member for West Belfast which he thought required attention. So far as he was concerned, in the few years he had been in the House, he had consistently voted for municipalisation, whether in Ireland or out of it, and on this question he was thoroughly convinced that not only the Corporation of Belfast, but the citizens of Belfast, by an overwhelming majority, were in favour of the transaction proposed in the Bill. He would support any Bill for the good of the people he represented. The licensed victuallers were the only people who had made any public statement in opposition to the Bill. When the promotion of the Bill was before the Corporation not a single Labour Member opposed it. In so far as the Belfast Corporation was concerned they had nothing to fear from any public investigation that might be made in reference to the Bill. It was unfortunate that sometimes in municipal affairs, politics seemed to take a more prominent position than the welfare of the citizens themselves. He had done his humble part to try to remove that spirit by his own action and speeches, but there were six members in the Corporation who attended a meeting which was being held for the purpose of the promotion of the Bill, and they opposed the Bill simply because there was a street in which they were interested, and which they wanted widening, and the Corporation could not see their way at that particular time to accede to their request; they opposed the promotion of the Bill in consequence. After their amendment was rejected by forty-two to six, they allowed the original resolution to promote the Bill to pass without a division. It was a hardship to municipalities to think that the ratepayers' money was to be spent in the promotion of Bills which were undoubtedly in the interests of the citizens and that solid arguments should be ignored and thrown to the winds. He knew every inch of the tramway line in question, and he knew the advantages that the citizens of this particular district would obtain from its construction. When they had a private company they paid 2d. and 3d. for a journey, but since municipalising and electrifying, the Corporation had been able through its managers to give a penny service to every part of the city. He had not the slightest doubt that the citizens of this district as time went on would be the very first to cry out against being compelled to stand fifteen or twenty minutes on a damp bleak night waiting for a Cavehill tram to come. Apart from that there were facilities by means of the Bill for the working class community to get out in thousands to the country for fresh air. There had not been a single meeting or letter of protest. A great many assertions had been made about a *plebiscite*, and they had been told about the marking of papers in a different way from what the people wanted. But he had been told himself that the West Belfast Nationalist organisation agents had gone round, got the papers, and marked them. But this was a question on which it did not matter what political parties said. The Corporation had decided more than once in favour of purchasing the tramways, and they could not have done so unless they had the support of the people. The Corporation wa divided when the historic meeting took place, but a *plebiscite* was taken and 24,000 voted in favour, 12,000 against, 15,000 papers were returned blank, and 400 were sent with the wrong names. Surely that was a strong case. He was not considering the Corporation in this matter. He had never heard of the British Electric Traction Company to any advantage in his life, and he knew the hostility to it. He was not concerned with the Company. He was concerned about the people of Belfast, and he declared that it was unfair in an off-handed manner and without any consideration or justification to throw out the Bill to gratify the only public body that had made any opposition to the Bill—the licensed victuallers. He appealed to the House to look at this from a distinctly municipal point of view, and to give them the opportunity of preventing any possibility of running powers being sought for over the municipal lines. They might not always have a democratic Parliament, and at some future time running powers might be canvassed for. This very company had got a Bill passed in opposition to the Corporation and last year they had made application for running powers. He looked upon this as a very serious and gross interference with the right of municipalities, which might be a continual annoyance and worry to the citizens for some years to come.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: Home Rule.

MR. SLOAN said he did not know what the interruption meant unless the hon. Member was as interested in the British Electric Traction Company as he was in Sunday closing. If he thought the British Electric Traction Company was playing a game or that there was any jobbery he would stand up and oppose it with any Labour man or Nationalist. He had never refused to associate himself with any man because of his politics in that which he thought was for the benefit of the people. He believed this was for the benefit of the people of Belfast and that the Corporation were right. It was affirmed by a vast majority of the citizens and was opposed by a great interest which indeed had no love for him while he had no particular love for their trade either. He asked the House to consider the advisability of adopting the suggestion of the Chairman of Ways and Means. The Corporation would have no objection to the fullest inquiry. They had nothing to hide, and in that debate they hardly had anything to defend. The Bill spoke for itself. There had been no real argument against it, though there had been some assertions with regard to blackmailing which were uncalled for. He hoped the question would be settled free from partisanship and prejudice.

MR. WOLFF said the promoters of the Bill would be most happy to accept the suggestion of the Chairman of Ways and Means. If the Bill were read a second time they would be glad to appear before the Committee and show that the bargain they had made was a fair one.

MR. ANNAN BRYCE (Inverness Burghs) said he would appeal to Members opposite whether a matter of this kind should be made a party question. He had a great many friends who were Home Rulers and Liberals in Belfast, and if the House decided against the Bill it would embitter the relations between the parties.

MR. J. DEVLIN: May I point out that the hon. Gentleman was not here to listen to the discussion.

MR. ANNAN BRYCE said that one might know something about the matter though one had not heard the debate. Gentlemen below the gangway opposite knew perfectly well what his opinions were in regard to their main policy, and that he was absolutely in sympathy with them. Therefore it was that he deprecated the introduction of party feeling on the Second Reading of a Bill of this kind.

MR. SCOTT (Ashton-under-Lyne) thought that an English Member who knew something about tramways might be allowed to say a word or two upon this Bill. For a tram line three-and-a-half miles long that could only support a twenty minutes service, it was preposterous to pay close upon £18,000 per mile. The hon. Member for South Belfast had told them that they ought to respect the expenditure of the ratepayers' money. No one did that more than he did, but he wished to point out that there was no company which had cost the ratepayers more money than the British Electric Traction Company, because other municipalities had been placed by this company in precisely the same position as Belfast. The people of Belfast had not been allowed to vote freely on this matter.

MR. SLOAN said the hon. Member was quite in error in making an insinuation of that kind.

MR. SCOTT said it had been stated that the people of Belfast believed that the British Electric Traction Company, which was a powerful body with great capitalists behind it, could seek powers to acquire a competitive service. That, however, was not so, because if Parliament granted this company running powers, conditions would be imposed to protect the Corporation. What he protested against was that municipalities should be humbugged with these associations coming on their border ground and acquiring these interests, not with the object of serving the public, but simply in order to squeeze from municipalities exorbitant prices for their undertakings.

MR. JAMES PARKER (Halifax) said in regard to this measure he agreed with the views expressed in the speeches of hon. Members below the Gangway. Nobody who had paid any attention to the Bill before the House or the balance sheet about which they had heard something in the debate would go into the Lobby and vote for the Second Reading of this Bill. This Bill was neither more nor less than the giving of a large sum of money to a company which was notorious for opposing municipal undertakings and putting the ratepayers to great expense. He was much interested in the speech of the hon. Member for East Belfast and the figures he had placed before the House. Whether hon. Members were in favour of or opposed to municipal enterprise, he would ask them was there any justification for handing the powers of Parliament to a body which was using those powers, not to help, but to injure municipal enterprises. In West Ham they only paid £5,000 per mile for a double tramway track, whereas in this case the city of Belfast were proposing to pay over £18,000 per mile for a single track. But that did not end the story. Before that track could be used by the Belfast Corporation probably another £40,000 would be spent.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 130; Noes, 176. (Division List No. 27.)

AYES.

Allen, A.Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Armitage, R.
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barrie, H.T.(Londonderry, N.)
Barry,Redmond J.(Tyrone,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bellairs, Carlyon
Berridge, T. H. D.
Black, Arthur W.
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brunner,J.F.L.(Lancs., Leigh)
Brunner,Rt HnSirJ.T(Cheshire)
Bryce, J. Annan
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hn. Victor C.W.
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Cecil,Lord R.(Marylebone, E.)
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill Rt. Hn. Winston S.
Clough, William
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett,C.H.(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cory, Sir Clifford John
Courthope, G. Loyd
Cox, Harold
Craig,Charles Curtis (Antrim,S.
Craig,Captain James(Down,E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Dalrymple, Viscount
Davies,David (MontgomeryCo.
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan,Robert (Lanark,Gov'n
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Fell, Arthur
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gladstone,Rt.HnHerbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Hamilton, Marquess of
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hills, J. W.
Holland, Sir William Henry
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hunt, Rowland
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennaway,Rt.Hn.Sir John H.
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
Lee,Arthur H.(Hants,Fareham
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lockwood,Rt.Hn. Lt.-Col.A.R.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Maclean, Donald
M'Arthur, Charles
M'Micking, Major G.
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Moore, William
Morgan,J.Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morpeth, Viscount
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholson,Charles N.(D'nc'st'r)
Nuttall, Harry
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torens
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price,Robert John(Norfolk,E.)
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ridsdale, E. A.
Robinson, S.
Rose, Charles Day
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sheffield,Sir Berkeley GeorgeD.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smith,F.E.(Liverpool, Walton)
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanley, Hn. A.Lyulph(Chesh.)
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomson, W. Mitchell (Lanark
Valentia, Viscount
Verney, F. W.
Walker,Col.W.H. (Lancashire)
Waring, Walter
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
White, Sir George (Norfolk)

Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley, Rt. Hn. G. (York, W.R.
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestershire, N.
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Wolff and Mr. George Clark.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Ambrose, Robert
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Brace, William
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Clynes, J. R.
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Erskine, David C.
Fenwick, Charles
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Sir Daniel Ford
Gulland, John W.
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Hayden, John Patrick
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jenkins, J.
Johnston, John (Gateshead)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Joyce, Michael
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kettle, Thomas Michael
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwi'h)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs)
Mackarness, Frederick C.
Mcpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeagh, Charles (Donegal, E.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Killop, W.
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield, H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Meagher, Michael
Middlebrook, William
Mond, A.
Mooney, J. J.
Muldoon, John
Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Murphy, N. J. (Kilkenny, S.)
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicholls, George
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nugent, Sir Walter Richard
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Connor, James (Wicklow, W.)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearce, Robert (Staffs Leek)
Pease, J. A (Saffron Walden)
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Power, Patrick Joseph
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mp'tn)
Richardson, A.
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradfrd)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rowlands, J.
Rutherford, V. R. (Brentford)
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Colonel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Snowden, P.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs, N.W.)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset)
Thorne, William
Wadsworth, J.
Walsh, Stephen
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent)
Wardle, George J.
Watt, Henry A.
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williamson, A.
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Devlin and Mr. Scott.

Main Question, as amended, put, and agreed to.

Second Reading put off for six months.

LICENSING BILL.

Postponed Proceeding on Question, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Licensing Acts, 1828 to 1906," resumed.

Question again proposed.

*MR. CHARLES ROBERTS, continuing his speech, said: I wish very briefly to conclude my argument on the time-limit. Fourteen years is a long tunnel, even though there is daylight at the end of it. Any extension of the term proposed by the Bill would really be an endowment of the brewers. May I refer to the attack which has been made on the Bill with reference to clubs? It has been said that the whole value of the Bill in reducing facilities for drinking will be counteracted by its weakness in dealing with clubs. I believe that the Government has seized the central and essential point in dealing with clubs. They might have gone further, but in handing over the question of the annual registration of clubs to the discretion of the licensing authority I believe the real step will be taken to check the multiplication of bogus clubs. We have seen before the value of this discretion in stopping the multiplication of grocers' licences. This provision will enable the justices to distinguish between the legitimate club and the bogus club which is started with the intention of wrecking the reduction movement or of paralysing the plan of No-licence. I wish, then, to thank the Government most cordially for the Bill. I know that there are points in it which may be regarded as shortcomings. It is not the whole loaf, but it is all good bread. It seems to me that in regard to election day closing they might have made that obligatory instead of permissive. I do not wish, however, on the First Reading to go into criticisms of detailed points. We shall hope that the Bill will be strengthened. I want to thank the Government for what is not in the Bill as well as for what is in it. On some points they might have followed devious and perilous ways. We have not got the position which faced us when Mr. Bruce's Bill was introduced. That Bill, along with many good points, proposed some most objectionable and dangerous changes, which have quite passed out of public memory. Hence at that time a most difficult and embarrassing decision faced the party of temperance reform. If the Bill does not on some points go far enough I am sure it is one which offers real and substantial advantages. I wish specially to thank the Government for having given to us the power of local option in regard to licences. I understand that we get under the Bill that power at once over new licences, and though we shall have to wait long for it, in the end we get the power of local option over all licences. That is the fighting issue of temperance reform all over the world. I hope the temperance forces will concentrate for the purpose of supporting and strengthening this Bill. We know quite well that it will be made the subject of party attack. Hon. Members on the other side would have attacked it just as much if the Bill had been weaker. The Bill is worth fighting for, and I hope the Government will stand to their guns against all opposition. I hope the House will allow me to say one word of thanks to the Prime Minister for his action in this matter. The right hon. Gentleman has crowned a life of steadfast fidelity to temperance reform by his act of signal courage in producing this Bill. Temperance reformers will not forget to whose decision it is due that at last a door is opened for the deliverance of the country from a great social evil.

*MR. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs): I have, I think, a certain title to intervene at this stage in the discussion. I am the only member of Lord Peel's Commission sitting on this side of the House. If I had not intended to speak to-night I should certainly have done so on account of the scant courtesy which the Chancellor of the Exchequer has paid to that Commission. I may not be regarded as perfectly free from a certain amount of prejudice on this question. I belong to the trade. I am a brewer, and although my interests are—[AN HON. MEMBER: You should be in the House of Lords] —I shall look forward to the day when my hon. friend will interrupt me there—I think I should perfectly frankly say that while my interests, and the interests of my firm, are predominantly Scottish we have certain English interests which will be affected by this Bill. At the same time, I am sorry not to be in the position of the hon. Member for Lincoln of being able to thank the Chancellor of the Exchequer for this measure. It is a very much more drastic Bill than I thought it would be. I hardly believe that the right hon. Gentleman expects it to pass in its present form, and I am perfectly certain that if it does it will create a financial cataclysm on the Stock Exchange which will react on other interests than those of the brewing trade. The fact of the matter is this: I do not suppose there is a single brewing concern of any consequence in England, having a large debenture issue, which would not find itself, within a very short period of the passing of the Bill, in the hands of the Official Receiver by means of the change in the quality of the debenture holder's security. That may seem to hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite a very small matter. It appears to me to be an extremely serious one, and I am bound to say that I was astonished at the light-hearted and casual fashion in which the Chancellor of the Exchequer dealt with the question to-day. As to the possibility which the right hon. Gentleman foreshadowed of the brewing companies being perfectly able, in the short time he was inclined to give, to insure the enormous interest they have in licensed properties, I do not intend to go deeply into the question. It has been spoken to with great ability already, and it will be discussed by my right hon. friend later on. I enter now as moderate but as strong a protest as I can against what I believe to be the extremely unfair proposals of the Bill. My hon. and learned friend the Member for the Walton Division produced certain figures which I think were not acceptable—certainly they were not accepted—to the other side. These figures I am authorised to say were provided by Mr. Peat, whose name I have only to mention to make the House realise that they were serious and sound figures. If hon. Gentlemen do not care to accept these figures, they have the recent letters of Mr. Edward North Buxton, once a Member of this House, and a member of the Licensing Commission. He stated in letters to *The Times* what the position of his firm would be if an illusory period were granted during which compensation was to be given and a levy continued. I think he stated in these letters that the balance of his profits amounted only to £64,000 a year, after paying fixed debenture charges, and that is under management by the existing partners of the concern. The House will see that with a fourteen years time limit and a concurrent levy it certainly is not possible that the whole of that money could provide what is required. The right hon. Gentleman is treading on rather dangerous ground in believing that this levy will continue to be paid. Does he suppose that these firms will remain solvent? Does he think that the profits now being made will continue to be made? Of course they will not. The whole thing will be gone. There will be a condition of affairs created which will disturb the credit of all those persons. The interest of those who so well manage these concerns will be taken away and in that case such profits will cease to be made. I would like to ask if there is the slightest sign of this Bill being a temperance measure. How will the consumer fare under it? All I can say is that the Chancellor of the Exchequer will risk the loss of his revenue while the consumer who wants a good glass of beer will get no "forrarder" on the beer which will be supplied under it if it be watered as the hon. Member for the Spen Valley suggests. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that there could be no temperance reform more likely to do good than the encouragement under a new licensing system of the improvement of the condition of the houses. I am one of those who think that the policy of most of the licensing magistrates has been very foolish in the restrictions which they have placed in the way of the licensed holders being encouraged to make their houses more like a French café than a mere drinking bar or saloon. Surely, if after fourteen years the whole of the interest of the licence-holder in his house is to disappear, that will neither induce him to carry on his business in the careful way I have indicated, or to incur further expenditure in the improvement of his premises. Again, how does the right hon. Gentleman expect to get all the money he wants? And what is the chance of the consumer having his beer or whiskey at a reasonable price? Prices under the right hon. Gentleman's proposal must go up, and that is not likely to make him a popular Minister or his Government a popular Government. After all, people have got used to paying 1½d. a glass for their beer. They will not like it if they have to pay 2d., and they will bless the right hon. Gentleman still less if there is some water added to it. In the speeches which have been made by the right hon. Gentleman and others who followed him, there was an extraordinary omission. I suppose that of the 95,000 licences which still exist in England, something like one-third represent the ante-1869 beer houses. When the Act of 1904 was passed, those houses had a statutory right to a renewal of their licences. They could not be taken away except on certain grounds. But the owners and holders of these licences agreed to come under the provisions and scope of the 1904 Act, because they were to be protected by its compensation clauses against the withdrawal of their licences. Why does the right hon. Gentleman place those licences now in the same position as other licences? I say that this action of the Government is in the nature of a gross breach of Parliamentary faith, and hon. Gentlemen opposite ought to bear that in mind. The hon. Member for Lincoln thought he had made an excellent point by saying that in estimating the compensation payable to those ante-1869 beer houses the Court only added one year's extra purchase money over and above the number of years purchase money allowed for on-licences. But instead of making a good point from his own standpoint, does the hon. Gentleman not see that he was making an extremely bad one? If a licence having a statutory right to renewal is only supposed to be worth not more than one year's purchase money more than an on-licence the Court showed that it thought that the expectation of renewal in the one case was nearly as good as the certainty of renewal in the other. At any rate that is how, I think, the Court understood the matter, and most people will agree. My right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition alluded in the course of his speech to the sale of a licensed house to which the Government was a party. The War Office sold a licensed house in Portsmouth in the month of July last for £10,000, and the valuer who valued that house for the War Office valued the house without the licence at £2,500. I wonder if the right hon. Gentleman thinks after this Bill is read to-morrow, and if it passes into an Act, that that house will be worth £10,000; and if he does not, does he think it quite fair for the Government to sell the house at that rate within a few months of the introduction of this Bill and in the knowledge of their intentions? I have heard of directors being severely taken to task for selling shares in a company when they knew that there was to be a poor dividend; but is this not a much worse case? The right hon. Gentleman is not content with hitting the unfortunate trader by granting him such a short limit, he has also seriously penalized him in order to increase the rate of reduction of licences. He changes the system of valuation in such a way as to enable him with the same levy to reduce a very much larger number of houses, so that in every way the unfortunate trader is put in the position of being wholly unable to meet the extra insurance money. There cannot be any question about that fact. The question of annual rental is a very different thing from the question of annual profits; and the loss under that head alone in the case of many companies will be so great that even if they were able to set aside from profits money to provide for insurance, that would preclude them from paying any dividend. I have only another word to say, and that is that, so far as I can judge, there seemed a desire on the part of the right hon. Gentleman and his friends to "play up" to the publican. Brewers are horrible persons in the estimation of some people, as was shown by the ironical cheers with which any reference to them was received. Just as Lord Rosebery the other day said that a noble Lord had the "airy grace of a butterfly," and then immediately after added: "a butterfly with a pin through it," so it struck me and many Members around me that, while the Chancellor of the Exchequer was playing up to the publican, he was putting three pins through him! I do not think that the publican will thank the right hon. Gentleman for this Bill any more than will the brewer. I was very glad to hear the right hon. Gentleman say that he would welcome criticism of the Bill, and would not resist any fair Amendment to it. I hope that as the result of debates in this House and of opinion in the country the Bill will be largely modified, and made more acceptable to the trade, which I consider for my part is a necessary and a perfectly respectable one. I trust that in its defence I have not used any extreme expressions, and I honestly say that if the right hon. Gentleman thinks that his Bill as at present drafted is fair and reasonable, there will not amongst the whole of the licensed trade of this country be found a single soul who will agree with him.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I think I may be allowed to express on my own behalf and that of my colleagues and of the great majority of the people of Wales our great satisfaction with the Bill introduced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and our gratitude to the right hon. Gentleman for the provision he has made in it for the special needs of Wales. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has admitted that the position of Wales in regard to licensing and Sunday closing is different from that of England, and it is very gratifying to us that he has recognised that fact in his Bill. For many years past the people of Wales have pressed for two outstanding reforms. One is that Monmouthshire should be included in the Welsh Sunday Closing Act, and the other is that immediate recognition should be given to the principle of popular control in the granting of licences. Both these reforms find a place in the Bill. I would like to say in regard to the extension of the Sunday closing area that that reform will be the means of conferring a benefit on the counties of Monmouthshire and Glamorganshire, and of meeting one of the worst evils in the border districts. With reference to the other point, the recognition of the principle of popular control, I desire again to express our great appreciation of the Government's action, and of the proposal which is included in the Bill in that respect. I feel sure that this provision will be very welcome in the Principality. It will afford the people of Wales an opportunity of testing the principle of local control during the running of the time limit, and I feel sure with regard to the funds at the disposal of the licensing authority for this further reduction, there will be sufficient money to bring about at all events a substantial reduction beyond that authorised by the machinery of the Bill. I have only further to say that I look upon this as a great Bill, and as a great effective, comprehensive, and equitable scheme for dealing with some of the most urgent evils that now exist in our licensing system There is one fact which I think will enable the Government to pass it into law, and that is that there is now in the country a settled feeling that something must be done to reduce the gigantic evil of intemperance in the country. This is a courageous and honest attempt on the part of the Government to grapple with that evil. We may hope that this will enable us to lift the question out of Party politics and make it a national question. I thank the Government for the special provisions of the Bill relating to Wales, and I have no doubt that if this great measure passes into law it will strengthen not only the physique but the mental and moral courage of the nation.

SIR E. CARSON (Dublin University): As I listened to-day—as I did very attentively, as one who took part in the last legislation upon this subject in 1904, when I had the honour to hold the position of Solicitor-General—to the statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and as he unravelled, with the lucidity of which he is such a master, the details of his Bill, and more and more showed his determination almost to strip away the last garment of the trade, I could not avoid asking myself whether, having regard to the serious nature of his proposals, we were to consider this really as a genuine Bill, or whether it was a move in the game of tactics in their campaign against the House of Lords. A great deal is said about that terrible class of people called brewers, who next, I think, to the Irish landlords are about the worst class of people with which the Legislature has to deal. But after all, what are the brewers? There are thousands, almost millions of innocent investors who upon the faith of legislation by Parliament have invested their money, not in a speculative, but in a perfectly proper and well recognised security. Therefore when you talk of brewers do not imagine you are dealing with two or three individuals; you are dealing with millions of people, and in many cases with the savings of a lifetime. When those who have invested their money in these securities come to realise what is included in this Bill, and the million and a half employees also come to realise it, the one class will know that they have been stripped of their property, and the other that they are going to be stripped of their employment. That is a course which I do not think even the Chancellor of the Exchequer can have entered upon with a light heart, and I certainly think he might have given us some very much better reasons, if he had them, for engaging in a campaign of this kind. The sole basis of his speech and of all his proposals was the old controversy as to what was the exact legal interest which the owner of a licensed house had in his licence. That is a very old phrase. We have argued it many times here across the floor of the House, but I venture to say that it is not a question of the construction of an Act of Parliament. It is a question of hard and actual facts as to the real nature of that expectancy, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer called it, and how it has been treated not merely in regard to the matter of licensing, but as an ordinary commodity in the market. It is idle to tell me that because by the construction of an Act of Parliament a discretion is given to justices in regard to licensing, in the same way as in regard to other matters which have been looked upon as a continuing and vested interest and have been so dealt with—it is idle to tell me that that can be got rid of by a decision of a Court, no matter how high that Court may be. But I would remind the Chancellor of the Exchequer that in that case to which he referred of Sharpe *v.* Wakefield—I really apologise for going into these matters, but they have been put at the root of the case by the right hon. Gentleman himself—I would remind him that in giving judgment in that case the Lord Chancellor, while admitting that the justices had a discretion, said—

"The legislature has given credit to the magistrates for exercising a judicial discretion that they will fairly decide the questions submitted to them, and not by an evasive attempt to repeal the law which permits public-houses to exist, or to evade it, avoiding a clear exposition of the reasons upon which they act."

That means that where an Act of Parliament has laid down certain definite considerations upon which these renewals may take place, unless the magistrates see clear and real reasons why they should go outside these conditions they ought to proceed to renew these licences as they have done for more than a century. If anyone wants anything further I wish hon. and right hon. Gentlemen who have to consider this very serious subject would take the trouble which I have done more than once to read a little of its history, which they will find stated in no biassed way in a little book produced by Mr. Sidney Webb, who at all events cannot be said to be a partisan of the political party to which I belong. He draws attention to the fact that as far back as 1816 a Committee appointed by the then House of Commons, and appointed because there was a revulsion of feeling against the drastic and stringent measures taken by the magistrates in reference to the subject of this discussion, reported to this House—

"Your Committee think it by no means clear that the legislature ever contemplated that magistrates would assume power to consider old licences as new ones, or that they should be able to deprive at their own will, persons of their property to which long enjoyment has given them a right, and upon which the living of themselves and their families depends."

MR. ASQUITH: Did Parliament take action on that?

SIR E. CARSON: Yes, Parliament took this action on that. They allowed a free trade in beer licences. That is the whole origin of the ante-beer licences in 1869.

AN HON. MEMBER: There is a vested interest in the ante-1869 licences.

SIR E. CARSON: But the Chancellor of the Exchequer does not take any notice of the vested interest in the ante-1869 beer licences. All this talk of the vested interest has nothing to do with the case. It is merely a peg for the right hon. Gentleman to hang his hat upon, because whether there is a vested interest in a beer licence or whether there is not, he intends to sweep them all into one net. Why, then, bring in all this talk about the question of vested interests at all? It has no real foundation, although it is the only argument put forward by the right hon. Gentleman in favour of bringing in this Bill. But it has nothing whatever to do with the arguments with which he tries to support this Bill. He draws no distinction between the case in which there is a vested interest and that in which there is not. I therefore dispute entirely the basis upon which the right hon. Gentleman frames his argument. The next point which the right hon. Gentleman took was our Act of 1904. He said it had been too slow. At all events, it had the merit of being the only Bill brought forward by either Party for thirty years which had had the effect of decreasing the number of public houses. Whatever effect it might have upon temperance, it reduced the number of new licences from 215 per annum to about fifty-five or thereabouts, and it decreased the number of licensed houses in the three years at the rate of about 1,200 a year. It has done that while for the last two years the Government has been trying to impair the usefulness of that measure. Why do I say that ? I say that because we gave powers in 1904 to borrow money on the security of the compensation fund, with a view to an immediate greater reduction ; with a view that redundant houses might be immediately suppressed. But when an application was made to the Home Office during the tenure of the present Government to borrow money in order to close up a larger number of houses, the applicants were told that they could not be allowed to borrow for more than one year. So that with a view to making a case in this matter the Government have actually impeded the operation of an Act of Parliament. It is no use for the right hon. Gentleman to shake his head, because it is the fact. Let him get up after me and deny it. I say to have an Act impeded in its operation in that way for party purposes is a disgrace to an Administration which is put into power for the purpose of administering the law as it exists. The right hon. Gentleman has told us that he is going to impose this time limit. I think he has given very little reason for doing so. He said we had to consider this question of time limit. We considered the question of the time limit when we were passing the Act of 1904. I said then, and I say now, and I believe the House thought then, and I believe it is a fact now as it was then, that a time limit is absolutely inconsistent with the idea of an insurance such as is set up under this Bill. Just examine it for a moment. I can understand its being said to a man who had merely the expectancy which the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer says he has, "We give you notice that at the end of fourteen years we will close your house, but we will take care that you are not turned out." You can say to the tenant: "You have made improvements, you are liable to be turned out, but we will give you fourteen years in order that you may compensate yourself for the improvements you have made." But if you tell this man during all those years he must compensate himself, and then suddenly suppress his house, the whole thing is a farce. Look at the absurdity to which you are driven the moment you apply a time limit to such a case. The first thing that results is that the longer a man resides the less he gets. Let us see how it works out. If a man's house is taken in the first year, he has paid a year's insurance and gets the value of his house based on a fourteen years purchase ; if he has paid fourteen years insurance and his house is taken he gets the value of his house on one year's purchase. Was there ever anything more ridiculous than an insurance on that basis ! But at the end of the time if he has not the good luck to have had his property taken from him before, he loses not merely his house but his insurance as well. That is a very satisfactory way of insuring property is it not ? But that is not the end of the effect of this time limit coupled with the compulsory powers conferred on the magistrates. In fact, as I understand it—it is not very easy to follow a complicated Bill of this kind—the magistrates are to be bound, whether they think it expedient for the neighbourhood and for the benefit of the people or not, to reduce a certain number of houses per year. Very well, the Government have not much trust in the magistrates anyway. How many houses are to be reduced per year ? Two thousand three hundred. Let us have no delusion over this. Where is the money to come from ? The right hon. Gentleman says : "We are going to take the same scale of compensation as under your Act." Do not let anybody in the trade be deceived by that. The Chancellor of the Exchequer knows perfectly well the money will not go nearly far enough.

MR. ASQUITH: It will go far enough.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: The Chancellor of the Exchequer is too sanguine. He must be thinking of the *personnel* of the Commission he is going to appoint. Probably, the Chairman will be the hon. Member for the Spen Valley and one of the other two gentlemen will probably be the Chairman of the United Kingdom Alliance. No doubt he can get a most excellent tribunal for the purpose of carrying out what he says will be the fact that there shall be sufficient money under the circumstances. If up to the present time, when, of course, the worst class of houses have been dealt with, you have only been able to reduce about 1,200 a year out of the sum available, how can it be that you will be able to deal with more expensive public-houses, taking away 2,300 a year with the money which will be available? The right hon. Gentleman knows it perfectly well, or he would not have put in the Bill the power to increase the compensation money. I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman who is to regulate that? Is it the Commission, with the hon. Member for the Spen Valley, as Chairman? It would be far better to do it openly in the House of Commons and regulate the price to be paid from year to year. There is another matter. As I understand the Bill, as stated by the right hon. Gentleman, when a district has been cleared, when you have got your £750 for the acre, or your 3 acres to the cow, or whatever it may be—when you have got your land cleared of excessive public-houses, then the remaining public-houses there are to go on contributing. The man in Sussex is to contribute towards the reduction of public-houses in York after the houses in Sussex have been sufficiently reduced. Well, I hope the man in Sussex will remember that when he comes to consider the just and equitable and judicial provisions of this Bill which the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought in, in such a judicial frame of mind this afternoon. Under the Bill, at the end of the time limit, the licensed trader loses his premises and his insurance. "Oh, but," says the right hon. Gentleman, "you can have a second insurance. You can insure against what will happen at the end of fourteen years." The right hon. Gentleman has not told us what is going to happen at the end of fourteen years. Although he calls it an insurance, what he really means is that you must make a sinking fund. Will the right hon. Gentleman lay upon the Table of the House his calculations, taking specimens of various houses in various districts, and tell us what it will cost to provide this sinking fund? I venture to think he will not. These calculations have been referred to by the hon. Member for the Walton Division of Liverpool. I have seen those figures. I do not, of course, vouch for the accuracy of them, but if they are anything like right you must, in order to put by a sinking fund to purchase or make good at the end what the Chancellor of the Exchequer is taking away, begin next year and starve your debenture holders, not to talk of preference and ordinary shareholders who are gone entirely the moment this Bill is passed. And what is more: Will any of these people who own shares in the trade be able in the meantime to raise a shilling of the capital required for the extension or keeping up other various businesses? Who would lend a brass farthing on such a security? The right hon. Gentleman knows perfectly well that if the interest falls into arrears, the debenture holders in their own protection will have to enter and take possession of the premises; if there is even a prospect of it falling into arrear, they will have the right to do so. The whole trade, by this Bill, must be thrown into a state of financial anarchy. Anybody who looks at the Bill fairly and considers the proposals must come to the conclusion that every shilling that is invested in it—and there are millions—is in jeopardy of being lost. Why is it that this time limit is put in at all? The right hon. Gentleman says: "It is because I have my political honour to think of." What does it matter to all these debenture holders, to the millions of people who have put the savings of their lifetime in this security under the sanction of the law, and to the 1,500,000 employees in these various businesses? He has his political honour to think of, and the pledges he gave when in Opposition! He stated of Lord Hugh Cecil—and nobody has a greater respect for the noble Lord than I have—said that the Bill of 1904 did not prevent Parliament setting up a time limit. He was quite right: nothing in an Act can prevent Parliament doing anything afterwards; and, just as the Bill of 1904 did not prevent Parliament setting up a time limit, or having it proposed, at all events, so the Bill of 1908, if it ever passes, cannot prevent Parliaments in years to come from striking out the time limit. The right hon. Gentleman talks of political honour in relation to what he said when in Opposition. What does he think of the political honour of those who passed the Bill of 1904, and of the course that they ought to take if the arrangement made and the moderate compromise effected are set aside? What would he think of the political honour of those who were engaged in the process of forming that Bill and in pressing it upon the House if they were to abandon those who were led to invest their money upon the compromise come to at that time? The right hon. Gentleman says we gave notice, and that that is the reason why he has a right to confiscate all this property of these various people. Fortunately we are legislating for fourteen years hence. I know the right hon. Gentleman probably thinks that, small minority as we are, we never have a chance of coming again into power. But at all events he will, I hope, give us credit for having as much honour as he has. There is at all events, time before those who are concerned in the effects of this time limit, and I have no doubt they will take advantage of the opportunity between this and fourteen years hence to try to have the matter regulated. Does the right hon. Gentleman not see that any attempt of this kind so far from being a settlement is absolutely an unsettlement of the whole matter? Does he not see that people, in reference to this matter, will be fighting for their very existence, and once you have raised the question in this form, in which it is to affect millions of innocent people, it will be many long years before you can expect them to leave this question outside their political contests. Above all things, the right hon. Gentleman has said he is not in this Bill going to determine what is to happen at the end of fourteen years. At least he gave a general indication that it would be left to local option or something of that kind, and he said how that local option was to be exercised, but it would have to be done in a future Bill. At all events, there is a fair field for fourteen years for the publican and the trade to keep agitating and to keep this as a dominant factor in politics before those who are seriously concerned in this matter, and I can assure the right hon. Gentleman that if I was not concerned with the rights of property and with the rights of those who have just as good reason to ask for protection as any individual in this House, there is nothing I should hail with greater joy if I were a mere politician than the fact that you have produced a Bill which will arouse a feeling amongst those affected which I think you little contemplate. And after all, have you any great confidence in your own Bill, that having inflicted these hardships it is going to raise any great accretion of strength to those who are so much engaged in this temperance movement? You, by your own admission, have shown that, at the best, as you suppress these licensed houses from time to time, you will only turn the channel into these clubs which the Chancellor of the Exchequer tells us have been growing so rapidly in recent years. Yes, and the right hon. Gentleman makes no serious effort to deal with them. He knows as well as I do what a network of these clubs there is. Has he considered the question of the affiliated clubs—the thousands of clubs affiliated to the central club, and how as you pass from one town into another you are able, by merely writing down your name and stating that you are a member in another town, to enjoy all the privileges of the club and the convenience of getting such liquor as you may require? I read somewhere, and I believe it is true, though I do not vouch for it, that these affiliated clubs have actually made arrangements with the Chancellor of the Exchequer that the sale of intoxicating liquors in any of the affiliated clubs to a member of any one club is not to be a breach of the rules and regulations of the club so as to prevent it from continuing to be registered as a club. The truth of the matter is that there is very little of temperance in the Bill at all. The provision that opposition can be made to the renewal of the registration of the club is founded on an absolutely farcical proceeding. What is it? That a policeman without uniform is to be at liberty to walk round the club occasionally, and I suppose is to go and give the evidence on which the registration is to be opposed. How is he to do it? Is he to look at the countenance of each man he sees reclining in a chair or on a sofa or perhaps smell his breath, and the usual matters we see in the police court from time to time? This man is to go round the clubs, and come up at the end of the year and tell you: "You ought not to renew the licence of this club, because I have been two or three times a year and I can assure you it is nothing more or less than a drinking shop." It is not in the least necessary that they should be disreputable drinking shops at all. They may be perfectly properly conducted clubs, just as the public-houses that you put an end to may have been perfectly properly conducted public-houses. What is your remedy then? Where does your temperance come in? If a properly conducted public house is turned into a properly conducted club, what is the difference as regards temperance? The only difference is that in the public-house there is some supervision, and that the club is free from licensing duties and various other charges which are paid to the Exchequer. I believe, looking at the history of this subject, if your Bill were to pass to-morrow, it would cause a reaction as regards this question, which would lead in a very short time either to the Bill's repeal or its modification. What do you find in the whole history of this question? You find in the eighteenth century magistrates taking great powers upon themselves, trying local option, trying the putting down of public-houses, trying to prevent in every way the sale of beer and other intoxicating liquors, and then in 1816 a great reaction of feeling coming over the country at these magistrates interfering with the liberty of a people who thought they had no right to interfere. And then you find the legislation going entirely in the other direction in consequence of that reaction, and that instead of these restrictions there was established an absolutely free trade in beer which led to the ante-1869 beerhouses being called into existence. You find by degrees as time went on, according as the wave went one way or the other, one year a number of licences taken away, and then an outcry, and then for a few years little or nothing done in the way of suppression of licences. And so you will find, if you pass an extreme, extravagant, drastic, and confiscatory measure such as this, a revulsion of feeling upon the part of this country which will drive back this question which has been going on steadily for years past, with consequences that temperance advocates little understand. This is not the time to go into the more minute details of the Bill, but I have no hesitation in expressing my opinion for what it is worth, that a more mischievous and a more confiscatory Bill has seldom been presented to Parliament

*THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir SAMUEL EVANS, Glamorganshire, Mid.): It has always been the case that whenever any interests of a private character are attacked for the benefit of the community at large it is the experience of the House of Commons that lugubrious and dark pictures are drawn, but those pictures are always falsified in the working of the measure. Up to the speech which has just been made by the right hon. and learned Gentleman opposite the criticism which has been directed towards the Bill of the Government, introduced in such a masterly speech by my right hon. friend, has been such that the Government and the Chancellor of the Exchequer have no reason to complain of it at all. The speech of the right hon. and learned Member opposite was made solely on behalf of the trade; and when in a few short sentences he approached the question of temperance, the good of the people, and the welfare of the community, his criticism consisted of a mere statement that the Bill was a mischievous and confiscatory measure. The Government have brought this Bill forward in the interests of temperance, and it would be the worst possible tactics in introducing a measure with that object to bring in a Bill which would deserve such criticism as that which has been directed by the right hon. and learned Gentleman in the last few phrases of his speech. I deny that this is an extreme, extravagant, or confiscatory measure. The Government are dealing with the interests of the community as well as with those of the trade, and the object they have in view is to make a fair and equitable adjustment between the rights of the trade and the rights of the community. Prophecies have been made as to the result to the Government (in case an appeal were made to the country) of having introduced a measure of this kind. I do not think that considerations of that sort ought to affect the Government in dealing with their legislation. We have to consider what is right and best for the country at large, and if the consequences are that we shall be overwhelmed in disaster, and that the Party to which the right hon. and learned Gentleman belongs will come in and repeal this Bill which we are going to pass into an Act, so much the worse for the Liberal Party, but if such should be the result, we should meet disaster in a good cause. The first principle of the Bill is that there is to be a gradual reduction of licences, the effect of which will be to promote the cause of temperance. The difference between the Act of 1904 and the present measure is that by this Bill there will be uniformity in reduction over the whole country: that the reduction will be gradual, and that it will be compulsory. With these exceptions we have followed the plan of the Act of 1904. We believe that it is absolutely essential for the good of the country that there should be not only a reduction but a reduction on a large scale.

SIR EDWARD CARSON: But we had no time limit.

*SIR SAMUEL EVANS: That is another and a different matter: but we have followed the Act of 1904 in adopting the plan of reduction as a means towards promoting temperance. The second principle of the Bill is that the State should after the reduction period resume the control of the licences which it has granted. If notice is required to the trade, they have had notice for many years that the time might come when the State would assume the full control of the right to grant licences, and should intercept the monopoly value of such licences. The time limit has been commented upon by the right hon. Gentleman, and he said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer thought it necessary in order to keep his word and to live up to his standard of political honour to deal with this question upon this basis. Quite true; and similarly the right hon. Gentleman and his Party find it necessary to preserve their political honour by threatening to recede from this principle. We have not been driven as the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition said to bring in this Bill: we have introduced it because we believe in it; but would it have been right, would anybody have thought anything of us if after professing opinions in opposition and giving pledges at the election, when we came to legislate we did not carry out our principles? We are not alone in this matter. Fortunately, in regard to the time-limit we have the assistance, among others, of the bishops of the Church of England. The Leader of the Opposition does not like the opinions of bishops on this question.

MR. BOTTOMLEY: Hear, Hear!

*SIR SAMUEL EVANS: I make a present of the support of the hon. Member for South Hackney to the Party opposite. The Leader of the Opposition said it was no use quoting bishops on this matter, because it was a matter of plain, common, financial equity, and, in his view, so far from the principles of this Bill being properly described as equitable, they were confiscatory and predatory, and that we are guilty of robbery in proposing such a Bill to the House. Such language proves nothing, and does not help to a right decision. With regard to clubs, the Leader of the Opposition said that we were doing hardly anything to stop the evils which arose out of them. We are not proposing to do anything in regard to *bona fide* clubs. We are proposing to deal with clubs which are mainly used for drinking purposes. We want to stop the practice of opening as a club premises next door to, or in the same street as, a public-house which has been closed. That is not a case of working men starting a club. It is not a question of interfering with the liberty of working men, but of dealing with the licences of brewers. It is well within the experience of everybody who knows about this matter that the evils with which we are dealing arise from the action of brewers in starting a club when public-house premises have been closed up. We intend to do something to check these evils. I can promise the right hon. Gentleman opposite and the Party to which he belongs that if they will give us a helping hand in strengthening the provisions of the Bill for dealing with the admitted evils of drinking clubs, we shall receive with the heartiest welcome any assistance they give us. We ask the help, sympathy, and support of the right hon. Gentleman towards that end, and we will give the right hon. Gentleman our gratitude for doing what he can to assist us in this object. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the pre-1869 beer-houses. I should like to remind him and the House that the change in the law in regard to these houses was carried out by the Party to which he belongs, and he cannot accuse us of being confiscatory in regard to them, seeing that in 1904 they were put by him and his party on the same footing as other licences.

*MR. YOUNGER: They were dealt with under a guarantee of full compensation if the licences were withdrawn.

*SIR SAMUEL EVANS: I attended the debates in 1904 pretty regularly; I heard and know nothing of a deal inside the trade, but I am perfectly certain that there was no deal in the House of Commons on that matter. There is one other principle of the Bill which has hardly had any opposition at all directed to it in the course of this evening, and if that be a presage of what is going to happen during future discussions on the Bill, we shall be very glad that we have introduced into this Bill the principle of local veto with regard to new licences. I have listened to every speech in the discussion to-night, and there has been no speech in disapproval of the introduction for the first time for many years past of the principle of local veto with regard to new licences. At the end of the period of fourteen years all the public-houses will be regarded as new licensed houses. The right hon. Gentleman drew a picture of the trade being stripped of all its garments. We have left it decently clothed for a period of fourteen years: and after that there will be scores of thousands of licensed premises still existing; the most respectable kind will be left in the field, all the others which have been extinguished having been compensated for according to the proper annual value of the premises and the time still to run. At the expiration of the fourteen years what will happen is that those people who have conducted licensed premises properly, and in a way to commend their conduct to the magistrates, will still have their licences granted to them; but the monopoly value will no longer be given to those people. We have heard to-night about a profit of £8,000 being recently made by the grant of a licence. I have seen coming into Brewster Sessions a man who had spent £1,200 or £1,400 upon a house obtaining a licence which made it at once worth £8,000 or £9,000. I think when we are considering the proper adjustment between the various interests, the trade on the one hand and the community on the other, we have a right to look back and ask what has become of the millions of money which really ought to belong to the State, and which has been pocketed by individuals and companies. It is an abuse of language, when the State is only asking for the monopoly value of the licences at the end of fourteen years, to call that robbery. We are told that we shall be punished for having given effect to our political convictions in proposing this measure to the House. It has been said that fourteen years is not a long time in the history of a nation. It is not a very long time in the history of a human being. Many of us have been Members of this House for fourteen years, and I hope there are many who will be Members fourteen years hence, and who may see the end of the reduction period and the beginning of a better system of dealing with licences. I feel perfectly confident that after this measure, improved in details possibly in Committee, has become an Act, and after it has been carefully worked by the wisdom and co-operation of all persons who will have the working of it, and when we have seen the effect at the end of fourteen years, we who take part in the passing of the measure will be glad of what we have done, and Members on the other side who oppose it will regret the opposition which they may now be prepared to offer.

*MR. BARNARD (Kidderminster): The Solicitor-General has stated that at the end of the time limit those licence holders who have by their conduct commended themselves to the magistrates will have fair consideration. I would like the House to compare that statement with what the Chancellor of the Exchequer said in his speech earlier in the day. The right hon. Gentleman said that when the time limit was reached complete dominion and unfettered freedom would come back to the State. I want to understand exactly what the Chancellor of the Exchequer means by that, because I have here a quotation from a speech which the right hon. Gentleman delivered on 29th July, 1904, on the Licensing Bill of that year. He said—

> "As I have said, any logical system of compensation will make it a diminishing contribution, so that in the later years it will be almost nothing. But, apart from that, I say the publican will have got a *quid pro quo.*"
>
> "In the first place, if the Act is to succeed in what is said to be its main purpose—namely the reduction of redundant licences—it is quite clear that at the end of the period, if reasonably long—say fourteen years—there will be such a reduction in these licences that redundancy will be a rare thing, and, of course, as redundancy ceases the risk to the publican of losing his licence is small, and it is a risk that could be insured to-morrow in any insurance company in the country. Moreover, the reduction in the amount and stress of competition must surely enhance the value of licences, not only at the end of the period but during the whole period that the process of reduction is going on. I find that, even without any change in the law, between 1900 and 1903 the number of on-licences in London decreased by 7 per cent. although both the population and the consumption of alcohol largely increased in those years; and it is obvious that there must be a greatly enhanced value in the licensed premises which remain.

I put it to the House if that is the case, it seems to carry out the idea expressed by the Home Secretary in a speech delivered at Leeds, and also in a speech by the late Attorney-General, which showed—they were talking prior to the election of 1906—that when this period of the time limit—or whatever you may call it—ceased, there would be something coming to those who had been paying into the compensation fund. When we are told that within fourteen years there are to be something like 30,000 licences taken away, I ask whether it is not a reasonable thing to demand that some complete explanation should be given to us as to the effect upon those licences which are left. Then, I want to know the meaning of "complete dominion" and "unfettered freedom." I understand that the unfettered freedom means that we are to give back to the justices the right which they had before the Act of 1904, to give a licence at their discretion. But I do not understand that that in any way deals with two other points in the Act of 1904, and which the right hon. Gentleman never touched upon in his speech. The Act of 1904 dealt deliberately with the ante-1869 beer-houses. The Chancellor of the Exchequer did not even name them, and did not deal with them in any way whatever. There were 30,000 of these beer-houses, the owners of which possessed a vested interest in the licences, subject to four conditions which I need not repeat. The Act of 1904 brought forward by a Conservative Government took away from them that right. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Divide."] I will not argue whether that was correct or not, but I say that if the Chancellor of the Exchequer brings forward to-night a measure which seeks to alter the Act of 1904 in a way which favours his own views, the right hon. Gentleman ought to have referred to those features of that Act of 1904 which do not meet his views. I would have liked to have heard him speak of those parts which took away absolutely the vested rights in the ante-1869 beer-house licences, and in the grocers' licences. [Renewed cries of "Divide."] It is all very fine for hon. Members to cry "Divide," but it is rather hard on me. I do not speak often, and when I want to put one or two points to the House, and when I happen to be in the very singular position that the National Trade Defence Association openly opposed me, whilst I never answered any of the questions or gave any pledge to any Temperance organisation—I think I may be allowed to proceed. What I was trying to bring out was that it seems to me to be extremely hard that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should single out this particular trade for what I regard as exceptional treatment. I will put it in this way: We have all sorts of taxation and different varieties of taxation. There were eight different war taxes put on during the South African War. Four of them have been got rid of, and the four which remain press distinctly on the licensing trade. I could further illustrate my meaning by showing that this particular trade has, in my opinion, been very badly treated in the Bill introduced by the right hon. Gentleman. It is sufficient for my purpose to have emphasised what I have tried to put forward. [Cries of "Divide."] I do not want to weary the House of Commons at this hour of the morning, and I know that it is very unpleasant for some of my friends who seem to imagine that on temperance legislation everybody should agree with them, and that we have got to swallow the whole lot offered us. That is not my view at all. I only wanted to make it clear that there are a great many points in this Bill which I most respectfully deprecate and shall oppose. In regard to the clubs, I, personally, wish that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had gone much further, as I am of opinion that it is altogether unfair that he should allow them to go on competing as they do with the public-houses. Whether the policeman goes in plain clothes or uniform, I do not care, but I would rather that the right hon. Gentleman sent a tax gatherer to levy upon the clubs in the same way as he does upon the public houses. I will go even a step further than that. If it is right that the right hon. Gentleman should by these drastic provisions in regard to public-houses seek to reduce them by some 30,000, I think that he ought at the same time to remember that those who hold grocers' licences will in the main be the gainers by this legislation, and that he ought to levy upon them in the same way. It appears to me that the fourteen years limit will in no way enable the ordinary holders of licences to meet their liabilities or to accommodate themselves to the situation. I have, moreover, a variety of authorities which show that we had no right to imagine or to expect, when we agreed to Lord Peel's Report, that at the end of the time limit rights were to be taken away from the people who were their possessors. This is, to my mind, a very serious matter, and I feel bound to get up and record my opinion that the measure brought forward by the right hon. Gentleman contains very many enormous dangers, and I am very glad that he concluded his speech by saying that it was open to amendment.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby): I promise only to take two minutes before we go to a division, but I want to put before the House a matter which goes to the root of the Bill. My point is this, that I am one of those who believe that the true cause of temperance and sobriety would best be served if all the public-houses in the kingdom were made airy in summer, well ventilated, well lighted, well warmed in winter, provided with tables and chairs, newspapers, games and music; in short, if they were made respectable. I believe the effect would be that, as environment has a great deal to do with a person's conduct, you would have respectable behaviour, less drunkenness and less excess, if all the licensed houses were so altered and so made comfortable and respectable. Unfortunately the Legislature and the bench of magistrates following it, have conspired together to make the licensed house to-day so small and dirty as to render it impossible decently to conduct business in it. The result is that the public slink in at side doors, and you have drunkenness and no respectable behaviour. Therefore, I believe, that in the interests of sobriety and temperance, it is necessary to get these alterations in the houses that supply necessaries to the people—for they are necessaries to a certain number of people. I say that if that money is compulsorily spent upon licensed houses it will be in the interests of sobriety and temperance. But it may be said, "Where is the money to come from?" and under a time limit of fourteen years nobody will find a sixpence to carry out any such reforms. The Act of 1904 missed the same point and was in the same stupid form as this, which is a blow at temperance, the liberties of the people, and the interests of the public. It is the worst blow that I have seen struck since I have been a Member of this House.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Secretary Gladstone, Mr. Lloyd-George, Mr. McKenna, Mr. Solicitor-General, and Mr. Herbert Samuel.

LICENSING BILL.

"To amend the Licensing Acts, 1828 to 1906," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday, 9th March, and to be printed. [Bill 133.]

LAW OF DISTRESS AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

And, it being after half-past Eleven of the Clock on Thursday evening, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to the Standing Order.

Adjourned at Twenty minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 28th February, 1908.

The House met at Twelve noon of the Clock.

PETITIONS.

CHILDREN BILL (JUVENILE SMOKING CLAUSES).

Petition from Birmingham, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

ELECTIONS AND REGISTRATION (LONDON) BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, against; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Carluke, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation; from Charlton; Clay Cross (two); Denholme; Gateshead; Islington (nine); Liverpool; Low Moor; Nottingham; South Hackney; Sutton; Thatcham; Tilehurst; and, Warrington (two); to lie upon the Table.

POLLING ARRANGEMENTS (PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHS) BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, in favour; to be laid upon the Table.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY COUNCILS) BILL.

Petition from Wandsworth, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions, in favour; from Birkdale; Cambois (two); Cambridge; Carlisle; Clay Cross; Leicester: Ottery St. Mary; South Shields (two); and, Stowmarket; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petitions, in favour; from Ashton-under-Lyne; Blackburn; Burnley; Camberwell; Cardiff; Chorley; Clayton; Eccles; Failsworth; Fulham (three); Great Yarmouth; Horfield; Hyde; Kensington; Levenshulme; Newton Heath; Sydenham; and, Warrington; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

GALWAY (COUNTY).

Copy presented, of Report of the Chief Inspector, Royal Irish Constabulary, Galway East Riding, as to the state of the Riding in October, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BANKRUPTCY COURTS (IRELAND.)

Annual Returns presented, of the Official Assignees of the Court of Bankruptcy in Ireland and the Local Courts, Belfast and Cork, for the year 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

QUEEN ANNE'S BOUNTY.

Copy presented, of Annual Report and Accounts of the Governors for the year 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NATIONAL GALLERY (REPORT).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 27th February; *Mr. Runciman*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 77.]

LICENSING STATISTICS, 1907.

Copy presented, of Statistics as to the operation and administration of the Laws relating to the Sale of Intoxicating Liquor for the year 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copy presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Report, Annual Series, No. 3961 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented of Report of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education upon the question of Devolution in county areas [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Pay of Bristol Telegraphists.

MR. W. T. WILSON (Lancashire, Westhoughton): To ask the Postmaster-General whether the recent scheme for postal and telegraph officials has had the effect of raising the maximum wages of the indoor telegraph staff at Bristol; whether it is by his knowledge and authority that the telegraphists at Bristol who are in receipt of the old maximum wages have been compelled to undergo tests of a manipulative character previous to being awarded the higher wages; and whether he will explain the reason for this exceptional treatment at Bristol.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I have received a communication from the Postal Telegraph Clerks' Association on this question.

Naval and Military Expenditure.

MR. TOULMIN (Bury, Lancashire): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury what was the total estimated gross expenditure on the Army and Navy, including expenditure from loans, for each year, inclusive, from 1905–6 to 1908–9; and the actual gross expenditure for the last two complete years for which the late Administration was responsible, and the first two years of the present Administration.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The figures required by my hon. friend are shown below:—

NAVY.

Statement showing the Total Estimated Gross Expenditure on the Navy, including Expenditure from Loans from each year, inclusive, from 1905–6 to 1908-9.

	1905–6.	1906–7.	1907–8.	1908–9.
	£	£	£	£
Gross estimated expenditure (Navy Votes) -	35,078,287*	33,573,302	32,911,046	33,942,003
Abate: Annuity under Naval Works Acts, 1895 to 1905 - - - -	1,015,812	1,094,309	1,214,402	1,264,032
	34,062,475	32,478,993	31,696,644	32,677,971
Estimated expenditure from loans - - - - -	4,000,000†	3,704,280†	1,478,000‡	438,000‡
Total - -	38,062,475	36,183,273	33,174,644	33,115,971
Value of stores drawn from stock, without replacement, in aid of cash expenditure - - -	768,850	1,024,200	1,241,800	500,150
Expenditure on behalf of Naval Services from Votes of other departments- - - - -	372,695	354,084	370,360	382,742
	39,204,020	37,561,557	34,786,804	33,998,863

* Includes Supplementary Estimate of £100.
† Parliamentary Paper, No. 2470, of August 1905.
‡ Parliamentary Paper, No. 3384, of March 1907.

Statement showing the Actual Gross Expenditure for the last two complete years for which the Late Administration was responsible, and the first two years of the Present Administration.

	Late Administration.		Present Administration.	
	1904–5.	1905–6.	1906–7.	1907–8 (estimated).
	£	£	£	£
Gross expenditure (Navy Votes) - - -	38,293,738	34,861,443	33,262,649	32,911,046
Abate: Annuity under the Naval Works Acts, 1895 to 1905 - -	634,238	1,015,812	1,094,309	1,214,402
	37,659,500	33,845,631	32,168,340	31,696,644
Expenditure from loans -	3,402,575	3,313,604	2,431,201	1,478,000*
Total - -	41,062,075	37,159,235	34,599,541	33,174,644
Value of stores drawn from stock, without replacement, in aid of cash expenditure -	—	768,850	1,024,200	1,241,800
Expenditure on behalf of Naval Services from Votes of other departments - - -	373,686	372,695	354,084	370,360
	41,435,761	38,300,780	35,977,825	34,786,804

* Parliamentary Paper, No. 3384, of March, 1907.

Total Estimated Gross Expenditure on the Army.

	1905–6.	1906–7.	1907–8.	1908–9.
	£	£	£	£
Gross estimated expenditure (Army Votes) -	33,370,725	33,038,561	31,042,366	30,837,024
Abate: Annuities under Military Works Acts -	1,021,670	1,081,523	1,122,882	1,122,882
	32,349,055	31,947,038	29,919,484	29,714,142
Estimated expenditure from Loans - -	1,300,000*	650,000†	600,000†	400,000
Total - -	33,649,055	32,607,038	30,519,484	30,114,142
Estimated expenditure on Army from Civil Votes	499,219	486,098	451,571	455,764
	34,148,274	33,093,136	30,971,055	30,569,906

* Cd. 2994 of 1906. † Cd. 3362 of 1907.

Total Actual Gross Expenditure on the Army.

	1904–5.	1905–6.	1906–7.	1907–8 (estimated).
	£	£	£	£
Gross expenditure (Army Votes) - - -	33,411,842	32,043,810	32,072,564	31,042,366
Abate: Annuities under Military Works Acts -	651,524	1,020,824	1,081,523	1,122,882
	32,760,318	31,022,986	30,991,041	29,919,484
Expenditure from loans -	3,066,240	1,287,416	560,980	320,000*
Total - -	35,826,558	32,310,402	31,552,021	30,239,484
Expenditure on Army from Civil Votes -	485,027	499,496	501,102	451,571
	36,311,585	32,809,898	32,053,123	30,691,055

* Revised Estimate. The remaining figures for 1907-8 are in the Parliamentary Estimates.

Total Estimated Gross Expenditure, Army and Navy combined.

	1905–6.	1906–7.	1907–8.	1908–9.
	£	£	£	£
Army - - - - -	34,148,274	33,093,136	30,971,055	30,569,906
Navy - - - - -	39,204,020	37,561,557	34,786,804	33,998,863
Total - -	73,352,294	70,654,693	65,757,859	64,568,769

Total Actual Gross Expenditure, Army and Navy combined.

	1904–5.	1905–6.	1906–7.	1907–8 (estimated).
	£	£	£	£
Army - - - - -	36,311,585	32,809,898	32,053,123	30,691,055
Navy - - - - -	41,435,761	38,300,780	35,977,825	34,786,804
Total - -	77,747,346	71,110,678	68,030,948	65,477,859

Sugar used in Brewing.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he possesses information showing the total amount of sugar used in brewing; and, if so, what was that amount; and what was the tax revenue received in the last year for which information is available.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The total amount of sugar used in brewing in the United Kingdom for the year ended 30th September, 1907, including the equivalents of syrups, glucose, and saccharum, was 2,859,487 cwts. Brewers use various kinds of sugar and sugar preparations on which varying rates of duty (Customs and Excise) have been levied, *e.g.*, Foreign sugar or glucose as imported, subject to varying rates of duty, British glucose, and brewing saccharine preparations. It is not, therefore, possible to estimate with any real approach to accuracy the duty paid in respect of sugar used in brewing.

Billingsgate Post Office—Additional Premises.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Postmaster-General what is the date from which rent is payable by the Department for the additional premises in which an upstairs dining-room is to be provided at Billingsgate Post Office.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The date for commencement of rent has not yet been fixed.

Rateable Value of Admiralty Land at Greenock.

MR. DUNDAS WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the Secretary for Scotland with reference to the property near Greenock of about 48 acres, of which the annual value for rating was entered in the assessor's roll at £75, and of which 10 acres, together with 4¾ acres of the foreshore, were recently purchased by the Admiralty for £27,225, if he can say what is now taken as the annual value for rating of these 10 acres, and what is now taken as the annual value for rating of the remainder of the property formerly entered at £75 a year.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) I have been in communication with the assessor on the point raised by my honourable friend, and am informed that returns of the values of the separated subjects have not yet been sent to him, and I am therefore unable at present to give the information desired.

Repayments of Naval Works Loans.

MR. HOLT (Northumberland, Hexham): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the amount chargeable in the Estimates in respect of annuity in repayment of loans under the Naval Works Acts for each financial year, beginning with 1909–10, until the last year in which such an amount is chargeable, in respect of the repayment of loans already authorised.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The figures, which are approximate only, are as follow:—

Year.	Amount.
1909–10 - - -	£1,320,000
1910–11 to 1924–5 -	1,350,000
1925–6 to 1932–3 -	769,626
1933–4 - - -	715,762
1934–5 - - -	581,719
1935–6 - - -	255,691
1936–7 - - -	135,598
1937–8 - - -	85,968
1938–9 - - -	30,000

Cattle Diseases.

SIR W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, in the case of each of the following diseases, the diagnosis rests upon the isolation and identification of a specific microbe or upon the naked-eye appearances of the disease: foot-and-mouth disease, cattle plague, pleuro-pneumonia, and sheep-pox.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The diagnosis of the diseases to which my hon. friend refers never rests on the naked-eye appearances of the disease alone, but it may rest on these appearances combined with evidence of their contagious nature. In the absence of the conditions for observing in the field whether the trouble is of a contagious nature or not, the diagnosis rests on the isolation not necessarily of a specific microbe but of a specific virus.

Irish Evicted Tenants—Case of Mr. James Brennan.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any steps are about to be taken by the Estates Commissioners to reinstate Mr. James Brennan (now of Killadooley, Ballybrophy, Queen's County, Ireland), who was evicted from his holding on the Hely property at Folkscourt, Johnstown, county Kilkenny, in 1897.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) The Estates Commissioners have inquired into the case of James Brennan, and have decided that he is suitable to work a holding. The case has been referred to an inspector, with a view to providing Brennan with a holding, if possible.

Suggested Grant to Mr. Robert Pearson, of Clonmore.

MR. DELANY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether, taking into consideration the amount of interest charged during the first, second, and third decades of payment of the loan granted by the Land Commission in 1878 to Mr. Robert Pearson, of Clonmore, Errill, Ballybrophy, Queen's County, Ireland, for the purchase of the property known as Ballyquaide Glebe, Ballybrophy, Queen's County, and likewise the sum deducted from the amount of purchase money received by him for the sale of the same property to his tenants in 1904 under the Act of 1903, he will recommend a reasonable amount of cash being granted to him by the Estates Commissioners by way of allowance.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) I am informed by the Estates Commissioners that the sale of Mr. Pearson's estate to his sub-tenants was concluded and the purchase money distributed in July, 1906. The amount payable to the funds of the Church property in discharge of mortgage debt due was correctly ascertained and paid, and a subsequent mortgage debt was also paid. I have already furnished the hon. Member with a full statement giving full particulars of the amounts so paid and showing that they were legally ascertained in the proper manner. The Estates Commissioners inform me that there is no legal power to make a grant to Mr. Pearson as suggested in the concluding part of the Question.

Repayment of Military Works Loans.

MR. HOLT: To ask the Secretary of State for War what is the amount chargeable in the Army Estimates in respect of repayments under Loan Acts for each financial year beginning with 1909–10 until the last year in which an amount is chargeable, in respect of the repayment of loans already authorised.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The figures are approximately as follows:—

1909–10 and 1910–11 -	£1,158,000
1911–12 to 1926–7 - -	854,000
1927–8 - - - -	173,000

Engineers Service—Surveyors.

MR. BENNETT (Oxfordshire, Woodstock): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state when that part of the scheme for the improvement in the conditions of the service of the surveyors on the staff for engineer services, dealing with the removal expenses and the title and uniform of the new establishment, which has now been under consideration for some considerable time, will be published and promulgated amongst those concerned.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The matters referred to in the Question are still under consideration. I hope that a statement will be made before long.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. STANGER (Kensington, N.) in moving that this Bill be now read a second time said: This Bill is similar to the one introduced last session by my hon. friend the Member for North St. Pancras, which was considered during the whole of one sitting. It is a Bill of which the aim is identical with that of the Resolution proposed in the first session of this Parliament by the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil. This, therefore, is neither the first nor the second time in this Parliament that the principle will have been discussed, and, having regard to the number of discussions which have taken place out of doors, I cannot but think that there will be a general feeling that in the course of this afternoon we may be able to proceed to a vote. The object of this Bill is to remove the disability which at present attaches to women at Parliamentary elections. The section which provides for that I think, requires no explanation. With reference to the second section, I may repeat what my hon. friend stated to the House last year, namely, that the section is rendered necessary by the decision of the Courts in a case where, in the matter of the municipal vote a married woman, a householder paying rates and taxes, living apart from her husband, and for all practical purposes single, was refused a vote because of her *status* as a married woman. I have nothing further to add with reference to the details of the Bill. The object is perfectly well known. It simply aims at the removal of the disability to which I have referred. I am aware that in presenting this Bill to the House I shall have to encounter not only what I may call legitimate opposition, that is the opposition of hon. Members who are not in favour of granting women the franchise, but the opposition of some hon. Members who, while they agree with me in supporting female enfranchisement, object to this particular Bill. I should like, before I come to what I call legitimate opposition, to address one or two observations to those of my friends who take that view. I desire to point out that when it is said that this is a limited Bill the description is not correct. Its object is to remove the disability which at present attaches to women, and it attains that object completely. Of course, if it is complained that the Bill does not aim at a number of other objects, that is a totally different point. I understand that in their opinion, the Bill, besides dealing with this one point, which to my mind should be dealt with quite separately, ought to contain a number of far-reaching provisions with which I heartily agree, and that I should attempt to induce this House to consent to the Second Reading of the Bill so overloaded. It appears to me that there are two objections to that course. In the first place, I am heartily in favour of all the suggestions of my hon. friends, for I know too well from my knowledge of the registration laws that they are a perfect medley of legal conundrums and political anomalies, and I should like to make a clean sweep of them. I am in favour of a simple residential qualification, a shorter qualifying period, putting the lodger and the tenant on an equal footing, and abolishing plural voting; but let me ask hon. Members to consider what would happen on the Second Reading debate if I were to provide for all these far-reaching matters in this Bill. We should have a discussion of a more or less academic character, and even if we did get to a vote, it would throw little light on the matter with which this Bill deals. We should have arrayed against us hon. Members who, while in favour of giving votes to women might be wholly opposed to these other provisions. I trust that before the end of this Parliament the Government will bring in a comprehensive measure dealing with all these questions of franchise and Parliamentary reform. Having taken counsel with others who are more versed in Parliamentary procedure than I am, I have come to the conclusion that if the Bill should receive a Second Reading this afternoon the tribunal to which it should be sent is a Committee of the Whole House. I, therefore, beg to say that if this Bill is read a second time I propose to move that it be so referred.

Coming to the legitimate opposition to this Bill, I am glad to think that the question has long passed that stage at which a burst of ridicule was thought to be a sufficient answer. Our opponents, or at least the more thoughtful of them, are now agreed that a strong case can be made out—a strong *prima facie* case—but they contend that there are overmastering considerations which displace that *prima facie* case. They recognise as we do, that if a woman is called upon to obey the law, and to pay the taxes the law imposes, that if her welfare and the welfare of those whom she holds most dear are affected by the law, and that the question whether the law is well or badly administered is one in which she is deeply interested, a case is at once made out, unless it can be displaced by overmastering considerations on the other side, that woman should have a voice in determining the people by whom the laws are to be made, and the taxes imposed, and to whose hands the administration of the laws is to be entrusted. I should like to examine briefly some of those so-called overmastering considerations which displace this *prima facie* case, and I desire to say at the outset that I admit the validity of none of them, unless it makes good one of these two propositions—either that the voter is personally unfit to vote, or that the exercise of the right will be attended by some public danger. Let us see whether either of these propositions can be made good. We heard when this question was in its earlier stages a great deal of two arguments, one of which was that the mental capacity of a woman was inferior to that of the average male voter, and the other that by some decree of nature, which it was blasphemy to contravene, a woman's sphere was very narrowly restricted, and that she ought not to concern herself with other than domestic affairs. I think the march of events has swept away both of these objections, or if I may vary the figure, they are outposts of prejudice which have been captured by women themselves. We have only to look round to see the number of occupations, not domestic, some of them public, or *quasi*-public in their character, now filled by women with credit and even with distinction. We have only to remember that in every other governing body except this—in all our local government arrangements—women can not merely exercise the vote as freely as men, but are qualified to sit on these governing bodies. Unless, therefore, one is prepared to condemn the whole trend of events in this direction, I do not see how anyone can with consistency bring forward these antiquated arguments. I know it is said that home is woman's sphere, and no doubt in a certain sense, and in regard to a certain number of women, that is true; but I know there are thousands of working women to whom home is merely the name of the place, often a very comfortless one, where she spends the short interval which divides one weary day from another. If you take other women who are more happily circumstanced, and to whom in a sense home is their sphere, let me ask this House to remember that our legislation is increasingly concerned with domestic matters. I need not go through the list of measures—education year after year, care of the young, the feeding of children, even the marriage laws which are at the very root and basis of home life, and if this is the case is it not a little pitiful that we should not only continue this exclusion, but imagine that we have brought forward some substantial argument in favour of it by repeating these parrot phrases about home being the woman's sphere. Properly understood and properly applied the fact that home is a woman's sphere is a cogent reason for giving her the vote. In regard to woman's capacity there has been a strange distinction made between that which enables a woman to deal with municipal matters, and that which she would be called upon to exercise if she had to vote for a Member of Parliament. I cannot follow the distinction. What are these municipal matters as to which she is entitled to vote? And that is all the claim made here—all that we are asking here is, not that she shall make the laws, but that she shall be consulted as to who shall make them. In these municipalities enormous sums of money are spent, many of them are huge industrial concerns. Great questions have often to be discussed, and yet woman is fully entitled not only to vote for representatives, but also to sit and deal with these matters. But when we come to such questions as whether young people should smoke cigarettes, or whether there should be a reduction in the number of licensed houses, we are told that the purely municipal brain of woman is not able to grapple with matters of that sort, and that we must turn, forsooth, to the more towering masculine intellect of those voters who, we were told at a recent election, thought that free food meant food supplied at their own doors for nothing, and that the Government were responsible for the consequences of a bad harvest. I cannot help thinking that the opponents of this principle had better do what has been done by one of the ablest of their number, and that is the *Spectator* newspaper. I find that in a recent number this admission was made, and it indicates the enormous advance the question has made during the past thirty years—

> "It not because they are inferior to men in morals and courage, in patriotism, or in intellectual powers. In heart and head the sexes are equal."

It is said that women would become in some way degraded if they were allowed to take part in politics and vote at the polling booth. That is a mere sentimental objection. My point is that everything has already been conceded to women except the mere physical act of going to the polling booth and marking the paper with a cross. You cannot go into any election without finding that women are taking part in politics. You invite them to take part in politics in connection with political associations and leagues. They form Liberal Associations and Primrose Leagues, they carry on the most vigorous propaganda. Many hon. Members come to this House by their assistance, and yet when it is proposed to make their power effective, you say, "Oh, it degrades them, and they will lose their refinement." I should like to take higher ground. I think the argument presupposes that women are more selfish than they really are, and that things which ought to be considered as mere temporary and accidental and unfortunate accompaniments of politics are their essential characteristics. We ought to look upon politics as one of the noblest objects in which either a woman's or a man's capacity can be engaged. What are politics but an attempt on the part of the State to solve those problems which press upon everybody—problems on the right solution of which the happiness and welfare of the people depend? I am quite sure that this argument of women losing their refinement by taking part in politics will not find an echo in the breasts of most women. They have a very sure instinct as to what is fitting and what is not. They know what they may touch without defilement, and many of the noblest of their sex would repudiate this argument with scorn. There is another favourite objection, and that is that women cannot work like men, nor fight nor perform the duties of a policeman. I wish to speak with all respect of this argument; but it is rather difficult to do so. There are a great many male voters who cannot fight. They would as soon think of flying, and I am not sure but that they would prefer to fly if they were called upon to fight. I do not know how many hon. Members in this House would be able to stand a navvy's work for more than half-an-hour. I am quite willing to admit that some social service ought to be rendered by every member of the community, and women render many social services at which your navvy or your fighting man would prove himself a sorry bungler. But there are some voters who perform no social service at all, and what do you do to them? Do you disqualify them? Do you say they must not go to the poll? On the contrary, you often double and treble their voting power, and you place them on the illustrious roll of the plural voter, who, we were told the other day, is thrifty and industrious and deserves to be encouraged. There is one other topic which seems to impress the *Spectator* and a number of other objectors to woman suffrage. They say it is so difficult to grant the franchise to women because there are so many of them. It is a very curious notion of justice, that we should deny to women a right, not because it is not a just right, but because those who claim it are really too numerous. I should have thought the greater the number the greater the injustice, but the argument is followed up by the *Spectator* in the most ingenious manner. The writer in the *Spectator* imagines that if the vote was conceded to women a crisis must occur in which men and women might find themselves in the sharpest conflict. My answer is that it is the merest moonshine. If there was the likelihood of collision it would have occurred in municipal matters. I do not say, of course, that the results would not be more serious in Parliamentary matters, but human nature being the same, I say the tendency to that collision is just as strong in municipal matters as in Parliamentary matters; and I challenge my friends to point out any single instance since 1869, when the municipal franchise was given to women when such collision has ever occurred. I think these fantastic hypotheses do more credit to the ingenuity of their constructors than to the sturdy, masculine common sense on which men are wont to pride themselves. Then, it is said that there is no demand for the vote. There again I meet the statement with a point blank denial, though I am quite aware that a great many women do not desire it. It is perfectly certain that there is a demand both broad in volume and passionate in its intensity—and moreover, a demand which no Government can long afford to refuse. There is another argument sometimes heard:

that the women will all vote Tory. I think these forecasts are usually falsified by the events. One is reminded very much of the prophecies made in the course of the debates in regard to the extension of the franchise in 1866 and in 1884. But I do not see why we of the Liberal Party should take any lower grounds now than then, and refuse to concede what would otherwise be an act of justice merely because we are afraid that women would not exercise their vote in the way we should like. It is said, with great truth, that the demand cannot be conceded until the predominant partner is converted. True, but I think that that conversion is proceeding very satisfactorily. I was very much struck by the fact that in the accounts of recent by-elections it has become almost a common form to state that both candidates are in favour of woman suffrage, and I am glad to find that in the election which is now proceeding the Liberal candidate has said that, subject to certain conditions, he is in favour of the extension of the franchise to women. I fully expect to find in the lobby in support of this Bill the hon. Member for South Leeds, the hon. Member for Worcester City, and the hon. and gallant Member for Mid Devon. How this House stands in the matter we shall know a little later when the vote is taken. I have been told that there are 420 Members in this House who have given pledges in favour of the proposal. Of course, I do not vouch for these figures, nor do I pretend to know the circumstances or qualifications subject to which these pledges were given, but I think that this is quite certain, that assurances have been given which have led women to expect, and reasonably expect, that a very considerable number of Members will support such a Bill as is now before the House. Let us see what is the kind of excuse which is given for not keeping these pledges. One is that the pledges given were of an academic character. Academic approval of a proposal is this: that you approve of it just as long as there is no chance of its being carried into law. And a pious opinion is one which becomes an impiety directly it is translated into action. I do not object to these qualifications; but common honesty demands that such qualifications should be made quite clear. It may be said that the action of the suffragettes affords a reason why those pledges should not be fulfilled. I should like to say something with regard to the action of the suffragettes. I have from the very first condemned certain of their actions. I have done it openly on the platform and in the Press—publicly and in private. The methods I mean are those of actual illegality, of concerted attempts to break up public meetings, and the invasion of the domestic privacy of Ministers. I hope that no words which fall from me will give the slightest encouragement to such methods in the conduct of the campaign. But what follows? I hope, that this House will not be guilty of the fault often imputed to the female sex, and to which men are not always superior, of letting their calm judgment be overbalanced by a wave of emotion. I have always thought that the true doctrine is this, that if in the course of a political agitation excesses are committed, while you must preserve law and order, and punish the transgressors with suitable punishments, you ought at the same time to search out the discontent which lies beneath the agitation and apply the appropriate remedy. I fail to see how we on the Liberal side, who have preached this doctrine for so many years, should not apply it to the case of women in their demand for the franchise. After all, what they have done is no worse than cattle-driving! For my part, I refuse to set aside the convictions of a life-time because of these methods. I will not allow the suffragettes to intimidate me into doing them an injustice. I hope we shall take the 400 into the lobby this afternoon, or if not, that we shall take all that is left of them —left of 400! How it may be time will show. I do not desire to keep the House longer, and I thank hon. Members for giving such an attentive hearing to one of the most inexperienced speakers. ["Oh!"] This is only the second time I have endeavoured to address this House, and I thank hon. Members in all sincerity for their indulgence. I trust that in the warmth of debate on a matter on which I have felt very deeply and strongly for years, I have not for one moment overstepped the proper bounds of Parliamentary discussion. I trust that in voting this afternoon we shall not be influenced by either prejudice or undue timidity, for I am convinced that by bringing women into the realm of politics we will promote new and nobler ideals which will tend gradually but surely to raise the whole tone and character of our public life. I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

MR. ACLAND (Yorkshire, Richmond), in seconding the Motion said that as that was the first time that he had ever ventured to say anything on the question of woman suffrage, he hoped the House would extend to him its indulgence. When the promoters of the Bill did him the honour late last night to ask him to second the Motion which had been so ably proposed by the hon. Member for Kensington, they were candid enough, when he asked them the reason for their request, to say that they thought that they could trust him to be sufficiently brief, and that they could not say the same thing about other gentlemen. If he deserved that commendation at their hands, he had one other claim to speak on this matter, and to urge the claims of women to have the vote, and that was, that he was not doing anything that could possibly be of any political advantage to himself. He represented a constituency which returned him by a slender majority of 100, and that constituency contained hardly any working women who would be enfranchised by the Bill, but did contain many women who had retired, who were living on their independent means, who were samples of respectability and worshippers of the aristocracy, and who could implicitly be relied on to vote against him. The effect of this Bill in his constituency might also go against him in another way. The voters were mainly peasant farmers, and it might be found that faggot votes would be created by admitting the farmer's wife to a joint-tenancy in every case where it was sure they would vote for a Conservative candidate, while the landlord might refuse a joint-tenancy if any doubt existed on the matter, or if the farmer and his wife would vote for the Liberal candidate. If this Bill was carried there are two possibilities as to what the effect would be. In the first place, the powers that be on whom they must rely in this matter, might think the question was already ripe for legislation, and that something should be allowed to be done within the limits of this Parliament. In that case it would be possible to amend the Bill fairly and simply so that no injustice such as those which he had mentioned would occur. For instance, it might be provided that, whereas everyone now entitled to have a vote should continue to enjoy it as owner, occupier, or lodger, the wives or husbands of occupiers having a vote on those grounds should also be enfranchised. That would prevent the multiplication of votes on £20 houses, but would stop the possibility of more than one vote on £10 houses. If the other view were taken, that this question of extending the vote to women involved a great constitutional change, and could not be legislated upon until after a majority of men, or if you liked to look upon it from their point of view, a majority of women, had fairly expressed their views upon it, and therefore, until after another general election — even then it would be a great gain to get the Second Reading of the Bill carried, and have the matter really threshed out in Committee, and put in a practical form. Whatever Party might be bold enough to take the question up, and put it definitely before the people, it should be so treated that a practical proposal instead of a principle should be presented to the electors. The mover of the Second Reading of the Bill had so exhaustively dealt with the reasons why women should have a vote that it only remained for him to deal with the reasons put forward against it. People were exercising their brains as to what was likely to happen if women got the vote, and they said the only logical basis of granting it was the basis of adult suffrage. With that he entirely agreed. He was in favour of adult suffrage. They also said that if it was brought on on this basis, there would be more women voters than men, and they would promptly combine together against men and by their majority would influence affairs entirely as they themselves desired. Hon. Members set up a terrible picture. They reminded them that women could not serve as soldiers or sailors, and that by getting together and all going the same way, they would be able to decide matters of military service, for instance, or great Imperial questions, against the wishes of men upon whom the burden in those important matters must fall. There were some things, also, which men could not do, and it was, at any rate, arguable whether the State would sooner come to grief if men ceased to bear arms or women children. The picture was drawn for them of women by their majority governing the country in their own way, and they were told that if that happened the Colonies which had set us so splendid an example in this matter would laugh at us and despise us for being governed by women instead of by men. This country would never be governed by women, unless it was better that it should be governed by women than by men, and unless women became more capable of governing. Then these thinkers said they could not stop at simply giving women the vote, that they would demand to enter Parliament, and they drew a doleful and frightening picture of what might happen if women were once to sit in that Chamber. He would like to reply to all these thinkers and imaginers about what might happen if women all decided to take some common action against the wishes of men as John Stuart Mill did to someone when considering this argument about the Bill—

> "The worst of these thinkers is that they so often think wrong."

He held that there was no possibility of women all banding together and deciding matters their own way, regardless of the views of men, even if they obtained a majority. He could hardly imagine the Women's Primrose League joining hands with the Women's Liberal Federation or the Women's Co-operative Guild, or the Women's Tariff Reform League and the Women's Free Trade Union, making common cause, and adopting a fiscal policy which should, for instance, declare that the whole revenue of the country should be levied on cigars or snuff, and not on anything which women generally consumed. Things would go on much the same. Women would still be divided in politics. There was no fear, he thought, that by making common cause together they would plunge the State into ruin. He believed this change would be good for men, good for women, and good for politics. He held it would be good for men because the grant of the vote to women would be the outward and visible sign that the days were over and gone when a woman could be treated as she had been, and was too frequently still by some men, as a piece of animated property to be abused as men pleased, or as they were by other men, as a plaything, to be shielded from all the serious questions of life. They had gone too far to be able to stand up for all these arguments now. They trusted women already far outside the domestic sphere, and relied on them for the most arduous and important work in local government, and in bringing up the rising generation. He thought it would be good for man that they should realise, by the grant of elementary rights of citizenship, that the old times and the old views of women had gone by, and that some new view must take their place. He believed the change would be good for women because it would stop once for all that appeal which was so often made to women's influence through their supposed power over their husbands or their sweethearts. They had all heard this appeal made time after time on public platforms. It was simply an appeal made to them, voteless now and only able to use their influence in this narrow way, to use their sex attraction. That appeal made any man who had a decent soul within him wince whenever he heard it. He believed that if they trusted women with the vote they would feel that their powers of reasoning and of deciding things as they thought right were put on the same level as those of man. They would get rid of these appeals for the use of sex influence, and that would be a great thing gained for women. He believed, finally, the change would be good for politics because it seemed to him that the matters of greatest importance in politics in future were those in which women were most vitally concerned. He often thought of what might be written about the beginning of the twentieth century by future historians. He thought they might not unreasonably say, in matters of housing and sweating, for instance, and education, and drink, that it was an extraordinary thing that at the beginning of the twentieth century they trusted the hereditary aristocracy, which was composed of individuals who knew nothing about public-houses, and who had never sent their children to elementary schools, and that they did not trust the influence of women, whose everyday lives were vitally concerned with these tremendous problems. It was in the hope that that day's vote would, if only by a little, remove one of those anomalies from our system of government that he seconded the Motion for the Second Reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said that the admirable speeches they had heard in support of the measure left nothing to be desired. Their moderation and the evident sincerity with which they were uttered did their authors the very highest credit. One remark made by the introducer of the Bill to the effect that 420 Members of the House were pledged to the measure reminded him of another matter which was also before the House and the country with regard to motor legislation, when they told him that practically every Member of the House of Commons was pledged to support the Automobile Club in any legislation that was proposed. According to election addresses, it seemed that out of 670 only sixty-one dealt either directly or indirectly with this question. He was not at all sure that pledges given in secret and surreptitiously were at all to be recommended as a reason why Members should support any such important measure as this. He objected to the measure—he was going to say for constitutional reasons, but when they talked about the British Constitution they often got into such a complete fog that it was as well to leave it out of the question. They had always held that property was not the foundation of the right to vote. From the earliest dawn of Parliamentary history, the men of the country assembled in concourse together and made the laws of the country. Property had crept on and crept on, and the landlords and ecclesiastics had gradually filched from the people all their authority and their privilege, especially that right to vote. They who held those views and called themselves Liberals, who meant practical politics and not simply philandering philanthropy, were there to do what they could—they were but passing shadows, and their one and only ambition in being there was to try and leave the world a little better than they found it. They denied, as their fathers denied before them, that property was the basis of taxation as well as the basis of representation in this country, and they asserted, as their fathers asserted, that the only qualification for Members of the House was that of manhood suffrage. He would ask Liberals whether they were to be held up to derision as being an organised hypocrisy as had been said of another Party. Only last year they had passed a Plural Voting Bill, and when they addressed their fellows in the recess they had denounced the action of another place for interfering with that Bill. Now Members with a light and cheery heart proposed a Bill which would clearly increase the number of property voters in the country, the faggot voters, and the out-voters who practically controlled every election. He asked the House to consider whether this movement was founded on riot or revolution. If it was founded on riot, were they going to yield to clamour? If so, what an example was set before them. Many of them felt very keenly about vaccination, others had strong views about vivisection, and for himself he had specially strong views as regarded the iniquity of trawling and whaling in the Shetlands. Was he to be encouraged to bring his constituents down to break the Secretary for Scotland's windows and tie themselves to his railings? He did not hesitate to say that many of his constituents would gladly put in a certain time in gaol if they could bring any proper and due influence to bear on the Secretary for Scotland. He would not object to a few months hard labour himself if he could bring that pressure on the right hon. Gentleman that his constituents desired. If it was founded on riot, Members would see what a hopeless *impasse* they were in. If it was founded on revolution, this was one of the most revolutionising measures ever proposed in a great assembly on a Friday afternoon by an absolutely irresponsible person. They were often told what a disaster it would be to the country if they had Home Rule or a great measure of tariff reform. Either Home Rule or tariff reform of the wildest description would be simply a gentle breeze to the tornado that would sweep over the country if they passed this Bill. One hon. Member had thrown out a remark about the action of our Colonial legislatures in this matter. But our Colonial legislatures had nothing to look after but themselves. They had grown up under our wing, and had no problems of defence or foreign affairs. They could do practically what they pleased. Let the House have regard to our responsibilities. Let them look at the responsibility which rested on the shoulders of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and hesitate long before they put such responsibility as that into the hands of an unknown quantity. Some people thought the millennium was at hand, or at least, they hoped so. Yet, not only did we know that Europe at the present time was an armed camp, but we had the great United States of America overshadowing Europe, and the great Eastern Powers overshadowing everything. Surely, then, this was not the time to call on our people to beat their swords into plough shares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Let the House think for a moment that in no responsible country that we knew of in the world, which had outside obligations, was there this franchise. They were not only concerned with domestic legislation in that House. If it were a question of temperance or factory legislation, he would be prepared to say that in such questions women reigned supreme. An hon. Member said to him the other day with regard to the Licensing Bill—

> "I do not know what to do about this question, because I do not know how the women feel about the barmaids."

Well, he himself did not know what the women felt about the barmaids, but he knew how he felt about them. If they had their way he believed ninety-nine out of a hundred Members of this House would vote strongly for the suppression of barmaids. [Cries of "No" and "Why?"] He would tell the hon. Member why. Because they refused to allow young, middle-aged, and old men to be tempted by their sexual instinct as well as their natural instinct of strong drink. Strong drink and sexual instinct were the two things most compatible and together made trouble. Let them take the position in France. Did anybody suppose that if women in France had a vote, France would be at peace as it was at the present time? He did not. He believed there would be a greater revolution there than had yet been seen. ["Why?"] Any hon. Member who had studied the history of France and knew what was now going on there would agree that it would be most undesirable for women to have votes at the present time. They all recognised and ought to recognise that force ruled the world. If they wanted to get into a strong man's house they bound the strong man first. It was only force that enabled us to lay down our heads on our pillows at night with an assurance of security that we should wake up in the morning and find them there. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Hammersmith presided over a large meeting recently, and pointed out that women had encroached in all classes of business, and had proved slowly and irresistibly their capacity to take up men's work, and that it was time for the Conservative Party to consider whether they should have the vote. The conclusion at which the hon. Gentleman arrived was that, without votes, women would be treated badly, and driven to the wall. Who had ever treated women badly? They could not bring forward a single grievance from which they suffered, which if they could prove and make it plain hon. Members of this House were not too eager to jostle each other in their anxiety to remedy. The hon. Gentleman quoted Lord Beaconsfield, Lord Salisbury, and Mr. Balfour, and said that he believed the Unionist Party would gain by sanctioning women's rights in this matter. There was little doubt as to what the result of the enfranchisement of women would be, but he thought it was only right, if the measure was good, that it should be considered on its merits. He did not think they ought to consider whether it was going to be to the advantage of one party or another. He thought everybody ought to do all they could to oppose it. He would point out to the House that all the time hon. Gentlemen opposite were in power, during the last twenty-five years certainly, when they had had almost uncontrolled power in that House, and in other directions, they had not moved a step in this matter. They had done many things which they ought not to have done, and they had left undone many things which they ought to have done, but they had never moved a step in the direction of woman franchise, although their great leader was in favour of it. There had been no organised attempts to break up Conservative meetings; there were no noisy women crying out like the horse leech "Give, give." There were no beauteous maidens chaining themselves to the doorstep of the hon. Member for the City of London and other hon. Conservatives, crying out that they must have votes. Another point which he appealed to hon. Members specially to consider was this. They had a great and fixed belief in the sanctity of the Holy Scriptures, and there was nothing in the Holy Scriptures to warrant this measure. Indeed, they were against it. Hon. Members who went through St. Paul would find that his whole doctrine and teaching were against it. It was nobody's fault that providence had created a great difference between the sexes. What were they that they should complain? It was not they, it was not the Liberal Party who had done this thing, but providence. But the facts were there, great historic facts were there, and they could not get over them, and he did not want to get over them if they could. Why this little Bill? It was not much of a Bill, a little cloud no bigger than a man's hand, but they could not tell what it would bring forth. Another point was this. If the Bill gave a right to women to vote for a Member of the House of Commons, of course with that went the right to sit in that House and to be elected to an office in that House, even to that held by Mr. Speaker of controlling an assembly which was not always too orderly. Almost every one must shudder at such a possibility as that. He believed it was Dryden who told of a noble knight who, having made too free with a maiden, was condemned to death by the ruling queen. He pleaded for mercy, and the queen said—

> "Well, I will give you a year to go forth into the world, and if when you return you will tell us the one thing women want above all things in this world you shall have your life and honour given back to you again."

He went into the world for many years and one day he met an old dame who said to him—

> "I am not fair to look upon, I am not comely, but if you pledge your knightly word that you will marry me I will tell you what it is that a woman wants above all things in this world."

He gave his promise, and she told him that the one thing which women wanted most was sovereignty, rule, power to put man under their feet and keep him there. Everyone knew that there was never a happy household, no matter what the importance of the household was, unless the woman was the supreme sovereign of the household. No one had a happy home, from the poorest to the highest, unless the woman ruled, absolutely, the household. The hon. Member who seconded the Motion had talked about women's work. There was no work which women could not perform. They could, and did do everything that man could do. In some parts of Scotland it was the common thing to hear: "Jean is going to be married. What can she do to keep a man?" There was not a field in which women had not distinguished themselves, but they could not have them in that House. There would not be happiness in the House if they did come in. If women were exceedingly desirous of taking part in the legislation of the country let them be sent to another place. He would give a willing vote to any proposition that would transfer them to another place, and gave them a share in the legislation there. He sincerely hoped the House would come to a decision on this matter. It was quite time that they knew who was on one side and who was on the other, and above all, those who had any doubt upon the matter. If hon. Members had not made up their minds; if they had not been convinced by the arguments that had been put before them, it must be left to the general electorate of the country to determine. At any rate, that debate was not going to settle the matter. The Bill would have to go to another tribunal, and it must also be submitted to the electorate. He quite agreed that men who established the Primrose League and the Ladies Liberal League did wrong if, having used women for these purposes, they now refused to comply with their natural demand for payment for their services. But he warned the House that they could not have legislative peace unless they kept the sexes as far apart as possible. A candidate who was once desirous of getting returned to Parliament, sent his wife out to canvass for him, and her one cry was, "Do, please, vote for my husband, and take him away from home; he is never out of the house." That shewed the divided responsibility. Each wanted to be supreme in his or her own way, and woman was absolutely determined to be supreme in her sphere. It was a matter of the commonest knowledge that they could not have something called platonism, and he never quite understood what it was —except that it led the experimentalist into trouble, and in the same way, they could not have men and women associated together in politics without injuring both. In such a matter as this the women of the country ought to be able to make their voices heard. What was the use of giving them a vote if they did not want it? He read the other day that a large daily paper in the Midlands had sent out ballot papers, with the result that 9,000 had declared in favour of the vote and 14,000 against.

An HON. MEMBER: Who gave the votes?

Mr. CATHCART WASON said the votes were given by women only. This was not a man's question. His contention was that the women did not want the vote, and were perfectly satisfied with things as they are. The agitation for the Bill was a bogus one, it would redound to the discredit of the Liberal Party, and it would constitute a grave peril and danger to the country. It was, therefore, with a full sense of responsibility, although accompanied by a feeling of regret that he had to announce that he could not support the Bill and would move that it be read a second time that day six months.

*Mr. MALLET (Plymouth) in seconding the Amendment said he was afraid that he was taking the ungallant side on this question, but he felt bound to adopt this course. In the first place he would remark how much they all admired the ability with which the case in support of the Bill had been put forward by his hon. friend the Member for North Kensington; he only wished that these methods of reasoned argument and persuasion were more popular with the advocates of the Bill outside that House. Those who opposed the Bill did so in no trifling or disrespectful spirit; they did not base their opposition to it mainly on the details of the measure. Indeed, his hon. friend who introduced it had not dealt much with the details. He gave reasons to show how easily the male electorate were deceived; but was that a good reason for giving the vote to women? Most of them regarded the Bill not as one destined to pass through the House this session, but rather as an abstract assertion of the principle that they could sweep away the disabilities of sex by legislation, and that women were qualified by nature and training to do precisely the same public work as men. That was an abstract assertion of a large and very important principle, but it was nothing more. Still, on that basis the Bill might possibly secure a Second Reading that day. There was one point on which he was in complete agreement with the "suffragettes"—who had discovered, as they all had, that politics were a demoralising thing. This Bill, if proposed at all, ought to be a Government Bill. His hon. friend had practically admitted that, because in the early part of his speech he stated that our electoral laws stood in need of wholesale reform—such reform as could only be undertaken by a responsible Government. It would not be denied, he thought, that such a grave change in the franchise as was proposed in this measure ought to be proposed by the Government, and he put it to the House that they could not add 2,000,000 voters to the electoral roll without throwing the whole electoral system into confusion. Some hon. Members dissented from the figure he had quoted, but 2,000,000, he thought, was well within the mark. The lowest estimate put forward in the debate last year was 1,250,000, and even if they accepted that figure he submitted that they could not at once add that number to the electoral roll, with the possibility of an addition of 8,000,000 or 9,000,000 later on, without throwing the whole system into the melting-pot. Why, 1,250,000 was more than double the number of voters added by the great Reform Bill! Again, any large reform of that kind must inevitably be accompanied by a redistribution scheme, and to try and slip this enormous legislative change through the House of Commons in a little Bill of three paragraphs on a Friday afternoon might be good tactics, but he ventured to say it was bad legislation. One grave objection to the Bill was that it would multiply the plural voter, of whom the Liberals had been trying to get rid for years. Under it every woman who had two or three houses would be able to secure two or three votes, and any husband and wife taking together a £20 house would be able to manufacture a double qualification. He very much doubted whether the new principle of one couple two votes would either appeal to the Liberal Party or make for peace and progress in the family. Then again the Bill would increase the influence of wealth rather than give votes to the working women of the country. He well remembered a very interesting passage in the speech delivered last year by the hon. Member for the Clitheroe division, in which he told the House that he was the head of a great working organisation of 120,000 people, of whom 80,000 were working women, not a single one of whom would be enfranchised under the terms of the Bill. The measure, in fact, as it stood, would not increase the influence of working women, but it would inevitably increase the influence of those middle-class spinsters with whom they were familiar in municipal politics, ladies whose interest in politics was remote, who dreaded the worry of politics, and who dreaded the rate-collector even more—admirable women, admirable church-goers, admirable aunts, inarticulate, not because they were down-trodden, but because on the subject of politics they had really nothing to say. He submitted, therefore, that a very serious objection to this Bill was that it would work so largely in the interest of the propertied classes and must make against political change. The property argument was worth something, because it had always had some weight with many people on this question. If the franchise were only a question of property, if the vote really depended on having property alone, they could not reasonably refuse the vote to able and well educated women, and give it to the dull witted men whom they employed. If they looked back to the old debates on this question they would find that thirty years ago, in 1872, this idea of the franchise as a matter of property was very common in the country. If they looked back to the debates on the Women's Disabilities Removal Bill in 1872, when Mr. Jacob Bright raised the question in the House of Commons, and Mr. Henry James delivered against the Bill a speech of such striking power and ability that Mr. Disraeli was said to have asked his law advisers why the Bar never sent up lawyers of that calibre to reinforce the Tory Party—a question which the Leader of the Tory Party did not need to ask his law advisers now—they would find that Mr. Bright based his case on property alone. He declared indeed that women had more control over their passions than men—he had not the experience of some of our Cabinet Ministers to-day. He declared that he would not give the vote to married women—"he would not run his head against the common law"—his hon. friend who was a lawyer of distinction knew the law far too intimately to respect it so. But he based his case really on the fact that it was enough for him to assert the principle that "every house should have a vote." There they had a property qualification pure and simple. Mr. Bright and other supporters of woman suffrage claimed the franchise as a matter of property for every spinster who had a house of her own. If that were the sole object of the measure before them, it would not be worth an hour's discussion in that House. If this Bill had any merit—he did not say it had—it was not because of its necessary qualifications, but because it was the first step in a great political change, in giving the same political rights to men and women without distinction of property or sex. He submitted to the House that, as a matter of fact, the franchise never had been a matter of property, and never could be. The franchise was a right or privilege personal to men or women, and surely it was a point worth some consideration by Members of that House, that hitherto in every sovereign state of which history had a record this right had been unanimously confined to men. After all, his hon. friends were not doing a light thing; they were undertaking a very serious matter. They were asking the House to reverse the rule of all the ages which, rightly or wrongly, had based the franchise primarily and inevitably on sex. The world might be all wrong in that matter; still the change did call for some consideration, more perhaps than they could give it in three short paragraphs of a private Member's Bill. Might he refer to the experience of the world on this question? It was often well to take their own initiative; still, experience of the world must go for something. Of course it was true that there were a few states—not sovereign states—which had tried this experiment of woman suffrage. If they went to the Colonies to which his hon. friend had referred, they found that they had got woman suffrage in Australia and New Zealand. There the vote was given to working women, but they did not give that in the present measure. He admitted most fully that the interests of working women ought to be defended and protected better than they were. But he denied that the interests of working women were neglected in that House by men merely because working women had not got the vote which this Bill did not propose to give them. He submitted that, after all, the interests of working women would be far better cared for and studied and represented by scores and scores of Members in that House, than by any single one of the ladies who went dancing on the doorsteps of Ministers of State. He admitted that women had the vote in Australia and New Zealand. His answer to that respectfully was that these young Colonies with their limited political experience and their rather crude political methods—[Cries of "Oh!"]——

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Mr. Wason was in the New Zealand Parliament.

*MR. MALLET: The hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland was one of the most admirable exceptions to the rule. But he submitted that these young Colonies, with their limited political experience—his hon. friends would agree with that—were not really better qualified to re-model our society than they were to re-model our economic laws. There was another precedent if they liked. Women had the vote in Finland, and no man with a spark of humanity could grudge them any privileges which they derived from it there. Women had the vote in the Isle of Man. If his hon. friend was going to restrict women to such powers and prerogatives as they enjoyed in the Isle of Man he admitted that some part of his objection would be easily removed. The last case was that the franchise was given in certain States of America. Might he ask the House to consider the American precedent for a moment, because it was really most important? In America they had a great nation whose women were at least as independent, as well educated, and as well endowed as the women of any country in the world. What was the experience of America? There had been a strong woman suffrage agitation there, but he did not think that it could be denied that in recent years the movement had had a definite set back. At any rate, in proof of that, he would suggest that whenever this question had come before the State legislatures in America lately, it had been defeated again and again. What were the suffrages given in America? They were of various kinds. First of all, there was the tax-paying suffrage. The women were allowed to vote on special loans and assessments—not a right which added very sensibly to freedom. Then women had the school suffrage in some States, and were allowed to vote for school officers, but they often did not use it as a matter of fact. In Massachusetts only 2 or 3 per cent. used it; in Connecticut only 1 per cent. In Kansas they had the municipal franchise and they steadily refused to go beyond it in that State. Then in Massachusetts again there had been an attempt made lately to give women the municipal franchise. In Massachusetts the legislature wanted to know what really was the view of men and women on the question; and he would go so far as this to meet his hon. friend; if it could be shown that the majority of men and women had really thought about this question, and had made up their minds to face the change, then he would admit that they had gone a long way to prove their case. In Massachusetts, they passed a special Bill to take a referendum on this question and find out what the women thought. Leaders of the woman suffrage movement opposed that referendum. Why? Because they did not want to have the people of the State consulted. The Bill for the referendum was carried, and there voted for giving the suffrage to women 86,000 men and against it 186,000. Of the women 864 voted "no," and 22,000 voted "yes." Out of 575,000 women only 22,000 or 23,000, only 4 per cent., took the trouble to vote at all.

MR. SNOWDEN (Blackburn): What about the men?

*MR. MALLET: I quite admit that a large number of men did not vote.

MR. SNOWDEN: You have about half a million, and the numbers on both sides are approximately the same.

*MR. MALLET: But that surely proves my case, that the men and women were both largely indifferent. But there were, of course, four States in America where there was full woman suffrage. What were those four states which were to be an example to the world? They had full woman suffrage in Idaho, and Wyoming. These two states comprised mining camps and cattle ranches, and they had a very limited population—Wyoming contained barely one person to the square mile, and therefore votes had a special value of their own. There was full woman suffrage in Colorado, one of the worst governed states of the Union ["Oh!"] Lastly, they had complete suffrage in the State of Utah. What an extraordinary example for the advocates of women's enfranchisement to choose! In Utah the Mormon Church, for obvious reasons, insisted on woman suffrage on the principle, he supposed, that if a woman was limited to a portion of a husband she was entitled to compensations of a higher kind. He was prepared to admit that the state was well governed, but as a result of woman suffrage they had the election to an unwilling legislature of Mr. Brigham Roberts, who possessed three wives, and who was promptly expelled as soon as he got there. He suggested to the House that they could not contemplate the generous suffrages of these far western States of America without dreaming dreams and seeing visions of state aided emigration for the suffragettes. Something had been said on that occasion about the genuineness of this demand. Those of them who opposed the claim did not deny its genuineness for a moment and, personally, he would like to say that he had the deepest respect for the convictions and motives of many of the advocates of woman suffrage, who numbered amongst them some of the very best and noblest women he had ever known. They did not deny that it was genuine, but they denied that it was widespread, and they challenged the promoters of the Bill before they thrust this social revolution upon them to prove that the country was behind them in any shape or form. It was very hard to get facts, but, taking all the woman suffrage societies together, what was the number of their membership? He would not stand by this figure, but he did not think that the members of these societies numbered more than 300,000. Let them take what was more easy to judge by, namely, petitions in this House. At the end of 1906 they had a return of the petitions on the subject for seventeen years going back to 1890. The total number of signatures appended to those petitions during the seventeen years was only 193,000, less than 1 per cent. of the adult population. He admitted that it was difficult to obtain signatures to petitions, and that when they were obtained there was not a great deal in petitions; but if they looked back thirty years they would find that the number of signatures to petitions were much more numerous. Mr. Bright claimed that he had 250,000 signatures in his day, and in 1875 nearly half a million persons signed in favour of woman suffrage. If they were to judge at all by these figures he should say that the movement had had a distinct set back in the last thirty years. He knew that that argument would not weigh with the hon. Member for Blackburn, whom he looked upon as one of the most eloquent and candid supporters of that great movement. He thought it was the hon. Member who argued last year in this House that this movement was, after all, the work of a minority, and he justified this on the ground that minorities were always right. Yes, but they could not study the minority in this case without realising how astonishingly small the number was. Let them take these ladies who went promenading in their purlieus, were they more than a handful—a handful in every sense? The other day he went down to Brighton to attend a free trade meeting, at which the chief speaker was the President of the Board of Education. Some twelve or fifteen of these ladies travelled down also, determined, no doubt from the highest motives, to break up the meeting of his right hon. friend, who had always been an advocate of woman suffrage, pledged to it perhaps in immature youth, like other generous-hearted gentlemen, through an imperfect power of saying "No." They made their demonstration and then they travelled back again with them to London, to the infinite delight of his right hon. friend. But after all, if the women of Brighton as a whole had cared two straws about the suffrage, would it have been necessary to import these pioneers from town? If the women of London really were with hon. Members in this great movement, would it be necessary to import mill hands from Lancashire in order to intimidate their policemen? These scenes were painful and pitiful enough, but it was even more pitiful that any body of women should imagine that they could coerce them by exhibitions of this sort, exhibitions which showed all those qualities which unfitted the average woman for public life, into voting for measures which they thought premature or wrong. He submitted that the very methods resorted to to run this agitation proved to demonstration the weakness of the cause. Surely they had a right to ask themselves before they acted that day, what was the state of opinion so far as they knew it, of the majority of men in this country. After all, this was a man's question as much as a woman's. Men had to decide it, and they could not shirk their responsibility by saying that it should be left to the women to settle for themselves. How many men, how many voters of this country, were consulted at the last general election on the subject and had seriously considered it? His hon. friend had quoted some information to the effect that in only about sixty election addresses did he find any mention of the subject at all. He admitted it never entered his head to mention the subject in his election address, and he ventured to say that it never entered the heads of his constituents either that he should do so. He thought that the advocates of the Bill ought to show what proof they had, what evidence they could show that the great majority of the men of this country had seriously considered the subject at all, or that the great majority of men in this country would be of their way of thinking after they had thought it out. The House must remember that it was not only a question of adding 2,000,000 more voters to the registers. It was a claim, a perfectly fair and very large claim, that women should be allowed to fill every public office which had hitherto been reserved for men alone. If it were granted they must be prepared to admit them to the House of Commons and the other House of Parliament. There might be something to be said for putting them in the other House, where they would have far less exacting duties, as well as ecclesiastical society, which they regarded with respect. But although this question had its humorous aspect, it also had an aspect of a very serious character, and if the House passed this Bill, if they really launched themselves on this great social change, they must be prepared to reconsider all those deep-founded laws and customs on which at present sex relations rested. The hon. Member for Blackburn told them last year that this was a great

Mr. Mallet.

measure, not merely a franchise question, but a great moral question which would affect the whole moral, economic, and social conditions of women and the relations between the sexes. It was, he said, the greatest of all measures that Parliament could be called upon to deal with. He believed that to be absolutely frank and true, but was it not an overwhelming argument against asking this House to rush such a change through Parliament in three short paragraphs of a private Member's Bill? He submitted to the House that while the leaders of this movement perfectly well understood its bearings, the largeness and gravity of its issues had never been in the least considered by the men of this country. If the promoters of the Bill could convince that House that the great majority of women really cared to have the vote and use it, that the great majority of men saw the importance of the issue and were prepared to face so great a social change, that women themselves desired to discharge the same public duties as men and really preferred political work and agitation to the work they had done incomparably for generations, in forming the character and habits of the people and in governing the family which was the foundation of the State, then he admitted that they had a right to press the Bill. But until that could be shown, those who opposed it were bound to resist such legislation, and to ask hon. Members to weigh and weigh again objections which, after all, were rooted in the nature and the lives of women, and in the ancient, universal custom of mankind.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out all the words after the word 'be' and to insert the words 'read a second time on this day six months.'"

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): We have listened to four very interesting speeches—two of ability and eloquence from the point of view of my hon. friend who has just sat down, but they have not shaken my opinion that the speeches of the mover and seconder of the Second Reading of this Bill and the arguments they enforced left nothing to be desired. As the House may have anticipated, the Government take to-day the course which they pursued last year. I will remind the House that on that occasion the Prime Minister pointed out that there was no indication of unanimity in the House of Commons on this question, and that there were differences of opinion upon it to be found on almost every bench. For these reasons on this occasion our only course is to leave the decision to the views of individual Members. So far as I am concerned, I am entirely in favour of the principle of the Bill, but I am not going into the question of what it contains. I have pledged myself to vote on this question without reservation, and though this Bill may be imperfect, at any rate it removes a disqualification and an inequality which have been for so long a time a deep source of complaint with masses of people in this country. It is impossible not to sympathise with the eagerness and passion which actuates so many women in this movement. It is impossible also not to sympathise with their disappointments, past, present, and yet to come. Women have not had the franchise up to now; therefore, through no fault of their own, they have not passed through the hard school of what are called practical, but which too often in this country are unpractical, politics. Men have had to struggle for centuries for their franchise rights. They have had to fight from the time of Cromwell, and for the last 130 years the contest, the warfare, has been perpetual, and full victory has not even yet been achieved on the question of male suffrage. On this question experience shows that predominance of argument alone—and I believe that has been obtained—is not enough to win the political day. We are in the region, in the stage, of what are called academic discussions, the ventilation of pious opinions, unaccompanied, it may be, by effective action not only on the part of the Government but of political parties and of the voters of the country. Members of the House reflect the opinions of the country not only in regard to the numbers outside, but with regard to the intensity of the feeling in support of a movement, and the Government must necessarily be a reflex of the party that brought it into being. There comes the time when political dynamics are far more important than political argument. You have to move a great inert mass of opinion which in the earlier stages of questions of the first magnitude always exists. Opinion must be moved at the present time, not in Parliament Square, not by relieving Cabinet Ministers of the trouble of making speeches at public meetings, but by moving it in all the constituencies of the country, in the towns, villages, and hamlets. Men have learned their lesson and know the necessity for establishing that *force majeure* which actuates and arms a Government for effective work. That is the task before the supporters of this great movement. When I view the natural impatience of many of its supporters I cannot but recollect my own political experience extending over thirty years. We have been reminded that there are other important questions demanding attention, and perhaps I may mention one as coming before this question in urgency—Home Rule for Ireland. For the last twenty-five years we have seen the most strenuous struggles and the greatest sacrifices, not less great because unaccompanied by periods of enforced seclusion, on behalf of the Home Rule movement. In Ireland the question has been pressed to the front continuously for over a century, and every kind of action, legal and illegal, has been taken in support of it, while every kind of repression has been brought into force by Governments to keep the movement back. Yet after all these efforts and sacrifices our labours are not at an end, and all must recognise by experience that political and sectarian forces are immensely strong and can only be overcome by sustained effort. Therefore when I am applied to to use my influence to move the Government forward, that is all very well so far as it goes, but the people outside must be more actively influenced. It is not enough for a Government to bring in a Bill. Lord John Russell and Mr. Disraeli four times failed to carry Bills for the extension of male suffrage. No doubt there is a great and growing movement in favour of granting the franchise to women, but the movement lacks numbers. Looking back at the great political crises in the thirties, the sixties, and the eighties, it will be found that people did not go about in small groups, nor were they content with enthusiastic meetings in large halls; they assembled in their tens of thousands all over the country, not only in the big towns but also in the country districts. It has been said that men had to use violence before they could get what they wanted, and the Hyde Park railings have been mentioned. But the destruction of the railings was in the nature of an accident, and was due to the pressure of huge masses of people wishing to show their earnestness and to ventilate their opinions in the Park, when the authorities foolishly closed the gates. Of course it is not to be expected that women could assemble in such masses, but I am bound to say there is great force in what my hon. friend the Member for Plymouth has said, that it has not yet been sufficiently demonstrated that women in general desire to have the vote. The present Bill is part of the movement; it affords opportunity for interchange of opinion, it helps to organise and give form to the movement. Those who believe that the suffrage for women would be a good thing will individually vote for the Bill. Now comes the importance of political dynamics. The influence of constituencies on Members must be made more effective. I hope this debate at any rate will carry the movement forward and do something to show that so far as argument is concerned the day has been won for the advocates of this proposal. For the rest, the Parliamentary road should be engineered. Power rests with the masses, and through this power a Government could be influenced into more effective action than the Government could take under present conditions. For my own part, I believe the country would be made better and happier by the admission of women to the franchise. I believe the power to exercise the vote will stimulate the activity of women in a thousand ways, will give them more confidence in themselves, will improve their present *status*, particularly in the industrial world, and open to them new avenues of employment. I shall therefore gladly give my vote for the Second Reading of the Bill.

Mr. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): The position taken by the Home Secretary is practically this: "I have no objection to your lighting the fire; indeed, I should like to see it lighted; but I shall take away the matches." The right hon. Gentleman says this is an academic discussion, and under the circumstances, having the opportunity of voting to-day, we shall be allowed to say whether we are in favour of the principle of woman suffrage, but we shall not be doing anything towards the consummation of our object. The right hon. Gentleman has concluded from the speeches to which he has listened to-day that the battle is won.

*Mr. GLADSTONE: I did not say that; it is not won.

Mr. PIKE PEASE: I do not want to misinterpret anything the right hon. Gentleman said. What I wanted to imply was that he considered that, as far as the four speeches which we have heard were concerned, the argument was won. I had an opportunity of listening to the two hon. Gentlemen who proposed and seconded the Bill, and I think very little can be added to their able speeches. Certainly, as one who favours woman suffrage, I do not propose to add other arguments to any great extent. Those of us who have listened to the speeches on this subject for the last ten years or so have always found that those who oppose a measure of this character put forward arguments of a somewhat frivolous character, such as those we have often listened to from the right hon. Gentleman who recently sat for Northampton. Though I have listened with pleasure to the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland, I do not think he added any important arguments to the debate. But as regards the question as to whether women should or should not have the vote, I think, after listening to his speech, I should be rather more inclined than before to vote in favour of giving the vote to women. In reference to the able speech made by the hon. Gentleman opposite, I think he has used some arguments in favour of not allowing women to vote, but at the same time he has put forward a very large number of arguments that are fallacious. He says we should not take into account the figures relating to petitions, and at the same time he put forward a long list of such figures himself.

*Mr. MALLET: What I did say was, that we *should* take into account the figures of petitions, although we must not lay any unfair stress upon them.

Mr. PIKE PEASE: All I can say in reference to that matter is, that I would guarantee that I would get petitions with 30,000 signatures on any problem on earth in a fortnight.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: You would have to pay for them.

Mr. PIKE PEASE: With further reference to this measure, I should like to say that the exceeding interest we see in the country at the present time, is not only due to the academic view of this subject, but also to interest in the question how far the recent trouble we have seen from day to day may have affected the opinions of members. The two chief reasons which I put forward in favour of a measure like this are, first, that it is illogical to grant the suffrage in connection with county council elections, and not in connection with the elections to the Imperial Parliament; and, secondly, that no real reason has ever been adduced to show why women are not worthy of the powers which they ask for. An hon. Gentleman to-day mentioned the question of the extension of the franchise to men, and gave some figures in regard to that. I think the Home Secretary to-day has forged a good many weapons to be used against himself, because he has said in reference to agitations in the past, that a good deal has been done for a cause by riots of various kinds, but the right hon. Gentleman also said that so far as the general public is concerned, they have shown no real concern for woman suffrage. I think if the question of the enfranchisement of men was taken into account, it would be found that in days gone by the same argument was used in regard to them. Many people said that men did not want to be enfranchised, and if that argument had been successful, men would not have been further enfranchised. But if this question was put to a referendum, what would be the answer of the country? I think it would be found that a very large number of the women of this country would be in favour of the franchise, though it is perfectly possible some of them would not be inclined to vote. The question before the country, and before the House, is whether or not the women of this country should have power to vote for Members of Parliament. I have had an opportunity of listening on more than one occasion to speeches made by ladies in favour of woman suffrage, and I have always found the chief part of their argument was with reference to their ability to legislate in this Assembly. I had the opportunity the other day in the North of England of listening to two of the most interesting speeches I have ever heard in my life. One was made by a lady of great histrionic talent, such as we rarely see in any member of the male sex. Her speech was followed by another made by the able wife of a well-known Member of Parliament. In both these speeches it was plainly stated that the women have very great cause for disquietude at the present time. The lady to whom I refer stated that women have been condemned because of small families in this country, but it was no use women bringing a female child into the world to be the slave of man. I noticed in a paper which was sent to me last night in reference to this woman suffrage movement, that the arguments which are adduced almost every day are in favour of the qualification of women for sitting in this Assembly, and not so much for voting at election times. If I may be allowed, I would quote one verse of a piece of poetry published:

"Woman's voice ye never hear,
In Councils of the State,
Man-made laws shall govern ye,
'Tis yours to stand and wait
Till all men's claims are satisfied,
Till all their wants are gratified,
And till that day shall come,
Be ye, oh patient-hearted,
Like driven cattle, dumb."

Mr. Pike Pease.

The arguments which have been adduced against those who raise this question amount to this, that this is the thin end of the wedge. I am not moved by these arguments; they will not prevent me from voting for this measure, because I believe that experience has shown that it is quite possible to grant the suffrage to women without allowing them to sit in this Assembly. That has been the experience of Australia. The hon. Gentleman the Member for Plymouth spoke in reference to Australia, but he did not point out the important fact in regard to this matter, that when a Federal Parliament came into existence, the Australians, having had experience of woman suffrage in the minor Parliaments, at once adopted it in the Federal Parliament. I think that that is a very strong argument in favour of the measure we are asked to support to-day. But an argument which has considerable effect in the country, though perhaps not so much in this House, is that ladies have recently shown that they can act in such a way as to make it impossible for the men of this country to grant the franchise. That is, that women's behaviour has been so bad in regard to the riots which have taken place lately that we ought not on that account to pass any measure for the extension of the franchise to women. I think that, though we may not agree as to the methods that have been employed, we must all agree that the intensity of their feelings has been shown by the willingness of these women to endure hardship, and also that many of these ladies probably are very well qualified to act as voters in this country. It does not follow that the whole class of women should be prevented from voting simply because a certain number of ladies act in a violent manner. If that were so, then it would be possible to argue that if there were a thousand criminals in the male class in this country all the men should be disfranchised. I will not detain the House on this occasion, because many would like to speak on this important matter, but I should like to refer for one moment to the fact that the greatest ruler of the greatest country on earth was a woman, and those who vote conscientiously against this proposal and think that women should not have this power because they are not born to fight, or for any other reasons, should look at the pages of history for women's work, and note as one great example the life of our late Queen. Those who have read the letters of the late gracious Queen, recently published, will agree that they show a depth of political wisdom which few of us fully realised before we had the pleasure of reading that book. I support the measure because I honestly believe it is for the welfare of the country, and I am very pleased to hear that it is almost certain that we shall be able to go to a division.

SIR WALTER NUGENT (West Meath, S.) said that one thing which had struck him in all the speeches to which he had listened, both for and against this Bill, was that they all seemed to admit that there was no real demand on the part of women for this franchise. If there was no such demand, why did they introduce this Bill? Why did they try to force upon them what they did not want? Was it because a small and noisy minority were making the days and nights of Cabinet Ministers hideous with their howlings? If that was the case, much as he should like to see them enjoy peace by day and quiet slumber by night, nevertheless he did not think that that was sufficient reason to impose on the women of Great Britain a measure which they did not want, had not asked for, and never would use. It had been said that the result of the county council franchise had been for their benefit. In his experience, he had never met one who did not look upon it as a nuisance. He remembered that he went into a house one afternoon and asked a woman for her vote, and she said: "If you have nothing better to do but to go about the country asking women for votes, I have something more to do than going to vote for you." I said, "I think you are quite right, and hope you will throw a bucket of water over anybody else who comes in and asks you for your vote." If they supported this franchise for women, did they think of what they were doing for the number of women who wished to remain in peace and free from the turmoil of elections? These women would never get any peace by day or night at election time, they would be continually harassed by Tariff men, Labour men, and suffragists who wanted their votes.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): They are after them now.

SIR WALTER NUGENT said he was perfectly certain that his hon. friend represented the views of the women of East Clare. Why did the women of East Clare want a vote? Was it because they took a deep and burning interest in the questions of the day? No, they wanted it that they might show their appreciation of their hon. Member. All Members of the House were not so fortunate as the hon. Member for East Clare, and he would impress upon Members who represented the City of London that there was a vast difference between giving women votes in the scantily populated country and giving them votes in a city. Of course, what was now proposed was the thin end of the wedge, and if they gave a vote to women there would come a day when a demand for universal suffrage would be put before the House. A great deal had been made of the claim that the supporters of this Bill were championing the rights of women. He maintained that it was not those who were supporting the measure who were championing the rights of women. The opponents of the proposal would always have the courage to withstand intimidation and pressure until they were satisfied that a great majority of the women of Great Britain and Ireland were in favour of having conferred upon them the right to vote at Parliamentary elections.

MR. FLETCHER (Hampstead) said the hon. Member who moved the Amendment had stated that he preferred to keep the sexes as far as possible apart. He strongly differed from that view, holding that no work in this world was properly and thoroughly done unless both men and women lent a hand to it. Men and women were never fully developed until they married. Until they married, the social and political worth of men and women was very much that of one half of a pair of scissors. Americans did not suffer from the terrible disease of shyness.

Boys and girls there were educated together; the boys did not grow up as hooligans as they did here. The boys were elevated by the society of the fair sex, and, on the other hand, the girls did not grow up as mere bread-and-butter misses. He contended that this question was settled twenty years ago, when a Conservative Government created the London County Council and most fairly and justly gave to women who paid rates the same right to vote as men. In his own constituency there was an unusually large number of lady voters, and he noticed that in the county council elections the party strength was not affected in the slightest degree. He did not think that the ladies on either side affected the strength of a party, and the inference he drew from their experience of women being allowed to vote in connection with county council elections was that there was nothing revolutionary in the proposal now before the House. The change would not be a great one, and in quiet times ladies would not vote in any greater proportion than men did. They should remember the terrors with which even leading statesmen regarded the introduction of the ballot in Parliamentary and other elections. It was feared that it would lead to hypocrisy, corruption, and the degradation of the electorate. The Act was passed, however, and was there one man in the country who would now suggest that it should be abolished? He took a great interest in the wonderful progress which had been made by the Dominion of New Zealand. He remembered that that great statesman, Mr. Seddon, told him that fifteen years ago when the vote was given to women in New Zealand he consented to it with some apprehension, but that ten years after the ladies got the franchise he declared that there was not one man in New Zealand who would lift a hand to bring back the former state of things. Only last week he had had the pleasure of speaking with a professor and his wife who were visitors to this country from New Zealand. He asked them what was the effect of granting the franchise to women there, and the answer was that it was entirely satisfactory. He put it to the professor, "Did it not lead to friction in families?" and the reply was, "Not at all; families discussed politics and politicians just the same way as they would discuss the merits of plays and actors." The professor added that at one time there were in New Zealand a considerable number of undesirable Parliamentary candidates—men given to drink, who were living apart from their wives, or were unfavourably known on the Exchange. The grant of the franchise to women had been very beneficial in purifying politics, and women voted for men of greater sincerity and earnestness in public life. He himself had paid great attention to this question for twenty years past, and he was convinced that it would be greatly to the benefit of this country if women had the vote.

*SIR MAURICE LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough) said that the hon. Gentleman who had moved the Second Reading of the Bill with earnest conviction had stated that he would content himself, if the Second Reading were carried, with having the Bill remitted to a Committee of the Whole House, which was practically admitting that he was prepared to have it slain immediately after its Second Reading. That action did not meet with the approval of the stormy petrels amongst the suffragists. Miss Pankhurst, in a letter to the London papers, had impressed on the Members of the House of Commons not to vote for such a Resolution, because the debate would then only prove to have been an academic discussion, and the expression of a pious opinion. His own opinion was that this was a bad Bill, it was a retrograde measure going back to the old reactionary days of the property qualification. It would not democratise the House of Commons, but make it less representative than it was at the present time. Under the existing electoral law nearly one-third of the adult population of the country was excluded from the franchise, and a simliar franchise extended to the women would include in the main just that portion of the women of the country least in need of the influence and power which the vote would give them, and exclude just that part who were more in need of that influence and power than any other class. Women numbered more than half of the adult population, yet only 750,000 women were enfranchised for local elections, showing definitely and clearly that this Bill provided neither more nor less than a special qualification on a most corrupt basis. The Bill ought to be called a Bill for the purpose of setting up faggot votes; and he warned Liberals who were pledged to the abolition of plural voting, and who had on their programme "one man, one vote," that this Bill would make it impossible to have such a measure passed in this or any other Parliament. The Bill set up a qualification to give a vote to the rich women of the country, and to the daughters of the wealthy. If inquiry were made it would be found that the wives of the well-to-do men would immediately become electors, and if they had daughters they also would become electors on the property-owning or lodger qualification. In this way an enormous power would be placed in the hands of the wealthy and well-to-do classes in the nation. He asked, why not trust all women? He contended that those women who now refused to improve the electoral system by adult suffrage would, if they obtained power under a limited franchise, use that power and influence to prevent the franchise being given to their cooks, their housemaids, and their domestic servants, who were far more in need of votes than were their mistresses; and while they were doing that they would be at the same time using their influence to prevent the extension of the franchise to the adult male population of the country. If the question were looked at closely it would be found that under this Bill working married women would not be enfranchised, because the majority of them lived in houses under £20 rent per annum. For instance, the wife of a working man would not receive any vote with her husband if the rent of the house was 7s. 6d. per week, but a woman living with her husband in a house the rent of which was 8s. 6d. per week would be enfranchised. Surely the House of Commons was not going to make such a blunder as that! Again, the number of women who worked in factories and mills who would be enfranchised under this Bill would be infinitesimal. The House of Commons should pause before consenting to such a Bill. The suggestion that a limited franchise was only a step was a delusion and a snare; he believed that the majority of women were absolutely hostile to such a franchise, that the bulk of them, if referred to, would say that the franchise should be extended to all women or to none. The *Sheffield Independent* issued inquiries recently to all the women householders in Sheffield, and put the question before them whether they desired the extension of the franchise or not; and the figures proved that of those who voted there were 50 per cent. more opposed than there were in favour of the extension of the franchise to women. 23,663 returned an answer, and of these 14,652 were opposed to the extension of the franchise to women, while only 9,011 were in favour of the franchise being granted. These figures proved that they were trying to convince the men before they had convinced the women. Let them convince the women and show the country there was a real and just demand, but the country would not be convinced by the noisy demonstrators whose idea of justice was the exclusion of the great majority of women from the privileges for which they were fighting, and whose notion of fairness was the unmannerly disturbance of other people's meetings. He believed that the agitation was a bogus one, that it was without numerical support, and that the noisy demonstrators represented a very small minority. No question was less urgent, in his judgment. Women had never suffered in consequence of legislation by men; at least, they had been as fairly treated by the legislation of this House as men had. Our legislation had been humane and largely in the interests of women. If the Factory Acts of various Governments were referred to it would also be found that there had been humane and tender thought for the women and children of the country, and if they brought women right into the midst of the hurly-burly of politics they would be put into a position where these distinctions in favour of women would have to disappear. If they were brought on to the register they must necessarily be brought into that House, and no practical division could then be made between the employments of men and women. They had seen legislation of class against class, of sect against sect, but never, he believed, had there been legislation of sex against sex. But if the women who demanded this Bill obtained it they would exclude a large portion of their sisters from the franchise, and there would be hostility of the female sex against itself. When this step of enfranchisement was taken it must be a step for the advantage to the whole body of women without restriction, by placing them on an equality as all men were placed with each other. If the vote were given to women, they could not be excluded from the House of Commons. Let him read what Mr. Gladstone said in his famous letter on female suffrage addressed to the late Samuel Smith, M.P., on the argument which many suffragists used that they would be content if women were only given the Parliamentary vote. Mr. Gladstone said—

> "For a long time we drew a distinction between competency to vote and competency to sit in Parliament. But long before our electorate had attained to its present popular proportions this distinction was felt to involve a possible inconsistency, and accordingly it died away. It surely cannot be revived; and if it cannot be revived, then the woman's vote carries with it, whether by the same Bill or by a consequential Bill, the woman's seat in Parliament. . . . Capacity to sit in the House of Commons now legally and practically draws in its train capacity to fill every office in the State."

The promoters of the Bill, who seemed to be a few rich women would be allowed to have a vote and a seat in Parliament which at the same time would be denied to the bulk of the working women of the country. This was a question of a revolutionary character which should not be decided by a discussion of a few hours on a Friday afternoon at the dictates of a few women. If there was a just demand for the franchise for women, it was the duty of the Government of the day to take up the question and advise the House in which direction it should go. Until the Government took upon themselves the responsibility of dealing with this question, he hoped the House would refuse to pass such a Bill, which was in no sense a democratic measure, nor one desired by the democracy.

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said he would leave those who believed in the further extension of the franchise to women to deal with the question of whether it should or should not be only on a property qualification. His object was to express his opinion as to whether women should have votes at all or not. He was bound to say that the hon. Member for Loughborough division went rather far when he stated that this was a bogus question. He thought that the matter had gone so far that it could no longer be treated as a bogus question, but must be dealt with as a serious political question. Up to the present time he had been a convinced opponent of woman suffrage, but he had come that day perfectly ready to be convinced by argument as to the propriety of changing his opinion, and voting for the Second Reading of the Bill. The ethical arguments by which the Bill had been supported were easy to adduce and very difficult to refute. He had listened with the greatest pleasure to the way in which the hon. Member for Kensington had introduced the Bill. The fault, if fault it was, that he found was that the hon. Gentleman's arguments were solely and entirely ethical. He had not heard in the course of the whole of the hon. Gentleman's observations a single argument which dealt with the real question before the House — the propriety of of a woman having a vote the same as a man. He had adduced one argument with which he (Colonel Lockwood) found himself in thorough agreement. The question of a woman lowering her *status* or character in the eye of man by going to the polling booth and putting her cross on the voting paper had never entered his head as an opponent to this measure. Nor did it ever enter the heads of those who were violently opposed to this measure. It was done at the present time in municipal elections, and he did not see anything derogatory to a woman in doing it. The hon. Member had addressed himself to the question of a woman's strength and spoke of her not being able to do a navvy's work. That again was an ethical argument and hardly worthy of the hon. Member. It was not an argument that he would use against this Bill. It was an argument impossible to refute. The position held by those who up to the present had opposed the Bill was, he confessed, not logical, but he had known many positions strong and good to hold that were not logical, and it certainly seemed curious that a woman with education and property, or with a large number of employees, should not be allowed to exercise a vote, while a man to whom she paid 14s. a week, and who might be barely able to read and write could do so. There were two ways of treating this question, the humorous and the serious. The temptation with many was to treat the question from the humorous point of view. The hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland had dealt with it from that point of view. He himself, however, desired to treat the question seriously, because he knew that to many at the present time it presented a very serious aspect. So far as the "Suffragettes" were concerned, he quite agreed with the hon. Member for Kensington. Such conduct as theirs, lawless as it was, could not be allowed to bias the votes of Members. But for years it had been regarded by some as almost necessary to violate the law in regard to a particular question before the question came into serious politics. He did not admit that argument. Such a thing never had any weight with him, but if it had he would never allow the misconduct of the few to affect the position of the many. If the House thought a particular thing was right they ought to support it, and he believed the majority of hon. Members would do so absolutely regardless of the consequences. He would now state in a few words the objections he had had in the past and which he still had to this extension of the franchise. In the first place, he had been unable to find any grounds for believing that the majority of women were in favour of it; he believed on the contrary that the majority of women were against it. He would acknowledge that those in front of the movement were thoroughly educated women and women whose opinion should have great weight with the community, but upon such a question as whether women should be given the suffrage, it was necessary to see if the large majority who would be entitled to it were in favour of such an extension. He very much doubted whether the large majority were in favour of it, and he awaited with some interest any statement that would lead him to alter his opinion. The most serious point of all was the fact that if logic were followed and the suffrage given to women because the men in their employ had it, it would be impossible to bar them from any position the State could offer. He could not view with equanimity the possibility of women being admitted to this House, not because he thought they were not fitted to take part in the debates; he had often heard women argue most logically, most acutely, and most lucidly; but because he could not alter his opinion that this assembly should be an assembly for men and men alone. Once women were admitted to the privilege of standing for election to Parliament, then to them also must be conceded the position of Mr. Speaker's Chair and the privilege of being Ministers of State, Judges, counsel, and various other positions in various professions. He did not wish to turn this matter into ridicule. It would be a very easy matter to joke about it, but the House was really seriously considering it, and it was necessary to do so. He had not heard one word to convince him that such objections as he had on the subject were either false or ill-founded. To those who said the municipal elections offered a ready machinery for this extension, his reply was that the questions dealt with by such an extension would be Imperial and not municipal. There was another great objection, he would not say insuperable, because no difficulties were insuperable to Statesmen of the present day. It would be most dangerous to invite the opinion of women on Imperial subjects when the pronouncement of the House of Commons might have a most serious effect. Let those who were in favour of woman suffrage leave the ethical question alone and come to the actual facts. Let the House hear from them an earnest argument why this difference in the position of men and women should be suddenly brushed aside, and why women should be admitted to an absolute equality with man, and then possibly they would find many converts among those who were at present opposed to them. But while they kept to the sentimental and ethical reasons, which, while they were hard to refute, made no impression, they would get no further. Sentiment and ethics had no weight with the House. It was figures and arguments alone that could have any weight, especially with such an assembly as the House of Commons. He had no doubt when the division was reached the question would be raised to a position it had never reached before, but possibly by that time they would have heard further and more convincing arguments than had yet been put forward.

MR. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.) said he rose more than anything else for the purpose of removing the impression that might be created that Irish opinion was against this Bill. It was not. Of course, the Nationalist Party, like others in the House, were divided on the question, but that was a conclusive reason why this should not be a Government measure. The arguments of the Opposition appeared to be self-contradictory. One section was opposed to the Bill because it gave votes to any woman, and another because it did not give votes to every woman. Speaking for the democratic party, and giving what must be considered as their opinion, he desired to say that he was in entire agreement with the argument that so far as the property qualification was concerned the proposal was not sufficiently democratic. But this Bill did not set up a property franchise. He supported the Bill, because it marked a beginning, because it would embody in the Statute-book a principle that would grow and develop. Some hon. Gentlemen said that if this Bill were accepted the electoral laws would need to be re-organised; but they were all agreed that under present conditions the franchise laws ought to be re-organised. First came the hon. Member for Plymouth, who had a Motion on the Paper for a time limit for speeches, and who, he noticed, had exceeded his proposed limit on this occasion by about 300 per cent. but they were all interested in his speech. Then came the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland, who appeared to have been a Member of the New Zealand Parliament until the women obtained the franchise there, but even the hon. Gentleman did not convince him. He had spoken of the absence of political questions in New Zealand, but was there a single point of the Radical programme, from land tenure to woman suffrage, in which the self-governing colonies were not 200 years at least ahead of this country? There were other places besides Australia and New Zealand in which women had the Parliamentary vote, as, for example, Finland, in which it was admittedly exercised for the benefit of the community, and also in Norway, the best governed country and perhaps one of the greatest intellectual forces in Europe. The hon. Member who last spoke had frankly admitted that logic was against him, but had said that people who were governed by logic were nearly always wrong. He was glad to think that people did not think after that fashion in the country from which he came. They were always in favour of what was logical, whatever inconvenience it might cause. The refusal to admit women to the title of "fellow-citizens" threw a sinister light on the attitude of the opponents. Women were to be treated as some sort of inferior animal, fit to do everything except exercise the Parliamentary vote. So long as they taxed women of property or hanged them for murder or sent them to gaol when guilty of offences against property, or of knocking at the doors of Cabinet Ministers, so long as they imposed on them burdens and responsibilities, they were logically compelled to give them the Parliamentary franchise. The tone of the debate had been maintained at a high standard, and the House had not been treated to the customary witticisms. But the opposition to the Bill was founded on prejudices, one would have thought the most ancient in the world if they had not enjoyed the advantage of hearing some of the jokes by which the prejudices were propounded. The hon. Member for Plymouth had taken the view that hon. Members in the House were too demoralised and that women ought not to be allowed to come there. He would not deny that one of the incidental consequences of giving women the franchise would be to allow them to become Members; but at least their entrance in the House would not depress its intelligence—because that was a thing that might not be possible—and it might do something to raise its moral standard. The hon. Member had objected to women getting the vote because woman was an unknown quantity and also because she was alleged to be a temptation. He hoped that, despite the advances in literature to which her influence had largely contributed, woman would never cease to be an unknown quantity. If he thought this Bill would do anything to pluck out the heart of her mystery and make her a merely logical being he would be strongly opposed to it. If women were regarded as a temptation they must in their individual capacity be allowed to grapple with the temptation as well as they could. The hon. Gentleman had a last argument. He had said the reason he was opposed to it was that there was nothing about woman suffrage in the Scriptures. The Scriptures was a large and extremely interesting book, but it left a great many things untouched. There was nothing, for instance, about the comparative economic value of free trade and protection. There was nothing in it about the Tariff Reform League or about whaling in the Orkney and Shetland Islands. If, however, hon. Members had not texts on these and other questions they had with them in support of the Bill the entire forces of logic, which, after all, ought to have some infinitesimal effect on the minds of hon. Members. They had also the up-growing wave of democracy and experience flowing from the improvement of the laws, regarded from the point of view of social reform, that came to them from every country that had had the courage to take this step. He did not say it had not some risks. It had. Was there ever a great social change that did not carry risks with it? They could not remove every objection by argument. They were asked on this question to make a great act of faith in the future of humanity. He was prepared to make that act of faith, and he thought the House ought to.

MR. CLEMENT EDWARDS (Denbigh District) said he opposed the Second Reading of the Bill because he was in favour of adult suffrage. The speech they had just heard was strongly in favour of adult suffrage, but it contained not a single thing in favour of this pettifogging and ridiculous Bill. He had fought three elections without the slightest pressure being put upon him from any quarter, and he had in each of those elections advocated adult suffrage on the ground of democratic principles. But he was not prepared to support a Bill of this limited and property-mongering character. It had been suggested that certain ladies who had been taking part in a great agitation should give pause to those who had advocated an extension of the suffrage to women. He, for one, had not been in the least frightened by the boisterous and somewhat Olympic methods of the active crusaders whom he supposed they might correctly describe as belonging to the furniture vanguard of the suffrage movement. But he was surprised that this Bill should on two different occasions have found foster parents on that side of the House. It was quite clear that the two hon. and most lady-like Members for North St. Pancras and North Kensington had had their tender sympathies and simple hearts exploited by the "suffragette" agitation. It was a matter of history that the wise men did not come from the north. It had, however, been suggested that they ought to support this Bill as a beginning. He did not regard a Bill which simply clothed with voting power certain propertied persons as a beginning. He believed when the well-to-do women got the franchise they would do little or nothing to extend the same right and privilege to the working women of the country. This Bill professed to be a measure for enfranchising women. It professed, as the Bill of last year and the Bill of the previous year did, to give the vote to women under the same circumstances as to men. That meant that women might be put on as freehold voters, that they might enjoy the service vote, that they might come on as independent occupiers and as lodgers. It also meant that in certain circumstances they might be entitled to the vote as joint occupiers or joint lodgers. When one came to see what proportion of married women in the country were likely to be enfranchised by this measure he was perfectly amazed that any man claiming to be democratic, and still more surprised that members of the Party below the gangway opposite, who professed to stand for and represent the interests of labour, could support a Bill which would shut out 89 per cent. of the married working women of the country from the possible enjoyment of the franchise. In the constituency of the hon. Member for Blackburn, for instance, it would be possible for only 6 per cent. of the married women to enjoy the vote. In the constituency of the hon. Member for Merthyr less than 4 per cent. of the married women could possibly have the vote; and taking the constituencies represented by the whole of the members of the Labour Party there was no single case where more than 12 per cent. of the married women could get on to the register, the proportion varying from 12 down to 4 per cent. There was another aspect of this question, and one to which he was surprised that no attention had been drawn. Not only would this Bill fail to enfranchise the great mass of the working women of the country, but it would, on the other hand, have the automatic effect, if it became law, of actually disfranchising thousands of workmen. The case of the independent householder and of the single lodger was simple, but when they came to the case of the joint occupier vote and the joint lodger vote it only needed to consider one or two very simple facts to make it perfectly clear that the Bill as drawn, if it became law, would automatically disfranchise a number of persons now living in houses under the rent of £20 a year, or occupying lodgings of less than £20 a year value. He would like to call attention to the operation of the franchise law at present—first of all, to the case of the single occupier. It was a fact within the knowledge of the House that under the Representation of the People Act of 1867 no value qualification was required for a single person to get on for a dwelling-house, but it was expressly provided that there could be no joint occupiers for dwelling-houses; they therefore had to go back to the Reform Act of 1832 to look at the franchise there for the joint occupier. By Section 29 of that Act, in the case of joint occupiers, under this Bill a man and his wife, they had to do a compulsory sum in arithmetic. They had to add the husband and wife, divide the amount of the rent by two, and if the yearly rent was not at least £10 for each of them, neither was entitled to go upon the register. What were the possibilities under these circumstances? In South East and East London practically the whole population lived in weekly tenancies, and there was no written agreement. What was to prevent the landlord from treating the man and his wife as joint tenants and thus not only prevent the woman being enfranchised under the Bill, but disfranchise the husband himself? To take a case of common occurrence in great industrial districts where hundreds of cottages were attached to a colliery, what was to prevent the owner of the cottages, in a spirit of political animus, insisting upon the husband and wife being made joint tenants and by the automatic operation of the Bill depriving the husband of the right to vote which he now enjoyed The Bill would not enfranchise a single one of the hundreds of thousands of agricultural labourers' wives, and it could be utilised by the landlord if there was political bias to compel husband and wife to become joint tenants and by that means to deprive the husband of the vote that he now enjoyed. But it was not in the case of the joint occupier that the danger was so great. It was much more dangerous and menacing in the case of the joint lodger. In the Act of 1878 provision was made for the joint lodger. What were the qualifications? Apart from the time qualification, there was the qualification that the rent paid must be of the clear yearly value of £10 for each of the lodgers in joint occupation. There were in London, as in most of the great industrial centres, a very large number of lodgings let to workmen and their wives. In the constituency of West Islington there were over 2,000 lodgers upon the register. Of these there were 1,500 workmen living with their wives in unfurnished lodgings rented at less than 8s. per week. How did that work out? At present the revising barrister, when a claim was made for a lodger vote, had first to ascertain what was the value of the premises occupied. If it was a question of there being more than one lodger, he at once divided the total value of the premises by the number of lodgers. There was no definition in any text-book or Act of Parliament of what a lodger was. In many cases the lodger had been treated as merely another occupant of the room. What happened now was, where there were, perhaps, two brothers claiming, that the revising barrister at once divided the total value of the lodging by the number of lodgers, and if, after dividing, there was not a clear annual value of £10 for each, then neither was entitled to be placed on the register. Hitherto, the revising barrister had treated husband and wife as one. In the case of brothers he had not so treated them. If this Bill became an Act of Parliament, and the wife of a workman in such a case was made a separate voting entity, revising barristers would do precisely as they had done in the case of two brothers, adding the wife to the husband, dividing the total rent by two, and there would be less than the clear net annual value of £10 for each, and neither would be entitled to have the franchise, and the husband, who now enjoyed it, would be struck off the register. He hoped that side of the House, and those who had stood for the democratic idea, would not allow themselves to be carried away in support of this Bill. How came it that the Bill was of the same limited character as the Bill of last year and the year before? The Women's Co-operative Guild had pointed out its limited character. Why had not the admitted defects been corrected? Why ask them to vote this great revolutionary change in the Constitution by a measure which set up a narrow property franchise? If woman franchise was a good thing, as he thought it was, let the House face it and pass a Bill which gave effect to the full principle.

MR. SNOWDEN (Blackburn) said that this was the twenty-third occasion that the question of female enfranchisement had been debated since John Stuart Mill moved his Amendment to the Reform Bill of 1867. On each of those twenty-three occasions the same worm-eaten objections had been brought forward. In the intervening years those objections had been disproved by the hard logic of facts. In Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, Finland, some of the American States, and what the hon. Member for Plymouth forgot to mention, in Norway also, women had the franchise, but in none of those countries had the anticipations and fears which had been so often expressed been realised. The stockings still got darned, the baby was still nursed, women did not spend all their time discussing politics, and the population continued to increase. But he rose mainly for the purpose of dealing with a challenge which had been brought forward in two or three quarters in the course of that debate, and that was for proof that a demand for women's emfranchisement existed. He wanted to prove that that demand did exist. It had been pointed out that there were more than 400 Members of that House pledged to women's enfranchisement, and he did not subscribe to the opinion which had been expressed as to the demoralised condition of politicians. He should assume that those promises were given after intelligent consideration of the question and were an expression of the honest conviction of the individual Members who made them. He had already said that this matter had been discussed in the House twenty-three times. Thirty-eight years ago a Women's Franchise Bill passed a Second Reading in that House, and twice subsequently a Bill had been carried through its Second Reading. The Liberal Federation or Council had repeatedly passed resolutions in support of the enfranchisement of women, and quite recently, at its meeting twelve months ago, by seventy-one votes to thirteen, it asked that the Government should at once take steps to press forward this reform into law. Last week, at a meeting of the Federation or Council, the question was again discussed, and in spite of the vehement eloquence of the hon. Member for Loughborough, it was decided by a large majority to continue to press upon the Government the extreme urgency of this question.

*SIR MAURICE LEVY said the amendment he objected to was not the one to which the hon. Member alluded.

*MR. SNOWDEN said the hon. Member objected to an amendment to the effect that the meeting was of opinion that an extension of the franchise to women should be passed into law at the earliest possible opportunity, and that was carried, but no vote was taken owing to the large majority in favour of the amendment.

*SIR MAURICE LEVY: You stated that in spite of the vehemence of my speech the motion was carried, but I never spoke on the motion which was carried. I opposed the previous amendment in reference to woman suffrage which was defeated by a large majority.

*MR. SNOWDEN, continuing, said his reference was to the eloquence of the hon. Member against the enfranchisement of women resolution. He would like to point out the very different attitude which the hon. Member had taken up in that debate to that which he adopted a week ago at Leicester. Twelve months ago the hon. Member put down a Motion on the Paper of that House, or introduced a Bill, in favour of adult suffrage, and he spoke that afternoon as though he were in favour of adult suffrage, which, of course, included woman suffrage, but his chief reason a week ago at Leicester against the enfranchisement of women was that the question of woman suffrage had never yet been put before the electors, and that if it were he thought the people would say the time had not yet come for the men to surrender and hand over the government to the women. Then why did he introduce a Bill twelve months ago which was going to put women in a majority? However, before that digression, he was trying to show that there existed in the country a strong and rapidly-growing demand for a measure of this description, and he referred to the expressions of opinion given by organised Liberal forces in the country. At the last meeting of the National Union of Conservative Associations, he believed for the first time, they, without a division, passed a resolution in favour of the enfranchisement of women. Might he refer to a statement made by the Home Secretary in his speech that afternoon? He advocated that women should first convince the Government by their methods that a demand did exist for female suffrage. He ventured to submit and he thought the right hon. Gentleman would agree, that at his own public meetings in the last twelve months there had been no topic so exciting as the question of female suffrage. He (Mr. Snowden) knew something of this agitation and he made this statement convinced of its truth—and he was certain that every Member in the House acquainted with the agitation would agree with his conclusion—that there was not in the country at the present time, with the single exception of the Socialist movement, a movement which was so vigorous and so active, which carried on such persistent and consistent propaganda, as that for the enfranchisement of women. More meetings had been held in support of that cause during the last twelve months than on behalf of any other question, except, as he said, for general Socialist propaganda. Twice within the last few months the Queen's Hall had been crowded in every nook and corner with enthusiastic audiences, almost entirely composed of women, on that subject. Let them take the recent bye-elections. Many reasons had been assigned for the results at Mid-Devon and Leeds, for the decline of the Liberal vote, but he was convinced that the action of the women at those bye-elections had done more to change the disposal of the male vote than any other factor or influence. At Leeds the women got by far the largest meetings. On the Sunday before the election they had a demonstration which was described to him by a man from Leeds, who said that he had taken part in every big demonstration in Leeds for the last thirty years and had never before seen a demonstration equalling in numbers, enthusiasm, and unanimity, the demonstration the women had on that Sunday afternoon. On the eve of the poll—and if the hon. Member who was returned at that by-election would speak in that debate he would corroborate what he said—the women had a demonstration, and the local police calculated that 100,000 persons took part in it. He himself went to address the third meeting on the evening in a schoolroom which at 9.30 p.m had been placed at their disposal by the women, who had had, from 6.30 to that hour, the room crowded with women.

Did hon. Members think that that could go on without having any effect? All those women had husbands, fathers, sons, brothers, or sweethearts. Those who were opposed to the enfranchisement of women admitted the influence of women, and it was in that direction that the women were beginning to exercise their influence. He did not subscribe to the position as it had been stated in the course of the debate that it was necessary for those who supported the proposal to prove that a majority of women demanded the vote. They had never applied that proposition to any other piece of legislation. What would be thought of the reasonableness and the position of a Member who asked the Cabinet to prove that a majority supported the Education Bill or the Licensing Bill introduced that week? He did not care whether a majority of women in the country wanted the vote or not; it was enough for him to know that a large number of women did want the vote. An hon. Member had talked about imposing the vote on the women, but they did not do anything of the sort. They would not be compelled to vote, and even if a considerable number of women did not want the vote that was no reason why a smaller number of intelligent women, quite capable of rendering valuable assistance to the government of the country, should be any longer withheld from the opportunity of doing so. The hon. Member for Plymouth, in trying to minimise the importance of the franchise agitation, had stated that there were not more than 300,000 women associated with suffrage organisations. Might he put it like this? What was the number of men associated officially with Liberal organisations in the country? He ventured to say it was not more than 300,000. They all knew that the membership of an organisation was no criterion at all of the strength of public opinion. He had in this constituency more than 10,000 votes, and those votes were given at a time when the organisation of his party did not number 200. He would turn to the criticism of what was called the limited character of the Bill. The Bill limited nothing. It was not a Franchise Bill; it was simply a Bill for the removal of sex disability. Every working women's organisation in the country supported the Bill. They were absolutely unanimous in demanding that the vote should be given to women on the same terms as it was, or might be, given to men; and he thought they were wise in confining their demand to that. They concentrated their demand at present upon the simple point of the removal of sex disability. An hon. Member had quoted a speech made in the House twelve months ago, but he quoted incorrectly, because it was not stated in that speech that the passing of the Bill before the House into law would not enfranchise any working woman. As a matter of fact, he (Mr. Snowden) gave figures, which had never been disputed, in the course of the debate last year, proving that by the passing of the measure at least 82 per cent. of the women enfranchised would belong to the working classes. His hon. friend had presented a petition from the textile workers in Lancashire, the majority of whom would not be enfranchised by the measure, but all the same they demanded a Bill of this kind, and they were wise, because they recognised that for all practical purposes the granting of the vote to a few women was the enfranchisement of the whole sex. He had only one more thing to say. The Home Secretary had asked for a majority in favour of the Second Reading as an indication of the growing sympathy with the cause in the House of Commons, but he did not think that that would quite satisfy the women outside. He believed a similar appeal was made when a similar Bill was under discussion nearly forty years ago, and they were not satisfied that mere platonic sympathy should be shown with such a measure. However, he hoped that at any rate the vote that afternoon would be of such a character as to indicate that inside that House, which after all was the last place in the country to feel the influence of public opinion outside, there had been since the last division on the question a very considerable advance.

*SIR RANDAL CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) said the mover of the Bill had intimated that if the House would agree to the Second Reading, he was willing that the Bill should be referred to a Committee of the Whole House. That was a very adroit move and vote-catching offer on the part of the hon. Gentleman and the supporters of the Bill, but he hoped Members of the House would not be deluded by any such promise or offer. The hon. Member for Blackburn had asserted that there was a large and constantly increasing demand in this country for the enfranchisement of women, but the hon. Member adduced no proofs for his assertion. He thought, however, he would be able to prove that there was very little demand for this measure on the part of the women of the United Kingdom. Last year when the Bill was under discussion, he gave to the House information which he had obtained from the Petitions Committee. The figures which he had given on that occasion as to the number of signatures in favour of female suffrage had been increased since then, though slightly. The hon. Member for Blackburn had said that there was a growing desire on the part of women for the franchise, and there was some boast of their having an organisation numbering 300,000 members. If that were so, one would have thought that they would have taken the trouble at least to attach their signatures to the petitions presented to this House, because signatures to a petition cost nothing, and the signatures of such a number would have been evidence that there was a desire on the part of many women to possess the vote. But there had been nothing like 300,000 signatures to the petitions presented to the House. Since he gave the figures last year some 4,500 more had signed petitions. These figures were brought up to the day before yesterday. He had gone to the Petitions Committee to get the facts before making his statement to the House, and there he found that during the last seventeen years, the total number of men and women, young and old who had signed petitions to this House in favour of female suffrage was 198,403. He hoped the House would bear with him while he gave the number of adult women in the United Kingdom and contrasted that with the small number of women who had manifested any desire to possess the Parliamentary vote. According to the last Census there were 10,500,000 adult females in the United Kingdom, of whom 198,403—presumably all adult women — had signed petitions to that House. He was quite willing to admit for the sake of argument that this number really did desire to possess the Parliamentary franchise, but if they deducted the 198,403 from the 10,500,000, they had 10,312,907 women who would not even take the trouble to sign a petition to that House in favour of woman suffrage. To him this was conclusive evidence that the little band of suffragists had no claim to represent the women of the United Kingdom. And it was not because they had made no attempt to obtain signatures. He repeated the statement which he made on good authority last year, and it had never been challenged, that they had employed paid agents to collect signatures; that they had given instructions to these paid agents—who were very liberally paid, he believed 8d. an hour—to tell women in the factories of Lancashire that if they signed the petitions and got votes their wages would be raised. Yet notwithstanding these paid agents and the instructions given to them, they had only been able to secure the number of signatures which he had stated. He repeated that the evidence he had given was conclusive that there was very little desire on the part of the women of this country to obtain the Parliamentary franchise. Reference had been made to the recent attempt by the *Sheffield Independent* to elicit an expression of opinion on this question from the women of that city. The result of that effort was very remarkable. The number who voted were a small minority of the women of Sheffield. The *Sheffield Independent* was a Liberal journal which he believed supported woman suffrage, and the result of the census taken by that newspaper was that of those who took the trouble to record their votes 14,652 voted against women having the vote, and 9,011 that they should have the vote. The *Sheffield Independent*, in publishing these figures, made a statement which he commended to the serious consideration of those who supported the Bill or the extension of the franchise to women under any circumstances. That journal, in commenting on the efforts they had made, wrote—

> "It did not occur to us that the canvassers would be met everywhere by the supposition that they were agents of the suffragettes, and as such, would be abused right and left and from time to time pursued off the premises. Amongst the vast majority who were opposed to the suffrage movement were a multitude who regarded it with most scornful disapproval. This fact was made patent at every turn. The women swayed by these feelings rarely had patience to vote. They burned the paper with contumely and were almost equally ready to burn the suffragettes."

He commended this to the consideration of those who declared that the women of the country were largely in favour of extending the franchise to the whole female sex. It was quite true that a number of meetings had been held, but the same kind of people nearly always appeared on the platforms. The clever little band of suffragists who undertook to speak in the name of the 10,500,000 women of Great Britain, but who could only get the signatures of 189,000, reminded him of a stage army passing in front of the curtain. There were about a dozen of them, and, as soon as the head of the column reached the curtain, he ran behind and came on again at the tail. Thus the continual march of a dozen men was made to impress the spectators as representing a mighty host. That was exactly what these women did. It was the same family party continually rushing from place to place and meeting to meeting, and they had deluded some people into the belief that they were a mighty host. Whatever importance they had in the public eye was, he averred, without the slightest hesitation, largely owing to the way they had been boomed by the Press. The London Liberal journals had been the worst sinners in this respect. He did not know whether they expected that if women were enfranchised it would advantage the Liberal Party, but one could scarcely take up a London Liberal daily journal without finding portraits of individual suffragists or groups of them; and, when they were committed to prison, the same journals described their hardships, what they had for breakfast and dinner, what the chaplain said to them and what they said to the chaplain. It was wearisome, almost nauseating, to read the reports given about the suffragists in the London daily Liberal journals. Was it surprising that, written about and pictured in the Press, they should have deluded not only themselves but their dupes into the belief that they were really heroines and martyrs in a great cause? Neither the hon. Member who introduced the Bill nor the hon. Member for Blackburn had given any proof that the women of the country laboured under any grievances which the House was not prepared to redress. It was not a question of grievances under which they laboured, but one of privileges which they enjoyed. Women, so far from having grievances, enjoyed a large number of privileges which were absolutely denied to what they called the mere male. He would give some of them. A woman, however wealthy, was not bound to contribute to the support of her parents, however necessitous they might be. A man, however poor he might be, was legally responsible for any debts his wife might incur even without his knowledge, but a wife was not responsibile for any debt of her husband's, although she might be a wealthy woman. A married man might be imprisoned for contempt of court if it was proved he had the means of paying either his own or his wife's debts and did not do so, but no such punishment could be inflicted on married women, however wealthy. If a married woman incurred debts she could not be made personally liable by being committed to prison for contempt of court if she failed to pay, nor could any of her property be seized in order to satisfy her creditors if that property had been settled on her in the usual way. She was thus in a unique and privileged position. No similar right was allowed to a married man. A bankruptcy order could be served against a married man, but not against a married woman, however much wealth she might possess, unless she was carrying on a trade separately from her husband. A wife might leave her husband without any risk and he could not compel her to return to him, but if a husband left his wife she could summons him for desertion and obtain an order for his return and her support. The wife might leave her husband, occupy a separate residence, refuse to let him in, and he had no remedy.

She could support herself on his credit and obtain an order for restitution of conjugal rights and maintenance, which order he disobeyed at his peril. If a man's wife slandered another woman and the woman was awarded damages the husband was liable to pay the costs of the trial and the damages while his wife escaped all obligations with impunity. If a man had a wife who spent his wages in drink and to get drink sold his home and deserted him and his children, leaving them without food and shelter, he had no remedy, but he could not leave her without the risk of being punished for desertion; and if a man behaved in such a manner towards his wife she could obtain an order for a judicial separation and an order compelling him to maintain her. He thought the facts which he had given, and which he had taken care to verify by consulting lawyers who were able to give sound judgment on questions of that sort, should be commended to the consideration of the House. He hoped that before this debate ended they should have some proof given to them that men enjoyed an equal number of legal privileges, and that a large proportion of women desire the vote. He did not say a majority of them, but such a proportion as would convince this House and the country that this great constitutional change should be effected. Before the Reform Bill of 1867 the railings of Hyde Park went down. He had played his part upon that occasion, having been one of the six men who organised that great demonstration, and therefore he spoke with knowledge of what took place, and of the multitudes that took part in that peaceful demonstration. If the women only gave this House the same kind of proof that they, "mere males," gave to the country before they succeeded in getting the franchise extended, that would satisfy him; but until they did that and proved to the country and this House that women laboured under the grievances, that they suffered under the hardships which they declared they suffered under, without giving a tittle of proof that they, the mere male brutes as they were described, were unjust to them—until they gave them this proof he for one should decline, not only on this occasion but as long as he had a seat in this House, to give his vote in favour of extending the suffrage to women. He hoped hon. Members would bear this one great fact in mind, that this was a revolution of such a nature and character that had never been passed by any assembly. The inevitable outcome of this Bill must be the complete enfranchisement of women, and then there would be a million more female than male voters in the country. That meant a transference of the sovereign power of governing this Empire and of ruling the world from men to women, and he asked hon. Members before they went into the Lobby to put this question to themselves: Were they prepared to transfer the sovereign power of ruling the British Empire and governing the world from men to women? He for one was not prepared for such a mighty change, and he should go into the Lobby to oppose this Bill.

*MR. BRODIE (Surrey, Reigate) said that those hon. Members who were there to support the Bill were confident of the triumph of the principle which it embodied, that sex should be no barrier to participation in Parliamentary franchise. When they remembered that 400 Members had expressed themselves as favourable to giving the suffrage to women they could hardly doubt the issue of the day's debate in the division lobbies. In fact, in rejecting the Amendment and supporting the Bill the House would only reaffirm an opinion expressed on several occasions. He would have no doubt as to the result if they had only to meet the frank and open opposition of declared opponents, but he was afraid of the action of some of those whom he might call their lukewarm friends. There were, of course, always those people who were generally in favour of a reform until that reform became a question of practical politics. They had such supporters among them in every quarter of the House, and their support was of very little worth. There were also those timid people, not a few, who had been alarmed by the action of a few women—not bad women, but women to whom the denial of what seemed to them an essential and elementary act of justice had driven to the adoption of methods of propaganda which were not new, not always unsuccessful, but which most of them disliked and deplored. He would ask hon. Members to turn their minds away from these women, who after all were few, at all events on the Liberal side, and indeed they had been twitted in this House on that occasion because they were few and it was therefore said that this demand was not a real one. To their timid friends he could only say that they should remember the great body of women of splendid and earnest character who worked for them at the last election, and take their courage in both hands, and it need not be a great deal of courage. They wanted all the help they could possibly get, because they had to meet the strong and powerful arguments which had been put forward in this House and in the country by hon. Members who conscientiously opposed the reform which they advocated. As to the Bill, it embodied a principle, and it was not fair of any hon. Member to say that he did not promise to support a particular Bill. What about the Education or Licensing Bills? He put it to his hon. friends that they could not be so wanting in courage, honour, and generosity as to shrink from sending this Bill to a Committee or better still considering it in Committee of the Whole House. They had all met men who admitted that they could sustain no logical or reasonable argument against this reform, but who yet remained opponents—

> "The reason why I cannot tell,
> I do not like thee, Dr. Fell."

seemed sufficient answer to them to anything that was said. If hon. Members unlocked their inner consciousness—a conscience they all possessed and generally suppressed—did they not recognise a small but penitent whisper which at least led them to doubt whether they had not reared this magnificent structure of argument against this reform, apparently so splendid and powerful, upon no stronger foundation than the prejudice openly confessed by less enlightened members of the community? At that hour he knew it would not be right for him to go through the arguments which, apart from prejudice, were urged against votes for women, moral, physical, and intellectual. He felt that everyone who had known good and hard-working women could not feel that they were in any way incapable of exercising the vote. They were capable of giving a sound judgment, and the assertion that they were not was daily contradicted in the life of every household. But when they came to the best women, were they not capable of greater sacrifices than men? The faults which men found in women were the faults found in an oppressed people—want of frankness, occasional violence—due to the suppression of liberty. Those who had known good women, and they all knew them, must welcome the extension of the radiance and inspiration of the home to the State. It was said that the influence of women would be destroyed by politics, but he did not think they could believe that, as man's influence had not been destroyed, but often increased. As to the physical arguments which were urged, they could be easily swept aside. Women bore a share in every war, and in the suffering which it entailed, and, not the least consideration, they had actually and personally led men to victory. Then they were asked how were they to enforce the law. Laws passed by men and women together would be enforced by men and women together, and the force of laws depended upon their acceptance by the community. They could not enforce the laws of the present or any Parliament if they were not generally accepted by the community. As to the intellectual argument, he might point out that women had competed successfully with men in any sphere open to them and the very exercise of the vote would do for women what it had done for class after class of emancipated men, while most women to-day were more fitted to exercise the vote intelligently than those men—and there were such men—who were swayed by a glass of beer. They were asked where this voting by women would lead them. It did not matter where it would lead them. They should "be just and fear not." They should have no doubt and not be afraid. Women had influence to-day, and let them extend it. They were told that women ought to stop at home and look after their homes, but they could still do so, just as many hon. Members took charge of their businesses, and also attended the House of Commons. He did not, however, wish this House to extend support to this measure merely because it was just, but because it was expedient and desirable. Some people said it would make no difference, nor was it in any way likely to upset society. But it would make a difference greater than any of them could conceive, and that was why they wanted it. When they looked back upon the pages of history and realised how this world of ours groaned and laboured on from year to year and age to age, one civilisation rising and falling after another, and how very badly men who had hitherto had charge of the politics of the world had managed, was it not time they called in the women folk, especially when they considered that the countries and times in which women had most respect and consideration had shown the greatest advancements? Let women find their highest ideal and expression in womanhood and woman's work, but let not that expression be fettered by any sense of inequality; let both men and women share in the selection of their Members, so that through the exercise of the best brains of both sexes, they might bring progress through our country to humanity.

MR. GUEST (Cardiff District) said he did not rise for the purpose of adding any arguments for or against the Bill; the only thing he wished to say was this. He understood that it was proposed to move that this Bill should be committed to a Committee of the whole House. That reduced a vote on the measure before them to a mere expression of pious opinion which might have been done by Resolution. Under those circumstances many Members who were opposed to the Bill would welcome a division, although he did not know whether he could speak for everybody. They therefore did not propose to object to the closure being moved, because they were anxious to take a vote on this subject. They thought the time had come when the public should realise the serious menace which would be the result if women had a vote. For himself he believed that a vote on this occasion might have a very different effect in the country from that which the supporters of the Bill imagined. He was entirely impressed with the fact that it was utterly wrong and indefensible to propose a change of this magnitude in the Bill of a private member, introduced on a Friday afternoon. He believed the country would think so, and that there would be unanimity on this point, that it was a subject of sufficient importance to warrant its being discussed in the country at a general election before any step was taken. [AN HON. MEMBER: Let it settle itself.] Did the hon. Gentleman opposite argue that it was possible for them as men to divest themselves of the responsibility of deciding this question? On what process of reasoning were they to stand aside and let the question settle itself? It was quite unnecessary for hon. Gentlemen opposite to assume that those who were opposed to this Bill were opposed to it on any ground which was ungenerous or illiberal. The debate had shown that whatever their convictions were, and however much they differed, they were honest convictions, and they were actuated by a desire to do what was best for women. He had risen simply to say it was not their intention to oppose the taking of a vote and for his own part the sooner that vote was taken the better.

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) said he did not rise to take part in the general discussion He thought that every argument which had been used for the last twenty years had been advanced that day. Whilst warmly congratulating his hon. friend upon. perhaps, the ablest speech with which a measure of this kind had ever been introduced, he wished to express, not as an opponent, but as a supporter of the Bill, his deep regret that the promoters had thought fit to propose the reference of this measure to a Committee of the Whole House. The subject had been the subject of discussion in the House for many years past. It had received the sanction on more than one occasion of large majorities of the House of Commons, and he protested against the resolve to send the Bill to a Committee of the Whole House, because it would mean relegating the question to another year. The Member for Plymouth, in his most capable speech against the Bill, had abandoned what had hitherto been the chief ground of attack—namely, the intellectual incapacity of women. Further, he had almost, if not entirely, abandoned the question of physical disability, and the only argument which he had advanced against the measure was, that, in the first place, there was an indifference on the part of women, and, in the second place, that this was a measure which should be brought in not by a private Member but by a responsible Government. He thought he was correct in stating that that represented the sum total of the opposition. Under those circumstances, why on earth should the promoters of the Bill deliberately choose to reduce the matter to the position of an academic question, and by resolving to refer the Bill to a Committee of the Whole House relegate it for an absolute certainty to another year of Parliamentary life? The Bill did not create a new franchise; it only said that women should enjoy the same franchise as men. He protested against the decision to refer the Bill to a Committee of the Whole House instead of sending it to a Grand Committee, and he hoped that even now the promoters of the Bill would consider his suggestion.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs), who spoke amid cries of "Divide divide," said he differed from the view which had just been expressed by the hon. M mber for Cardiff, and upon this subject his sentence was for open war. He thought it was their duty to oppose this measure going to a division, and also to oppose it if a division were taken. The hon. Member for Blackburn had said that there was a strong feeling in the country in favour of this Bill, but the only proof he put forward turned out to be that this was a subject in which he himself was interested, and therefore, it must be a subject in which the country was interested. He said—

> "Female suffrage and Socialism are my subjects, and they are the subjects the country has most at heart."

That was a complaint from which other hon. Members suffered besides the hon. Member for Blackburn. He took the liberty to say that the opinion of an individual member on this question was worth as much or as little as that of another, and his experience of the women he had come in contact with as to the principle of this measure was in a contrary direction to that which had been expressed by its supporters. Last year he had the honour to speak upon this measure for a minute or two, and since then, although the seven vials of wrath had been emptied upon his devoted head by the London suffragettes, from his own constituency only one lady had raised any objection to his action. It was true she was a very capable lady, and one whose co-operation and support he highly valued. This measure had been drafted with adult suffrage in full view. The hon. Member for Loughborough had said it would be disastrous to the Liberals to pass this measure, but he believed that it would be only less disastrous to the Conservative Party, and until it was brought forward by the Government as the pro nounced opinion of the country, the House was not in a position to deal with it. This Bill contained within it the germ of a great revolution, and it should not be rushed through the House in this way. It ought only to be brought forward by the Government of the day after the country had pronounced in favour of it at a general election, and not upon the Motion of a private Member who happened to win the ballot, so that the matter came up as the mere accident of an accident. What was most amazing in regard to this question was that the House did not seem to take it altogether seriously. In his opinion no more serious matter could be brought before the House, and although the question lent itself to humorous treatment that was a mere incident in the case. Every hon. Member who had spoken had done so under a deep sense of responsibility, and he hoped that he would not be considered an exception. He would not take up any time witd details. There was absolutely no grounh for refusing the franchise to women except the hard and fast line of sex. They were as brave, intellegent, well-conducted, and ambitious as men. Finland had been quoted as an example for this country to follow. It was a very nice little country, and there was very good fishing there; but why should we go there for a precedent? Simply because a system was found there which gave colour to this claim, but he knew Finland, and the women there did as their husbands told them to do. Why, too, should we go to our Colonies for an example? Had any parents outside a lunatic asylum ever gone to their children for an example of government?

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: You were very glad to go to them when there was a war on.

*MR. REES said the hon. Member was not entitled to question him without putting his questions on the paper. [Cries of "Divide, divide."] If women became qualified to sit in Parliament they would be qualified for such posts as Viceroy of India or Commander-in-Chief. The House could imagine a bearded Mahomedan in that case saying, "God is great, and the English are madder now than ever. The Secretary for War, indeed, had positively announced lately that he had appointed, approved, or countenanced a lady recruiter; but pretty women had been recruiters for the Army ever since the brave deserved the fair. Logic had been invoked to support this Bill. No doubt woman was a good thing, and suffrage was a good thing, but it did not follow that woman suffrage was a good thing. In the same way a petticoat was a good thing and government was, or should be, a good thing, but it did not follow that petticoat government was a good thing. Not one hon. Member would get up and say it was a good thing, in his own case and in his own home, and how in that case could it be good for the aggregate of homes which made the nation? He would like a reply to that from one of the subsequent speakers who might follow him in the debate. An endeavour had been made to make use of the authority of Scripture to favour the case. The hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland began to quote St. Paul, but stopped because, he supposed, he had forgotten the quotation. He happened to remember it. "Neither was man created for woman, but woman for man." He put that forward as a conclusive answer against Scripture giving any support to this claim. If Scripture was to be invoked, other passages might be found of an entirely opposite description. One passage was: "Jerusalem is ruined and Judah is fallen. As for my people, children are their oppressors and women rule over them." What kind of women were these? The prophet said, "Because the daughters of Sion are haughty and walk with out-stretched necks, therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Sion, and in that day the Lord will take away from them"—What? "The bravery of their tinkling ornaments, the chains, earrings and bracelets, the mufflers, bonnets, and changeable suits of apparel, the smaller wimple, and the crisping pins, the hoods, veils, and fine linen." He did not infer from this that the prophet placed the women, who ruled over the men, in the front rank of their sex. [Cries of "Divide."]

Lord R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.) rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put"; but Mr. SPEAKER withheld his assent, and declined then to put that Question.

MR. REES, continuing, said this Bill was simply put forward with adult suffrage in view, in which case, since women were in a standing majority in Great Britain it was impossible to disguise the fact that the men of the country would come under the government of women.

Mr. STANGER rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put and agreed to.

Question put accordingly, "That the word "now" stand part of the Question.

The House divided:—Ayes, 271; Noes, 92. (Division List, No. 28.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden Percy
Ambrose, Robert
Armitage, R.
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury,E.
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Beale, W. P.
Beaumont, Hon. Hubert
Bell, Richard
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D
Bethell,Sir J.H.(Essex,R'mf'rd

Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Bottomley, Horatio
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Branch, James
Brodie, H. C.
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Bull, Sir William James
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt.Hn.Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett,C H(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig,Captain James(Down,E.)
Cross, Alexander
Curran, Peter Francis
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Devlin, Joseph
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dickinson, W.H. (StPancras,N.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Duncan,Robert (Lanark,Govan
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Fenwick, Charles
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn Herbert John
Glen-Coats,Sir T.(Renfrew, W.)
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Grant, Corrie
Grayson, Albert Victor
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gretton, John
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis J.

Gulland, John W.
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey,W.E.(Derbyshire,N.E.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hayden, John Patrick
Heaton, John Henniker
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen, W.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holden, E. Hopkinson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Emslie John
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy, H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones,Sir D.Brynmor(Swansea)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kettle, Thomas Michael
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Lea,Hugh Cecil (St.Pancras,E.)
Lee,Arthur H.(Hants,Fareham
Leese,Sir JosephF.(Accrington
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J.M.(Falkirk B'ghs)
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal,E.)
M'Arthur Charles
M'Cullum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kean, John
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Marnham, F. J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Middlebrook, William
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. G.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John

Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,Charles N.(Donc'st'r
Nield, Herbert
Norman, Sir Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien,Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Grady, J.
O'Malley, William
Parker, James (Halifax
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pearson,W.H.M. (Suffolk,Eye)
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Radford, G. H.
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, William (Clare)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Richards, T.F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles N. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson,Sir G.Scott(Bradf'd)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Schwann Sir C.E.(Manchester)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheffield,Sir BerkeleyGeorgeD.
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smith,Abel H.(Hertford, East)
Snowden, P.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanley, Albert (Staffs, N.W.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Sutherland, J. E.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E
Thomas,David Alfred(Merthyr
Thompson,J.W.H (Somerset,E
Thomson, W.Mitchell-(Lanark)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips

Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph
Ward, W.Dudley(Southampt'n
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason,Rt.Hn.E (Clackmannan
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, Hon. G. G. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Stanger and Mr. Acland.

NOES.

Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C. R.
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith,Rt.Hn.Herbert Henry
Balcarres, Lord
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Baring,Capt.Hn.G (Winchester
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beauchamp, E.
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Bertram, Julius
Boyle, Sir Edward
BrunnerJ.F.L.(Lancs., Leigh)
Brunner,Rt.Hn.Sir J.T.(Chesh.
Bryce, J. Annan
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Burke, E. Haviland-
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Cavendish,Rt.Hn. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Chance, Frederick William
Cleland, J. W.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Craig,Charles Curtis (Antrim,S.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Craik, Sir Henry
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Cullinan, J.
Dalmeny, Lord
Davies,David (MontgomeryCo.
Dewar, Sir J. A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Donelan, Captain A.
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Essex, R. W.
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Fuller, John Michael F.
Gardner, Ernest
Gurdon,RtHn.Sir W.Brampton
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert,Col.Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hills, J. W.
Hogan, Michael
Hunt, Rowland
Hyde, Clarendon
Kennaway,Rt.Hon.SirJohn H.
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hn. Col. W.
King,Sir Henry Seymour (Hull)
Lamb, Ernest H (Rochester)
Lehmann, R. C.
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lockwood, Rt.Hn.Lt.-Col.A.R.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyell, Charles Henry
MacVeagh,Jeremiah (Down, S.
M'Killop, W.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Massie, J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morpeth, Viscount
Murphy, N. J. (Kilkenny, S.)
Nugent, Sir Walter Richard
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
O'Shaughnessy, P J.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Reddy, M.
Rees, J. D.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Tennant,Sir Edward (Salisbury
Valentia, Viscount
Walker,Col. W.H.(Lancashire)
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid.
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Whitbread Howard
Whitehead, Rowland
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Cathcart Wason and Mr. Guest.

Main Question put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Bill committed to a Committee of the Whole House for Monday next.—(*Mr. Stanger.*)

STANDING COMMITTEES (CHAIRMEN'S PANEL).

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY reported from the Chairmen's Panel; That they had appointed Mr. Stuart-Wortley to act as Chairman of Standing Committee A; and Mr. Eugene Wason to act as Chairman of the Standing Committee on Scottish Bills.

Mr. STUART-WORTLEY further reported from the Chairman's Panel; That they had agreed to the following Resolution, That any Member of the Chairman's Panel be and he is hereby empowered to ask any other Member of the Chairman's Panel to take his place in case of necessity.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at thirteen minutes after five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 2nd March, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificates from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have been complied with:—Metropolitan Electric Tramways [H.L.]; Interoceanic Railway of Mexico [H.L.]; London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies [H.L.]; North British and Mercantile Insurance Company [H.L.].

Also the Certificates that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bills have not been complied with:—Camborne Water; Margate Corporation—(Petition for additional Provision).

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Rochester Bridge Bill [H.L.].—Report from His Majesty s Attorney-General received, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Swansea Valley Gas Bill [H.L.]; Llanelly Gas Bill [H.L.]; Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.]; Rhymney Railway Bill [H.L.]; Taff Vale Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [H.L.]; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; Thames River Steamboat Service Act, 1904 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Earl of Eldon be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Cranbrook; read, and agreed to.

Audenshaw and Saddleworth Urban District Councils Bill [H.L.]; Briton Ferry Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Pontypridd Water Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection. That the following Lords be proposed to the House to form the Select Committee for the consideration of the said Bills, viz.:—

E. Fitzwilliam,
L. Clinton (chairman),
L. Dormer,
L. Saltoun,
L. Ritchie of Dundee;

agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly. The Committee to meet on Tuesday, 10th March, at Eleven o'clock; and all petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bills to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bills.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC

COLONIES: MISCELLANEOUS.

No. 49. East Africa Protectorate (Annual Report of the Veterinary Department, 1906–1907).

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Report of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education upon the question of devolution in county areas.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3961. Switzerland.

QUEEN ANNE'S BOUNTY.

Annual Report and accounts of the governors, for the year ended 31st December, 1907.

IRELAND (COUNTY GALWAY, EAST RIDING).

Report of the County Inspector, Royal Irish Constabulary, Galway, East Riding, as to the state of the Riding in the month of October, 1907.

LICENSING STATISTICS, 1907.

Statistics as to the operation and administration of the laws relating to the sale of intoxicating liquor, for the year 1907.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

ARMY (MILITARY SAVINGS BANKS).

Statement of the amount due by the public to depositors on 31st March, 1906, and of the receipts, interest, and disbursements during the year ended 31st March, 1907, etc.

BANKRUPTCY (IRELAND).

Returns of the official assignees of the King's Bench Division "in Bankruptcy" in Ireland, and of the local courts Belfast and Cork, for the year 1907.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SIR JOHN SOANE'S MUSEUM.

Statement of the funds, 5th January, 1908; Delivered (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE ZAKKA KHEL EXPEDITION.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: My Lords, I should like to ask the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council whether he has anything to communicate to your Lordships from Sir James Willcocks with regard to the expedition recently undertaken against the Zakka Khel.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): My Lords, the Secretary of State received yesterday a telegram from Sir James Willcocks, in which he says—

"Jirga of all Afridis, including Zakka Khel spent night discussing details of settlement. I received them this afternoon, and they laid before me the following petition:—'We, maliks and elders of the whole Afridi tribe in jirga assembled, humbly represent to the British Government that being anxious to end quarrel between Zakka Khel Afridis and British Government, which has been caused by misconduct of former, we have agreed and do promise that we Afridis will hold ourselves responsible jointly and severally for the future good behaviour of every section of the Zakka Khel tribe. Also, we promise that when we are called upon we will assist each other in punishing these bad characters, and British Government may punish us by fine, by exclusion from British territory, or in any other way for the misdeeds of Zakka Khel sections, for whom we stand security. As regards the past, we beg that British Government in its strength will take into consideration losses suffered by Zakka Khel by exclusion from British territory and by war, and will not complete ruin of tribe for sins of badly behaved minority. As regards actual thieves who have been leaders of raids in British territory, we beg that we, with assistance of Zakka Khel elders, may undertake their punishment, wherever they may be, and we will punish them, to the satisfaction of British Government, in earnest for which we here deposit fifty-three rifles, which are worth, according to prices current in our country, more than Rs. 20,000, as security. And these rifles will only be returned to us when political agent, Khyber, is satisfied that thieves have been sufficiently punished. And we Zakka Khel agree to this petition, and promise to assist Afridi jirga in every way. Further, we hope for the mercy and favour of British Government.'"

Sir James Willcocks adds—

"I cannot speak too highly of the ability and tact displayed by Colonel Roos Keppel (the agent in the Khyber Pass) in effecting this settlement. All the troops will leave Bazar Valley to-morrow."

PERSIAN RAILWAYS.

LORD CURZON OF KEDLESTON: My Lords, with the permission of the House I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question which has been on the Paper for a week, and which I postponed at the request of the noble Lord. It is, whether the autograph promise of the Shah of Persia given to His Majesty's Government in March, 1889, and repeated on several occasions at a later date, that Great Britain should have priority in the construction of any southern railway to Teheran, that if concessions for railways were given to others in the north, a similar concession should be granted to an English company in the south, and that no southern railway concession in Persia should be granted to any foreign company without consultation with His Majesty's Government, which promise was referred to by Lord Cranborne in the House of Commons on 18th February, 1903, and by the Marquess of Lansdowne in the House of Lords on 5th May, 1903, is still regarded by His Majesty's Government as operative, or whether it has been abrogated or modified by the Anglo-Russian Convention of 31st August, 1907.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord FITZMAURICE): My Lords, His Majesty's Government certainly intend, in the event of railway construction in the north of Persia, to demand the fulfilment of the pledge given by Nasir-ed-Din Shah on 16th September, 1888, and recognised as binding by Mousaffir-ed-Din Shah in 1900. The Anglo-Russian Agreement would clearly prevent His Majesty's Government from constructing a railway line as far as Teheran, but the pledge given by the Shah in 1888, would justify His Majesty's Government in claiming to be allowed to construct a line in Southern Persia, should they desire to do so, in the event of the Russian Government obtaining a concession to construct one in the north. The Russian Government have undertaken by the Agreement not to oppose concessions supported by His Majesty's Government in the British sphere, nor without previous discussion with His Majesty's Government in the neutral zone either. There is, however, no prospect of railway construction in Persia so long as the Russo-Persian Railway Convention is in force.

THE TERRITORIAL ARMY.

*THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH rose to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War a series of Questions in connection with the Territorial Force. The noble Earl said: My Lords, perhaps I ought in the first place to offer some explanation as to the somewhat unusual form my Question takes. The fact is, that, wide as is the latitude given in your Lordships' House in the asking of Questions, I have had the misfortune on more than one occasion to exceed that limit, and I have laid myself open to the charge of putting the Minister who had to reply in some difficulty in consequence. I have endeavoured, therefore, by framing these Questions in this particular way, to avoid that danger on this occasion.

My first Question is, as to the position of a commanding officer of a disbanded unit. The other day, in replying to Lord Ampthill, the noble Earl told us what would be the position of other officers of these units. If not provided for in other arms they were to be placed on a supernumerary list, and no recruiting is to take place until the officers and men so placed are absorbed. I wish to ask—Will the name of the commanding officer of a disbanded unit be placed on a supernumerary list, and, if so, will he have first claim on the command of any battalion in the county that becomes vacant?

My second interrogation deals with the question of co-optation. In the county which I represent we are in rather a difficult position. There is great difficulty in finding room for members on the civilian side. We have very full representation of the present military units, but there will be considerable difficulty when the new units are formed in making way for the representatives of those units. I should like to have it made perfectly clear whether the County Associations will be entitled, under certain circumstances, to co-opt members as military representatives. For instance, we have at the present time one military representative member whose term of command has expired. Under the rules he will retire. We have also the colonel of the disbanded unit. He will also retire. They are both qualified, and there would be no difficulty in reappointing them, if necessary, as military representative members. The scheme itself talks of military members, not military representative members, to be appointed by the Army Council. As the point is a very important one, I would ask whether there would be any objection to giving the County Associations power where the circumstances demanded it, to co-opt members as military representatives.

I have received a letter from Lord Heneage, who is suffering from bronchitis and unable to be in his place, asking me to put several Questions on his behalf. I quite understand that, having had no notice of some of these Questions, the noble Earl will not be ready with an immediate reply. Lord Heneage first raises the point as to the financial memorandum recently issued. I would impress on the noble Earl the importance of having these matters, which are essential to our success, fully considered before the scheme is made final. Personally, though I am not a financial expert, I have a vague idea that the amount proposed will not be half enough, and I trust that pressure will be put on the Chancellor of the Exchequer in order to induce him to extend the financial limit. The other night the Secretary of State for War stated that it is the first step that costs. That is absolutely true. Here are we, the County Associations, doing what is usually known as the goose step; but if you are going to tie our feet, we shall never be able to step out at the necessary regulation pace. What I would especially emphasise is that our difficulty will be in the start. By and bye, when the Territorial Force is a going concern, we may be able to effect savings which are impossible in the first instance.

Then Lord Heneage refers to the attestation form, against which his Association requested him to send a strong protest. The Association expressed the opinion that it should be immediately withdrawn, and that a revised form should be issued without delay for recruiting purposes. Personally I have not seen the attestation form, and therefore cannot express an opinion; but there is, I think, one point which we would all be ready to admit—namely, that men should not be induced to serve without knowing fully what the conditions of service are. Next, Lord Heneage protests against the calling in of the clothing for valuation purposes. He says—

> "The officers were unanimous that if the clothing were called in it would not be taken out again, and there would be more resignations. Business men all agree that it is unnecessary, as the valuation could be done quite as easily from the books."

The next point Lord Heneage urges is the desirability, when present companies are linked to a reduced number of units, that the sergeant-instructors should remain with half companies. That raises the whole question of recruiting, and it would help us very much if we knew exactly our position in that matter. While we admit that the Regular Army must come first, the question of recruiting these units will be a matter of serious difficulty, as the sergeant-instructors will be serving two masters who will be pulling in opposite directions. I should like the noble Earl to take into consideration the question of recruiting for the Territorial Army and what assistance will be given. The next point is as to guns, and Lord Heneage urges the importance of supplying the new guns for field artillery without further delay. I have already written to the War Office to ascertain the position in which we stand at this moment. The other day, in the House of Commons, Mr. Haldane intimated that there would be required to arm the Territorial Force 536 converted 15-pounder guns, and that about 150—roughly, a third—would be ready by the end of last month. We in Staffordshire have to raise six batteries of twenty-four guns, and we made application for eight to be issued at once. I wish to impress on the noble Earl opposite how important it is, both as regards training and recruiting, that these guns should be sent round as quickly as possible.

The Earl of Dartmouth.

To return to my own Questions, I wish to ask—(3) What is the exact meaning of the intimation given that should the quota of units allotted to a county not be raised, the salary of the secretary is liable to be reconsidered? (4) In view of the desire expressed by the Minister for War that a free hand should be given to County Associations, what are to be the relations between County Associations and the War Office? The noble Earl the Under-Secretary stated on a former occasion that the Army Council desired to give the Association as free a hand as possible. These were his words—

> "The Army Council, in their desire to give the Territorial Force as free a hand as possible, have decentralised its administration as far as is compatible with military efficiency."

That is the desire of the noble Earl, and, as we know, of the Secretary of State for War; but that is not the spirit in which our representations have been met by the War Office. My County Association received an instruction that at our first meeting we should appoint a secretary. The appointment was to be subject to one condition only—the approval of the Army Council. On 16th January I notified the War Office that a certain gentleman had been appointed, and stated the salary we proposed to give him. I may say that I had been informed by the War Office beforehand that the salary I then offered—£230—would be approved by them, or was considered an appropriate salary to offer. It took the War Office more than a fortnight to acknowledge receipt of that letter, and more than a month to complete the appointment. I was told that the reason was that it went through so many hands. Why should it go through all these hands? These are only two parties concerned—the County Association on the one hand, and the Army Council on the other.

Mr. Haldane informed us the other day that he was surprised that there should be any interference on the question of the salary to the secretary, and added that all the War Office wished to do was to advise County Associations not to give too big a salary for fear they might be hampered in the many expenses they would have to meet. But what happened? I received an answer stating that it was considered, having regard to the number of troops to be maintained by the county, that not more than £200 should be given, and that the secretary, moreover, should be informed that in the event of the number of the territorial units raised by the county falling lower than in the draft scheme, the amendment of the salary might be subject to reconsideration. I have since received a telegram, however, stating that the War Office approve of the salary of £230 for Captain Wheeler. I would point out that the secretary in my county has to help to raise 7,300 men, and a salary of £200, considered sufficient by the War Office represents a payment of about 6½d. a man, or less than the amount given to a recruiting officer. It is also to be remembered that, in addition to the heavy duties of raising and equipping these men, there is the enormous difficulty of locating the new units. This cannot be done without very careful consideration and organisation, and I think it is obvious that the secretary's work is sufficiently difficult to carry a higher salary than £200. I was present at the conference at which the Secretary of State reeled out the qualifications of the suggested secretary, and as we listened to the right hon. Gentleman we could almost imagine the wings of the angel sprouting under the well-worn tunic of the secretary, and we felt that at any rate the services of such a man would require to be well-paid. But we now find that the War Office have dozens of these heaven-born geniuses, who, I suppose, fulfil the necessary qualifications, ready to undertake the duties at £150 a year or less. At another conference we were told that the County Associations were liable to take too parochial a view of the secretaries; that we were not to look upon them as glorified quartermaster-sergeants but to take a wider view. I think the only thing parochial about the position of the secretary is the salary we give and if we are to take a wider view of the secretary we ought to take a wider view of the salary we offer. The difficulty in locating the units is great. In my own county—Staffordshire—we have to place the various units, many of them consisting of arms hitherto unknown to us, in forty-four or forty-five different localities. The Army Council can tell us we have to raise so many troops, but we cannot go down to the districts and say to one: "You must raise the transport"; and to another: "You must raise a half company of engineers." We have to endeavour to induce them to do what we ask.

Lord Lucas the other night, in an excellent paper—and here I should like to say how thoroughly we appreciate the way in which Lord Lucas has endeavoured to help us in the difficulties that have arisen—said there were three ways in which we might induce men to come forward. One was to cajole, another to persuade, and a third to approach. I did not myself like the word "cajole," and, on looking it up in Webster's dictionary, I find that to cajole is to "chatter like a bird in a cage," and to "deceive with flattery of fair words." I venture to think that if we are to cajole by deceiving with flattery of fair words we shall not get a very reliable body of men. I have pointed out the difficulty there is in obtaining answers to letters sent to the War Office. On the other side it is very different, for we are asked to say, by telegram, what is to be the location of these units. This must be a matter of time. We cannot do it without very careful consideration and a good deal of organisation and reorganisation. I would urge upon those who are responsible not to make the scheme absolutely fixed and final. We are doing the best we can, but do not let the i's be dotted and the t's crossed so that we shall be fixed down to a particular scheme. What we require in all these matters is elasticity. We cannot put the new Territorial Force on to a bed of Procrustes for its limbs to be lopped or stretched in a moment. It must be a matter of time, and considerable time.

These are all the Questions I propose to ask to-day. I have a great many more, but will postpone them. I wish it to be understood that I do not raise the question in any carping spirit. We have taken it up heart and soul, and are doing our best to carry it through. I am in entire agreement with making the county the proper unit. I am also pleased with the position which is given to the lord-lieutenant. There is a smack of feudalism about it which to the old Tory is not without attraction. The spirit in which the scheme has been taken up by the County Associations is remarkable, and its success or failure will depend very much on what they are able to do. The success or failure of the scheme is now in the balance, and the War Office would be well advised to give us a free hand, and let us take the public into our confidence. What everyone is clamouring to know are the details of the scheme and the duties the Territorial Force will be called upon to undertake. We have an Advisory Council at the head, which we are glad to see so long as it is not merely to be one more port of call for the communications we send to the War Office. We have as our representative at the War Office Lieutenant-General Mackinnon, who will keep us straight in regard to military discipline; and behind there are the County Associations. What I say is, trust the Associations and they will do their best to pull you through. I beg to ask the Questions of which I have given the noble Earl private notice.

THE MARQUESS OF WINCHESTER: As the First Lord of the Admiralty is sitting next to him, I would ask the noble Earl the Under-Secretary if he would confer with the First Lord and give an Answer to the Question which I addressed to the War Office at the end of January—namely, whether the employees in His Majesty's dockyards will be permitted to join the Territorial Force. This Question has been put to me by one of the commanding officers in my county, and as I addressed it to the War Office and received a reply that the Admiralty and the War Office would confer on the subject, I trust the noble Lord will excuse me for intervening now and asking whether a decision has been come to on the point.

The Earl of Dartmouth.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord TWEEDMOUTH): A certain number of dockyard men—the exact proportion has not yet been settled—will be allowed to join the Territorial Force, and we are in consultation with the War Office on the subject. The noble Marquess will quite realise that it is necessary to have the dockyard men in the dockyards in times of emergency, and, therefore, a great number of them cannot be allowed to join.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of PORTSMOUTH): My Lords, I am indebted to the noble Earl for his courtesy in giving me private notice of four specific Questions, and I propose to answer them in their order. It was, however, difficult for me to follow, from the noble Earl's speech, what the precise Questions were which Lord Heneage wished to have addressed to the War Office; and as I am anxious to give your Lordships and the public full and accurate information on the points raised, perhaps the noble Earl will enable me to do so by communicating the Questions to me privately or putting them down on the Notice Paper.

*THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH: I intended to make it clear that Lord Heneage's letter had only just reached me, and that I had had no time to give notice to the noble Earl. I will furnish him with the Questions, so that he may have an opportunity of fully answering them.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: The first Question put to me by the noble Earl was—What is the position of a commanding officer of a disbanded unit? Will his name be placed on a supernumerary list, and, if so, will he have first claim on the command of any battalion in the county that becomes vacant? My answer to that Question is that all officers, including commanding officers of disbanded units, can, if they so wish, be placed on a supernumerary list for other units in the county. Should a commanding officer decide to have his name placed on the supernumerary list his name will be kept on it until the end of his appointment unless he wishes to withdraw earlier. Should a vacancy occur in the command of a unit whilst he is on its supernumerary list the appointment of a commanding officer would depend on the recommendation of the military authorities, and he may be appointed to the command should they consider him the most fitting officer for the post. The appointment will be made not necessarily according to seniority, but the respective merits of officers who are eligible for the command of the unit will be given careful consideration before any appointment is made.

*THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH: Do I understand from that that no special favour will be shown to a commanding officer of a disbanded unit, but that he will have to take his chance with the rest?

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: That is so. The second Question put to me by the noble Earl was—Will power be given to County Associations, under certain conditions, to co-opt members as military representatives? I should like to remind my noble friend that military members cannot be appointed by co-option of the Association. The Act lays down that they shall be appointed by the Army Council, and the policy of the Army Council in this respect has been to ask general officers commanding-in-chief to supply the names of those officers who should be appointed as military members of their County Associations, and then to obtain the concurrence of the Association. When vacancies occur among military members the same method is adopted for filling them up, though I may again add that the wishes of County Associations will, wherever possible, be consulted before the appointment is made. When the officer commanding a unit retires on the completion of his term of command, he need not necessarily cease to be a military member of the Association, so long as he is considered to be still representative of the Territorial Forces within the county area. In a great many cases it will probably be found that the officer who succeeds him in command of the unit is already a member of the Association; should this not be the case it will be a matter for arrangement between the Association and the general officer commanding-in-chief as to whether or not the retiring commanding officer should give up his place on the Association to the new commanding officer. The retiring commanding officer, if there is a vacancy, can, of course, be co-opted as an ordinary member.

*THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH: There is no room for him.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: The noble Earl's next Question was—What is the exact meaning of the intimation given that should the quota of units allotted to a county not be raised, the salary of the secretary is liable to be reconsidered? The total amount of the administrative grant, out of which provision for the secretary's salary is to be made, depends upon the number of efficient units raised by the county. If, therefore, the required number of units are from any cause not raised, the total administrative grant is correspondingly less. The secretary's salary coming, as it does, out of the administrative grant, may be similarly affected. I should like to add that if the Associations have money to spare from other sources, it would be open to them to increase the emoluments of their secretary.

*THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH: I am sorry to interrupt the noble Earl again, but this is a very important point. When I received the letter from the War Office, I replied stating that Captain Wheeler had been offered, and had accepted, a fixed salary of £230 a year. He is compelled to retire from the Army and we offered him this fixed salary. My Association could not agree to any proposal to reduce that amount in the event of the number of efficient units raised not coming up to the quota.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: The noble Earl has instanced the particular case of Captain Wheeler, but I was dealing with the general question. In the case to which the noble Earl referred, the salary has, I understand, been fixed and agreed to. Next the noble Earl asked: In view of the desire expressed by the Minister for War, that a free hand should be given to County Associations, what are to be the relations between County Associations and the War Office? As I have said before, the Army Council is strongly of opinion that the Associations should be given as free a hand as possible in the management of their own affairs. We feel that the Associations are thoroughly competent to manage them, and are convinced that they will do so to the best of their abilities. Subject only to the general supervision which the War Office is bound to exercise over the manner in which grants are expended by the Association, the War Office wish to interfere as little as possible, and even the method of financial control which has been outlined in the financial Memorandum in the hands of the Associations has been framed so as to suit the convenience of Associations as much as possible.

Then, in a subsequent letter to me, the noble Earl says that the Secretary of State for War had stated that of the 536 converted 15-pounders required to arm the Field Artillery of the Territorial Force, 150 would be ready at the end of February. My noble friend asks whether I can now indicate when these guns will be distributed and where they will be placed. My noble friend seems to be under some misapprehension on this point. If he is referring to an Answer given in another place by my right hon. friend on 3rd February, no definite date was given by him on that occasion. My right hon. friend then stated that of the 536 guns required the first batch of 150 was undergoing conversion, and that some of these would be ready for issue immediately. I may add that we expect to have fifty completed by the end of this month; six are now ready for issue, and distribution will be begun immediately, one being issued to each brigade for instructional purposes in the first place. It is, of course, difficult for me to say anything as regards the method of distribution, but I presume that will largely depend upon the rapidity with which Garrison Artillery are converted into Field Artillery in certain counties, and that those counties which are able to do this quickest will receive the most attention in this matter.

Earl FORTESCUE: Can the noble Earl tell the House how much longer it is likely to be before more than fifty guns will be issued?

The Earl of PORTSMOUTH: It is difficult to give the exact date, but I think before the end of the year.

The Duke of RICHMOND and GORDON: If these guns are not all to be available for use before the end of the year, I should like to ask the noble Earl how the new Field Artillery are to be instructed in the use of guns they will not have?

The Earl of PORTSMOUTH: A certain number of guns, though, perhaps, not the whole, will be completed before then. We shall certainly have a sufficient number to carry on instruction.

The Duke of RICHMOND and GORDON: I am sorry to press my noble friend, but cannot he be more definite? All that he has said is that some guns will be available for use for instruction. This new force comes into existence on the last day of this month, and I would like to ask what steps the County Associations can be expected to take to bring their Field Artillery units into any sort of condition of efficiency if they have no guns with which to instruct them?

The Earl of PORTSMOUTH: In reply to that further appeal, I can only say that if the noble Duke will put a Question down, I will, in the meantime, look into the matter with the authorities specially concerned with this particular department, and see whether anything can be done to expedite the delivery of guns. I do not like giving any pledges, which may not be fulfilled, as to time.

Viscount MIDLETON: Will the noble Earl undertake that until the guns are issued and the new Territorial Artillery pronounced efficient, recruiting of the Regular Artillery will go on as last year?

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I am afraid I cannot answer that Question.

TERRITORIAL ARMY—SPECIAL CHURCH PARADE.

LORD NEWTON rose to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War if he could state the nature of the replies which had been returned by the lords-lieutenant to the suggestion of the War Office that a special church parade should be held on Sunday, 5th April, for the purpose of invoking a blessing upon the Territorial Force. The noble Lord said: My Lords, although I personally have the most profound distrust of the present Secretary of State for War, and have, indeed, far less confidence in him than in any Member of His Majesty's Administration, I have always experienced a feeling of reluctant admiration for the way in which he has succeeded in making a large portion of his countrymen believe that he is effecting a vast military revolution, whereas any calm and impartial person like myself, who considers the subject, must realise that all he has done is to form the Yeomanry and Volunteers into brigades and divisions and change their name into that of the Territorial Force.

But this by no means exhausts the ingenuity of the right hon. Gentleman, because, by reason of continually advertising and dilating upon the surpassing excellence of that Territorial Force, and by continually talking about reservoirs. a nation in arms, and all the rest of it, he has managed to effect most serious and dangerous reductions in the Regular Army, and has almost succeeded in escaping observation in doing so, except on the part of my noble friend Lord Midleton and of his successor at the War Office. But, perhaps, the greatest achievement of all—it is an unsurpassable feat in its way—is that, having got his Act passed, he has actually managed to throw the burden of administering it on to his political opponents. I have often expressed the opinion that there is not much to choose between various Secretaries of State for War; but on this occasion I feel bound to make somewhat of an exception, because I am quite convinced that neither Lord Midleton nor Mr. Arnold-Forster would have succeeded in inducing their political opponents to undertake the work they proposed.

That reminds me, by the way, that the Liberal Party has completely dissociated itself from this great work. The Liberal Party ostentatiously declined to have anything to do with it, and the only really effective part which that Party has taken in promoting this vast military revolution was to operate the closure whenever an opportunity occurred in another place. Not content with having secured, or at all events, nominally secured, the support of almost everybody in this country, from the highest in the land downwards, the right hon. Gentleman is now occupied in an attempt to obtain celestial support as well. I have in my hand an Army Order which lately came under my observation——

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: It is not an Army Order.

LORD NEWTON: In which the President and members of the various County Associations and the officers and men of the Territorial Force are invited to attend a special church parade; and in some cases, I believe, they have actually been directed to attend. The object of this church parade is three-fold. In the first place, it is to be held with the object of expressing gratitude for the past services of the Yeomanry and of the Volunteers; its second object is to invoke a blessing upon the new Territorial Force; its third object is to offer prayers for peace. Well, my Lords, with the last of these objects I heartily associate myself. Peace is a most desirable thing at any time, but it is obviously much more desirable at a time when the Secretary of State for War has seriously decreased the fighting efficiency of the country. I have no particular fault to find with the proposal that the Volunteers and the Yeomanry should be thanked for their past services. The only suggestion I have to make is that there appears to be a somewhat remarkable omission. I observe no mention of the Militia with regard to this expression of thanks, and I commend this as an additional grievance to my noble friend behind me, the Duke of Bedford. But possibly this was an intended omission, to penalise my noble friend for the recalcitrant action he adopted with regard to the proposal in reference to the Militia.

I admit there is something to be said in favour of rendering thanks for past services; but when it comes to asking a blessing upon a Force which has hardly come into existence, and which is really the result of an extremely contentious Act, only passed through Parliament by closure and means of that kind, it is a somewhat dubious proposal. Providence, we have been assured, is on the side of the big battalions. Well, whatever the Territorial Force may be, it certainly will not be big. Last session I endeavoured, without any success, to extract from my noble friend opposite—in whom, by the way, I feel much more confidence than in his chief—a statement as to the ultimate strength of this Force, and I remember complaining, not altogether without reason, that my noble friend could not tell me within half a million what the size of that Force would be. But now, having made further investigations, I have discovered what is to be the total number of this Force. I believe the exact figure aimed at is 315,000. There are something like 44,500,000 inhabitants in these islands, and of them 315,000 are to form the Territorial Force, or, in other words, the nation in arms. If you divide 44,500,000 by 315,000, the nation in arms amounts to between one-one hundred and forty-first or one-one hundred and forty-second part of the entire population of these islands.

There is another objection which occurs to me. On this occasion the Secretary of State for War appears to be taking a somewhat mean advantage of his colleagues. This is the first occasion in our history, so far as I know, on which a Minister has taken upon himself to invoke a blessing on his own Act. Even my noble friend opposite, the noble Earl who represents agriculture, although we know he is convinced that he is the most beneficial of modern statesmen, has never yet called upon the agricultural community to attend a thanksgiving service for the legislation for which he is responsible; and so far I note the assistance of Heaven has not yet been invoked on behalf of the crusade against this House, nor is it likely to be invoked with regard to the Scottish measures. All I have to say, my Lords, in conclusion, is this, that were I to take any part in these supplications, my own prayer would take the form of a petition that we might be delivered before long from the present Secretary of State for War, and might be granted someone who had a more correct conception of our military necessities. But my own view in the matter is unimportant. What I want to know is the opinion of the Lords-Lieutenant. So far as I have been able to gather, they are all unfriendly, and I await with interest the reply of my noble friend to the Question I have placed on the Paper.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: My noble friend is in error in thinking there has been any Army Order on this matter. It has merely been a question of a letter; and, so far, only thirty-two replies, out of a possible ninety-three, have been received. In sixteen cases it is thought undesirable and premature; and in six cases it is thought impracticable owing to lack of Sunday train service. Eight counties have merely acknowledged, and the proposal has been viewed favourably in the two counties. I should like to inform the noble Lord that the suggested church parade is a purely voluntary one. No Order will be issued from the War Office on the subject. Although 5th April was proposed as a suitable date, the parade, if considered desirable by Associations and the commanding officers of units, may be held at such times and places as the various local conditions render advisable. The suggestion is that of the Chaplain-General, but is a suggestion merely. Complete liberty is left to the Associations as to whether they will adopt it.

*THE EARL OF DARTMOUTH: I should like to ask where the Advisory Committee will parade on this occasion, and whether in those counties in which the parade is held any steps will be taken to prevent a counter-demonstration on the part of the disbanded units.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: As I have not the honour of being a member of the Advisory Committee, I am not concerned; but I will forward my noble friend's Question to the proper quarter.

VOLUNTEERS AND LONG SERVICE.

LORD AMPTHILL: My Lords, I rise to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War whether any provision has been made to meet the cases of members of the Volunteer Forces who have served in that Force for many years, but who may either be ineligible for enlistment in the new Territorial Forces or be unable to comply with the altered conditions of service, and who, therefore, in the absence of any provision to the contrary would be deprived of the right hitherto enjoyed by them of securing, in the case of officers, a long service decoration (V.D.), and in the case of men a long service medal on completion of twenty years meritorious service. The circumstances to which this Question relates must be so familiar to your Lordships that it is unnecessary for me to offer any explanation; but I hope the noble Earl is now in a position to make a statement in regard to a matter which has becomes of considerable importance now that we are fairly launched on what is called the transition stage from the present Auxiliary Forces to the new Territorial Army.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: My Lords, we have not overlooked the difficulty arising from the circumstances specified in my noble friend's Question. I am glad to be able to inform him that we intend to meet, if possible, the special requirements of the case by special regulations which are now under consideration. My noble friend is, however, aware that any new regulations in a question of this kind must first have the Royal approval. That being so, my noble friend will not, I trust, expect me to indicate further the lines upon which we are working to secure that justice shall be done in the case of both officers and men.

LORD AMPTHILL: Might I ask when the regulations may be expected? Many of these officers have to decide within the next two or three weeks whether they will join the Territorial Force or not, and it is only fair that they should know in what position they stand. The Secretary of State has had since last year to consider the matter.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I quite appreciate the importance of the point, and can assure my noble friend that the regulations will very soon be made public.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON: I should like to ask the noble Earl when we may expect to have the Return for which I moved a few weeks ago, and which we understood would be in our hands by now.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I asked this morning at the War Office when it would be ready. It is now being printed, and your Lordships will be in possession of it, I hope, to-day or to-morrow.

House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes before 6 o'clock till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 2nd March, 1908.

The House met a quarter before Three of the Clock.

NEW WRIT.

New Writ for the County of Down (West Down Division) in the room of the right hon. Lord Arthur William Hill (Manor of Northstead).—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH.)

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz.:—Dartford Gas Bill; Knott End Railway Bill; Blaydon and Ryton Water (Transfer) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

Cheshire Lines Committee Bill; Motherwell Burgh Extension, etc., Bill; Seaham Harbour Dock Bill; Wishaw Burgh Electricity, etc., Bill. Read a second time, and committed.

PETITIONS.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (No. 2) BILL.

Petition from Sunderland, against; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN.

Petitions for legislation; from Bolsover; Harrow on the Hill; Lytchett Matravers; South Croydon; Thorne; and Wallasey; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Chadderton; East Toxteth; Holinwood; Ramsbottom; Royton; and Southport; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COLONIAL REPORTS (MISCELLANEOUS).

Copy presented, of Colonial Report, No. 49 (East Africa Protectorate, Annual Report of the Veterinary Department, 1906–7 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY (MILITARY SAVINGS BANK).

Copy presented, of Statement of the Amounts due by the Public to Depositors on 31st March, 1906, and of the Receipts, Interest, and Disbursements during the year ended 31st March, 1907, etc. [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 78.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1908–9.

Copy presented, of Estimates for Civil Services and Revenue Departments for the year ending 31st March, 1909, together with a Copy of the Memorandum by the Financial Secretary to the Treasury relating thereto [by Command]; referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 79.]

UGANDA RAILWAY ACTS, 1896 AND 1902.

Account presented, showing the money issued from the Consolidated Fund under the provisions of the Uganda Railway Acts, 1896, (59 and 60 Vic., c. 38), and 1902 (2 Edw. 7, c. 40), and of the Money expended and borrowed, and Securities created under the said Acts, to 31st March 1907, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and tc be printed. [No. 80.]

PAPERS LAID UPON THE TABLE BY THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE.

1. Soane's Museum, Copy of Statement of the Funds of the Museum of the late Sir John Soane on 5th January, 1908 [by Act.]; 2. Public Records (Disposal of Documents), Copy of Addition to the Rules for Disposal of Documents under the Public Record Office Acts, 1877 and 1898 [by Act].

MAGISTRATES (IRELAND.)

Return ordered, "of the number of Magistrates appointed in the different counties of Ireland, with their names, addressess, and occupations or descriptions, from the 26th day of April 1906 to the present time (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 136, of Session 1906)."—(*Mr. Devlin.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Royal Engineers and Submarine Mining.

MR. DUNDAS WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether and to what extent the submarine mining work of the Royal Engineers has been discontinued; what was the approximate cost of the submarine mining stores, and how they were disposed of; and where and by whom any submarine mining is now carried on.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The submarine mining work of the Royal Engineers has been entirely discontinued. The estimated value of the stores in 1905 was £551,080. These stores, with the exception of a few launches, were handed over to the Admiralty in 1905. The last part of the Question should, therefore, be addressed to my right hon. friend.

Irish National Education Board.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he will state the number of meetings of the National Education Board that were held during the twelve months of the financial year, commencing on the 1st April, 1906, and ending on the 31st March, 1907; the number of these meetings attended by each of the Commissioners who happened to be a member of the Board during the whole of the twelve months in question; and the amount paid in the way of travelling expenses, and personal expenses respectively to each such member.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell*). The Commissioners of National Education inform me that the number of meetings of the Board during the financial year mentioned was twenty-eight, exclusive of meetings of committees of the Board. The Commissioners inform me that they see grave objections to furnishing information as to the attendances of individual members of the Board. They gave such information on a former occasion, and it was then used to criticise and reflect on the action of individual Commissioners, and thus interfere with their personal independence as members of the Board. The Commissioners believe such interference to be detrimental to the public interest. The following payments were made for travelling expenses and personal allowance in respect of the financial year 1906–7. No payment in respect of attendance was made to the remaining Commissioners:—

Name of Commissioner.	Travelling Expenses.			Personal Allowance.			Total.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Sir H. Bellingham, Bart., D.L. - -	17	16	8	—			17	16	8
Rev. H. Evans, D.D. - - - -	15	16	3	7	14	0	23	10	3
Right Hon. Sir R. Blenerhassett, Bart., D.L. - - - - - -	61	4	0	26	5	0	87	9	0
Rev. H. B. Wilson, D.D. - - -	28	10	8	27	6	0	55	16	8
Sir Stanley Harrington, J.P. - -	4	4	0	29	8	0	33	12	0
Right Rev. Mervyn Archdall, D.D., Bishop of Killaloe - - - -	47	16	3	52	10	0	100	6	3
A. Traill, Esq., LL.D., M.D., D.L., Provost of Trinity College - -	6	8	4	4	4	0	10	12	4
Rev. D. Taylor, D.D. - - - -	14	13	6	4	11	0	19	4	6
Right Hon. Lord Killanin - - -	46	3	9	31	10	0	77	13	9
Major Gerald Dease, D.L. - - -	19	1	0	13	13	0	32	14	0
R. Bagwell, Esq., D.L. - - -	39	14	3	19	19	0	59	13	3
	301	8	8	217	0	0	518	8	8

Tobacco Dealers' Licences.

MR. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has considered, or will consider, the advisability of graduation in tobacco dealers' licences.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I have received many suggestions on the subject; but, as at present advised, I do not think that a licence duty of the character in question, which is imposed solely for registration purposes, readily lends itself to graduation.

Irish Agricultural Statistics.

MR. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.): To ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) whether exhaustive and reliable statistics of Irish production, imports, and exports are avaliable; whether legislation is necessary to endow the Department of Agriculture with the powers requisite for compiling them; and, if so, does he propose to introduce such legislation.

(*Answered by Mr. T. W. Russell.*) The available statistics of Irish imports and exports, as explained in the Report issued by the Department on the trade in imports and exports at Irish ports in 1905, are neither complete as regards the quantities of the commodities imported and exported, nor exact as regards the values of the said quantities. The Department have at present no statutory powers enabling them to require returns of imports and exports, and the information at present collected and published has been obtained by voluntary arrangement with the Irish harbour authorities and with shipping companies trading between Ireland and Great Britain or other countries. The Department consider that the existing system is inadequate, and that they should be given statutory powers enabling them to obtain complete and accurate returns. A Bill is being prepared with a view to obtaining such powers. With regard to "production," the Board of Trade are collecting statistics of Irish production under the provisions of the Census of Production Act.

Volunteer Medical Association.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether Volunteers whose efficient service approaches twenty years, but who on presenting themselves for enlistment on 31st March fail to pass the stringent medical examination required by the Territorial Army Act, will be granted any solatium, such as a long service, or some equivalent medal, or other suitable acknowledgment of their service.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Volunteers now serving will not be required to pass the medical examination unless they desire to enlist into a different arm of the service. Some solatium of the kind suggested by my hon. friend will in all probability be given to those Volunteers whose efficient service approaches twenty years.

Second Battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers.

MR. C. B. HARMSWORTH (Worcestershire, Droitwich): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the 2nd battalion Royal Inniskilling Fusiliers, which recently arrived in the United Kingdom from Egypt to be stationed in Dublin, was disembarked at Southampton and conveyed by train from Southampton to Holyhead, and again embarked at Holyhead for Dublin; whether a considerable saving could have been effected by disembarking the battalion at Queenstown or Kingstown; whether the same procedure is adopted in the case of all units and drafts leaving Ireland during the trooping season for foreign service; and, if so, whether a more economical arrangement could be effected, whereby a sufficient complement of men for a transport could be prepared for embarkation on the same date, and the transport despatched from a convenient Irish port.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The facts are as stated. If the battalion had been disembarked at Queenstown, an extra expense of £230 would have been involved. Kingstown is not a suitable port for dealing with a transport of 6,600 tons. Queenstown is sometimes used for embarkations and disembarkations.

Service Pensions.

SIR HENRY KIMBER (Wandsworth): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Army Council have considered and approved or disapproved the recommendations of paragraphs 43 and

44 of the Report of Sir Edward Ward's Committee, recommending that service in the Army or the Navy, succeeded by employment in the Civil Service, should count towards pension in the latter service; and whether the present difficulty in recruiting would to a great extent be relieved if those recommendations were carried out, and soldiers and sailors knew, on enlistment, that their Army or Navy service would count towards pension if by good conduct they were eligible for, and transferred into, Civil Service employment on discharge.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) May I refer the hon. Baronet to the Answer given by my hon. friend the Financial Secretary to the Treasury to a similar question put by the hon. Member for the Tower Hamlets on the 3rd February last? I am afraid that I can add nothing thereto.

Second Division Clerks.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is prepared to amend Clause IV. of the Order in Council of the 29th May, 1905, which provides for increased remuneration being given to junior second division clerks after six years' service, by making it permissible to reckon towards this period of six years any service rendered by assistant clerks prior to their promotion to the second division, having regard to the fact that such clerks must, under existing conditions, have a minimum permanent service of ten years before becoming eligible for an increase, which is primarily intended to benefit junior men with small salaries.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I see no reason for making the alteration suggested by the hon. Member.

MR. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that in putting into force the recent Order in Council as to the second division, members of that class who were formerly assistant clerks will receive only a small proportion of the increase of salary which is applicable to clerks whose entire service has been in the second division; whether, by way of illustration, he will institute a comparison between the cases of any two clerks now in receipt of equal salaries say £100 per annum, one of whom would receive, on acceptance of the new scheme, an increase of £15 a year as from 1st April next, and the other, with previous service as an assistant clerk, a much smaller sum, or should he have been promoted within a year no increase whatever; whether he will endeavour to obviate this distinction by arranging that all clerks of the second division now drawing similar salaries shall have equal increases if they accept the new conditions of service, or, in the alternative, that clerks who would under the present reading of the new scheme, receive no immediate benefit may receive a uniform addition to their salaries as compensation; and whether, in considering this question he will bear in mind that the principal value of the amended scheme lies in the fact that it gives an immediate increase to the majority of those who accept it as a set-off against a reduced maximum salary.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I see no reason for making any exceptional arrangements in favour of clerks promoted to the second division from an inferior grade. The hon. Member should bear in mind that clerks now serving are free to choose whichever scheme they consider to be more advantageous to them.

Workmen's Trains.

MR. WHITEHEAD (Essex, S.E.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many times during the ten years expiring 31st December, 1907, the Board of Trade has, without holding any preliminary inquiry, referred to the Railway Commissioners a demand for the provision of workmen's trains under The Cheap Trains Act, 1883; and in how many of such cases have the Railway Commissioners ordered a railway company to provide such trains.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Twenty-seven complaints under The Cheap Trains Act, 1883, have been referred to the Railway and Canal Commission at the request of the railway company concerned during the ten years ended on the 31st December last, and in two of these cases the Commission have, I understand, made an order on the railway company concerned. In more than half the remaining cases concessions were made by the railway companies, as the result of which the application has been withdrawn or not proceeded with.

MR. WHITEHEAD: To ask the President of the Board of Trade how many inquiries have been held by the Board of Trade during the ten years expiring 31st December, 1907, with reference to the provision of workmen's trains; in how many such cases the Board has made an Order requiring a railway company to provide such trains; how many appeals there have been from such orders to the Railway Commissioners; and in how many cases such orders have been rescinded or varied by the Commissioners.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd George.*) Fourteen public inquiries have been held by the Board of Trade under The Cheap Trains Act, 1883, during the period referred to by my hon. friend. In five of these cases increased facilities for the conveyance of workmen have been granted as a result of the inquiry, and two are still under consideration. The Board have not found it necessary to make any formal orders. In addition the Department have made inquiry by correspondence into a number of complaints of insufficient accommodation for workmen on railways, and in nearly half of these cases the railway companies have met the complainants to some extent.

Salt Exports.

MR. C. B. HARMSWORTH: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state what are the exports from the United Kingdom of table or manufactured salt, and what are the countries of consignment.

MR. C. B. HARMSWORTH: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state what are the imports into the United Kingdom of table or manufactured salt, and what are the countries of its origin.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The information asked for is not available, the imports and exports of table salt not being recorded separately from those of other articles included under the heading of "Sauces and Condiments."

National Lifeboat Institution.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what steps the Government propose to take to assist the National Lifeboat Association in the discharge of its duties for the saving of life at sea, in view of the abolition of the coastguard service and the closing of the coastguard stations.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) I must refer the hon. Member to my reply of the 27th February to a Question on this subject from the hon. Member for Sunderland.

Loan Societies.

MR. SEAVERNS (Lambeth, Brixton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will consider the desirability of amending The Loan Societies Act, 1840, Section 16, so as to provide that proceedings for the recovery of loans made by such societies may be taken before a justice of the peace in the district or place where the registered office of any such society may be situate, instead of, or in addition to, the place where the party neglecting to discharge any note for the repayment of a loan from such society may happen to be or reside.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I do not think this amendment of the law would be desirable, as it would give these loan societies (who, I am informed, already possess a privilege peculiar to themselves in recovering their debts by proceedings in a court of summary jurisdiction) powers which are not allowed under the ordinary law relating to the recovery of debts in a county court. Moreover, such powers would lend themselves readily to abuse.

Cost of Elementary Education in Boroughs.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): To ask the President of the Board of Education if he can give figures for London, and for a few typical English boroughs, showing what is the total cost of elementary education per child in average attendance, including the cost of loans for buildings, the cost of administration, and all other necessary items, and how that cost is at present divided between the ratepayer and the taxpayer; and how it will be divided if the financial provisions of the Education Bill of this session become law.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) My hon. friend will find in the Report of the Departmental Committee on Education Rates (Cd. 3317 of 1907) the actual cost for 1904–5, and the estimated cost for 1905–6, per child in each area, classified under various headings, together with the amount of Exchequer Grants received. If he will let me know the boroughs for which he desires statistics I shall be happy to supply him with the actual figures for 1905–6, as found from Tables 19 and 132 of the volume of the Board's Statistics for 1905–6–7; those for 1906–7 will not be available until the examination of the audited accounts has been completed. With regard to the last part of the Question, it is impossible to estimate the expenditure of any local authority after the passing of the Education Bill, inasmuch as it must depend upon many factors, some of which are within the discretion of the authority and are not affected by the Bill.

Income-Tax on Glebe Buildings.

LORD J. JOICEY-CECIL (Lincolnshire, Stamford): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, as beneficed clergy are bound, under The Ecclesiastical Dilapidations Act, 1871, to insure their glebe buildings, they may deduct the amount of the insurance premiums from their net incomes before assessing them for income-tax.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) There is no provision in the Income-tax Acts under which the cost of the insurance of glebe buildings could be deducted from the income of the incumbent for purposes of assessment to income-tax. Under Section 35 of The Finance Act, 1894, an allowance of one-sixth is made from the annual value of the property to cover the expense of repairs and other outgoings.

Indian Central Province.

SIR SEYMOUR KING (Hull, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the scheme of amalgamation between the police establishments of the Central Provinces and Berar, which was published in the *Central Provinces Gazette* of the 15th November, 1906, has caused some dissatisfaction among the officers from Berar, on the ground that officers have found themselves, as they conceive, unfairly classified in the amalgamated list, and that, while the Central Provinces officers get an average benefit of 294 rupees per mensem, the Berar officers gain an average only of 150 rupees per mensem; whether he has received any memorials on the subject from aggrieved officers, and will ascertain from the Government of India whether any are on the way; and whether this scheme is a part of the police reorganisation as settled by the Secretary of State, and therefore liable to his special control and revision.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I have received no memorials from police officers serving in Berar; if any have been addressed to me the Government of India will no doubt forward them in due course. The reorganisation follows generally the same lines as in other provinces, and the scheme of course requires my approval, as any other scheme of the kind would.

Irish Education Grant.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he proposes this session to raise the grant to national education for Ireland to the figure of the grant for Scotland.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I do not propose to anticipate the appearance of the Estimates by making any detailed statement on this subject.

Tuberculosis in Ireland.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Government will introduce legislation this session making the notification of pulmonary tuberculosis compulsory, enacting more stringent and uniform measures for the regulation of milk and food supplies, establishing a system of medical inspection of schools and school children, and enabling county councils to erect and maintain sanatoria and dispensaries for the treatment of consumption.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I have already announced the intention of the Government to introduce the Tuberculosis

Prevention (Ireland) Bill, which will deal with some of the matters referred to in the Question. For details of the measure I must ask the hon. Baronet to await the appearance of the Bill.

Lambert Minors Estate, Athenry.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland what is the cause of the delay in completing the settlement of the Lambert Minors estate in Athenry, Castle Ellen, Glones, and Kingsland; and when it is proposed to dispose of the matter finally.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that the arrangements for the re-purchase of the portions of the town of Athenry proposed to be acquired by them have not yet been finally settled. As soon as these arrangements are complete, the sale will be carried through as quickly as possible.

Castle Lambert Estate.

MR. DUFFY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how far the negotiations have advanced for the purchase of the Castle Lambert estate of Mr. F. Shaw Taylor; and, having regard to the fact that two extra police barracks are maintained at Moor Park and Castle Lambert in connection with this property, will he urge upon the Estates Commissioners the advisability of dealing immediately and without delay with this property.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have furnished the owner with a preliminary estimate of the price which they are prepared to offer for the property in question, but the owner is not satisfied with the price. The negotiations are pending. As regards the temporary police stations referred to, I may mention that the police are engaged upon other duties besides protection duty in connection with the property.

Mr. M'Donagh's Galway Estate.

MR. DUFFY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if Mr. M'Donagh, of Galway, offered his property at Moneytigue, Athenry, for sale to the Estates Commissioners: and will he explain how the matter stands.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) A preliminary inspection of this estate has been made by the Estates Commissioners and a preliminary estimate of price has been furnished to the owner, but formal proceedings for purchase have not yet been instituted.

Brown Estate, Glones.

MR. DUFFY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any proposals for the sale of the Brown estate, Glones, near Athenry, were made by the owners to the Estates Commissioners; and whether, seeing that the district contains a large number ot very small holdings, he will give instructions to the Commissioners to accelerate the purchase of this property.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners are negotiating for the purchase of several estates in county Galway of which the owner is named Brown or Browne, and they are unable to identify the particular estate referred to in the Question. If the hon. Member will give fuller particulars, further inquiries will be made.

Mr. O'Malley's Estate at Athenry.

MR. DUFFY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the property of Mr. O'Malley, Connemara, situate at Craig Abbey, Athenry, was offered for sale to the Estates Commissioners; have negotiations concluded; and, if so, will instructions be given to the Commissioners to deal with the property at an early date.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners had a preliminary inspection made of the property in question, but did not consider it desirable to take steps to purchase it.

Police Huts at Athenry.

MR. DUFFY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland how many police huts are erected on the agricultural farm near Athenry; how many police are quartered there; and can he state the probable cost of the extra police in the district.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) One single and two double huts have been erected, or are in course of erection near Athenry. The huts will accommodate seventeen men, of whom ten are already quartered in them. The extra police force in the Athenry district consists of one head constable and forty-seven sergeants and constables. The local charge for these men will fall on the county at large at a fixed rate, namely, £43 6s. per annum for the head constable, and £34 9s. 3d. per annum for each sergeant and constable. The necessity for erecting the huts was due to the exorbitant rents asked for barrack accommodation in the locality and to other police reasons.

Newford Police Canteen.

MR. DUFFY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the police authorities are erecting a canteen and supply store at Newford, near Athenry; whether the police could procure everything they wanted in Athenry; and will he explain the purpose of burdening the rates with this expense.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) A canteen and general supply store for the constabulary will shortly be opened at this place. The police could doubtless procure supplies in Athenry, but in the Inspector General's opinion it will be an advantage to the large extra force in the district to obtain their supplies at their own store. This arrangement will impose no burden upon local rates. The charge for the extra police is at a fixed rate.

Walker Trustees and Knighthood Fees.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Walker Trustees, as holders of the office of the Heritable Usher of Scotland, are entitled to charge fees, and, if so, to what amount, on the creation of knights of the United Kingdom, or to levy such fees from any other recipients of honours conferred by His Majesty; what services the Walker Trustees render in respect of such fees; and to what purposes the fees are devoted.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) The Treasury have been advised that the right of the Walker Trustees, as representing the Heritable Usher of Scotland, to charge fees on the creation of honours is confined to the cases of knighthoods bachelor, conferred upon Scotsmen, and knighthoods bachelor conferred upon Englishmen in Scotland. I understand that the fee payable in these cases is £3 6s. 8d. So far as the Treasury is aware no services are rendered by the Heritable Usher. The fees received are presumably devoted to the purposes of the Walker Trust.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Navy Estimates.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state, from the Estimates for the new financial year 1908-9, what is the the total sum proposed for material, viz., shipbuilding, repairs, and armaments, prepared on the same basis as our expenditure of £11,102,400 for material in the previous year and the German total of £9,479,451 for 1908-9.

*THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. LAMBERT, Devonshire, South Molton): £11,221,534.

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that the Abstract of the Navy Estimates which appears on pages 2 and 3 of the Navy Estimates for 1908-9 bears the date 29th January opposite the signatures of the Lords of the Admiralty; whether he is aware that the Estimates were largely modified subsequent to that date; and whether the Board will adopt in future the usual business method of making the date of a signed statement correspond with the date of the final revision of that statement.

*MR. LAMBERT: The Estimates were ordered to be printed by the House on the 30th January. I understand that it is an invariable custom that no Parliamentary Paper should bear a date later than the order for printing. My hon. and gallant friend was informed on the 26th February that this date had no bearing on the final contents of the Estimates.

MR. BELLAIRS: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the date of printing is the one printed on the title page, and that it was the 30th January, whereas the business statement is dated the 29th, since which time considerable alterations had been made in the Estimates?

*MR. LAMBERT: I have nothing to add to my Answer.

The Coastguard.

MR. HAY MORGAN (Cornwall, Truro): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he can state the reasons for the reductions which have been made in the coastguard force; and whether, in view of their service in life-saving from shipwrecks on the coast, he can give any assurance to the House that the present strength of the force will not be further reduced.

MR. LAMBERT: My right hon. friend will make a statement on this subject to-morrow.

Duke of York's School.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is the intention to reduce the numbers to be trained at the Duke of York's School, which was established for the benefit of poor soldiers' children, from some 550 to 480; and, if so, to what purpose the money thus saved is to be applied.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): The numbers will be reduced as stated. The reduction has been made because of the establishment of the Queen Victoria School at Edinburgh which fulfils a similar purpose to the Duke of York's School. The expenditure upon it quite absorbs any saving made upon the latter school.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: May I take it there is no intention to reduce the number of boys receiving the benefit of the charity?

MR. HALDANE: I cannot answer that, but there will now be three schools —the Duke of York's, the Hibernian, and the Queen Victoria School.

Secretaries of County Associations.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many secretaries have been appointed to the Territorial Force County Associations, and how many of them previously served in the Imperial Yeomanry or Volunteer force.

MR. HALDANE: For thirty-five Associations secretaries have been definitely appointed. The number of individuals appointed is thirty-two, some counties having appointed joint secretaries, while Lancashire has appointed two. Of this number three have served or are serving in the Yeomanry and nine in the Volunteers. Two of the secretaries appointed have served as brigade majors of Volunteers and one as adjutant.

Territorial Force—Attestation Form.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if the attestation forms for recruits of the Territorial Force, threatening imprisonment with hard labour, taking a religious census, and requiring information as to the wife and the baptism for the children, have been withdrawn; what has been the cost of the half-million copies printed and issued; and if it can be recovered from those responsible for the compilation of such documents, instead of being charged to the public.

MR. HALDANE: As I have already stated, the attestation form for recruits will be duly considered by the Advisory Council which has been appointed to deal with questions affecting the Territorial force. The cost of the copies issued for recruits amounts to about £150. The remainder of the Question of the hon. Member does not appear to be of a sufficiently serious nature to require consideration.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Would it not be better for the right hon. Gentleman to withdraw this foolish document at once and pay the expense himself?

MR. HALDANE: Whether it is wise or foolish will be considered by a competent authority.

Soldiers Invalided for Tuberculosis.

COLONEL SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in the event of subscriptions being forthcoming from private sources to ensure treatment in hospitals or sanatoria for soldiers discharged from the Army suffering from tuberculosis, he will be prepared to give a substantial grant in aid.

MR. HALDANE: The question of recommending a substantial subscription from Army Funds would certainly, so for as I am concerned, be favourably considered. It is impossible for me to say more at this stage.

Committee on Tuberculosis in the Army.

COLONEL SEELY: On behalf of the hon. Member for Sunderland, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can state when the Report of the Committee as to the treatment of soldiers found to be suffering from tuberculosis will be laid upon the Table of the House.

MR. HALDANE: The Report of the Committee will shortly be laid.

4th Battalion Essex Regiment.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how he intends to utilise the services of the officers of the 4th battalion Essex Regiment, lately abolished; what opportunity will be afforded to the commanding officer of again serving the King; what position is he prepared to offer to the officer who filled the position of honorary colonel; and who will have the custody of the colours.

MR. HALDANE: The officers of this battalion, other than the lieutenant-colonel commanding, will be dealt with as laid down in paragraphs 72 and 73 of the Special Army Order of 23rd December, 1907. The lieutenant-colonel commanding can be shown on the unattached list of Militia officers and he will be available for appointment to some other battalion should an opportunity occur of so appointing him, or subject to his being under fifty-five years of age he can join the existing Reserve of officers. As regards the honorary colonel, I am afraid there is no position which I can at present offer him. The colours should preferably be deposited in a cathedral or a public building, and a circular to this effect will shortly be issued.

British Cavalry.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what was the number of officers and men of cavalry of the Line in the United Kingdom on the 1st January last; what was the number of horses on the establishment of cavalry of the Line in the United Kingdom; and the number of those estimated as fit for war service on the same date.

MR. HALDANE: On the 1st January, 1908, there were in the cavalry of the Line 327 officers and 8,521 men. There were on that date 6,445 horses on the establishment of the cavalry of the Line, of which 5,801 were fit for war service.

Volunteers and the Territorial Force.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if members of the existing Yeomanry or Volunteer force decide to join the Territorial Force for one year or two years, whether they will at the expiration of that period be able to renew their engagements for one year or two years, or if they will have to enlist for four years.

MR. HALDANE: These members will be treated as re-engaged men and their term of re-engagement will be left to the County associations to decide, but it must not be for less than one year nor exceed four years.

Advisory Council on Attestation.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he can give the names of the Committee to whom the new attestation form for the Territorial Army is to be submitted.

MR HALDANE: The names were published on Saturday last.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): Will this Committee deal with the attestation only or with other questions which may be referred to it by the right hon. Gentleman?

MR. HALDANE: It will deal with general questions.

LORD BALCARRES: Inasmuch as there are on it only five gentlemen who have served with Volunteer regiments, will the right hon. Gentleman consider the propriety of adding a certain number of ex-Volunteer officers in order that these matters may be dealt with by men with practical experience?

MR. HALDANE: I think five is a very considerable proportion. The Committee will deal with questions affecting the County Associations, which should have a distinguished representative on it.

4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.): On behalf of the hon. Member for Mid. Antrim, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what are the reasons which have led to the decision that the 4th Royal Irish Dragoon Guards, withdrawn from South Africa, shall be quartered at Brighton; and whether having regard to the fact that in recent years Ireland has been deprived of three regiments of cavalry, and also that in the Cork district there is no regiment of cavalry to manœuvre with artillery and infantry, so as to ensure proper combined training with the troops, arrangements can be made for stationing this Irish cavalry regiment at Cahir or Ballincollig.

MR. HALDANE: Brighton was selected for this regiment as it was considered the most suitable station. As regards Ireland, it is true that thirteen years ago there were six cavalry regiments there. It has been found necessary to station some of the Field Artillery Brigades quartered in Ireland at Cahir and Ballincollig. There are therefore no barracks available for cavalry in the Cork district.

Calcutta High Court.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to a speech of the Chief Justice of Bengal, at the annual dinner of the Calcutta Trades' Association, on the 29th January, in which reference was made to a strong rumour current that the Calcutta High Court was to be partitioned and a portion of the Bench sent to Dacca, and invoking the Trades' Association and the Chamber of Commerce to make a protest which would preserve the unity of the High Court; whether any proposals for the partition of the High Court have, in fact, been made; and, if so, at what stage they have arrived; and whether having regard to the adverse view which has already been so decidedly expressed in both Anglo-Indian and Indian circles he will afford the amplest opportunity for public criticism in India and for discussion in this House before his sanction is given to any such proposals.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): I have seen a newspaper report of the speech to which this Question refers. No proposal for the partitioning of the High Court of Calcutta has been made, nor do I regard any such proposal as in the least degree probable.

English Settlers in Kashmir.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether there are any restrictions by the Indian Government designed to prevent Englishmen residing in Kashmir and purchasing land or going into business there; and, if so, what is the object of these restrictions.

MR. MORLEY: No such restrictions are imposed by the Government of India, but the Kashmir Durbar, I understand, have laid down conditions as to the acquisition of land and so forth. This is entirely within their rights. It would be wholly contrary to public policy for the Government of India to interfere with the free discretion of the Durbar of a Native State in a matter of the kind.

Indian Railway Expenditure.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is able to make any statement relative to railway expenditure contemplated for 1908–9.

MR. MORLEY: The information will, in accordance with the usual practice, be contained in the Financial Statement of the Government of India, which will be laid before the Governor-General's Council on 20th March.

Cost of Indian Frontier Operations.

SIR H. COTTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to Clause 55 of the Act of 1858, an Act which transferred the government of India from the East India Company to the Crown, which enacts that, except for preventing or repelling invasion of His Majesty's Indian possessions or under other sudden and urgent necessity, the revenues of India shall not, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament, be applicable to defray the expenses of any military operation carried on beyond the external frontier of such possession by His Majesty's forces charged upon such revenues; whether he is aware that this clause was drafted by the late Mr. Gladstone in order to provide that the Indian Army should not be employed beyond the frontiers of India without the permission of Parliament; and whether provisions of this clause are applicable to the present expedition against the Zakka Khel which was sanctioned by His Majesty's Government without the consent of Parliament.

MR. MORLEY: Clause 55 of the Act of 1858 does not apply to the punitive expedition against the Zakka Khel, whose territory lies within the external frontiers of His Majesty's Indian possessions.

The Zakka Khel Expedition.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what are the conditions of the cessation of the operations against the Zakka Khel.

MR. MORLEY: I told the House last week that I hoped I should be able to make a satisfactory announcement to the House within a few days, and I am glad to find that it is so. Yesterday I received a telegram from Sir James Willcocks, dated 28th February, delayed because of the storms, in which he says, "Campeast of China, Bazar Valley, 28th February. Jirga of all Afridis, including Zakka Khel, spent night discussing details of settlement. I received them this afternoon, and they laid before me the following petition: 'We, maliks and elders of the whole Afridi tribe in Jirga assembled, humbly represent to the British Government that being anxious to end quarrel between Zakka Khel Afridis and British Government, which has been caused by misconduct of former, we have agreed and do promise that we Afridis will hold ourselves responsible jointly and severally for the future good behaviour of every section of the Zakka Khel tribe. Also, we promise that when we are called upon we will assist each other in punishing these bad characters, and British Government may punish us by fine, by exclusion from British territory or in any other way, for the misdeeds of Zakka Khel sections for whom we stand security. As regards the past, we beg that British Government in its strength will take into consideration losses suffered by Zakka Khel by exclusion from British territory and by war, and will not complete ruin of tribe for sins of badly behaved minority. As regards actual thieves who have been leaders of raids in British territory, we beg that we with assistance of Zakka Khel elders may undertake their punishment wherever they may be, and we will punish them to the satisfaction of British Government, in earnest for which we here deposit fifty-three rifles, which are worth according to prices current in our country more than Rs. 20,000, as security. And these rifles will only be returned to us when Political Agent, Khyber, is satisfied that thieves have been sufficiently punished. And we Zakka Khel agree to this petition and promise to assist Afridi Jirga in every way. Further we hope for the mercy and favour of British Government.' Then follow seals and signatures of 322 maliks and elders representing every tribe of the Afridis. I trust that agreement will meet with approval of Government. I cannot speak too highly of the ability and tact displayed by Colonel Roos-Keppel in effecting this settlement, and would also bring to notice invaluable services of his assistant, Sahibzada Abdul Quaiyum. All the troops will leave Bazar Valley to-morrow."

The Lado Enclave.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he found on his recent visit a satisfactory condition of affairs existing in the portion of British territory leased to His Majesty the King of the Belgians, and known as the Lado enclave; and whether he heard any complaints of any atrocities having been committed there.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The formal visit which I paid to the Belgian Authorities at Lado afforded me no opportunity of forming any special opinion on these matters which, of course, lie quite outside the responsibilities of the Colonial Office.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): Can the right hon. Gentleman say if it was not what was known about the Lado enclave which furnished Lord Cromer with his opinion regarding the Belgian atrocities?

MR. CHURCHILL: I really cannot say how I form my own impressions very often.

Rand Labour.—Madagascar as a Recruiting Ground.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether the Transvaal Government is negotiating direct with the French Government, with a view to opening up Madagascar as a field for recruiting native labour for the mines of the Rand; and whether he has any information which would show that these negotiations are justified by an inadequacy of Native labour in the sub-Continent for the needs of the Witwatersrand mines.

MR. CHURCHILL: No, Sir.

Land Tenure in Nigeria.

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether any steps have been or will be taken in the near future to compare and, if possible, make alike the land tenure systems of Northern and Southern Nigeria.

MR. CHURCHILL: The subject is at present receiving consideration.

South African Republic—Civil Servants.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether his attention has been drawn to a speech by General Botha at Standerton in which he said that the civil servants of the old South African Republic who had lost their public employment should have a pension or compensation; and whether he will take steps to see that such civil servants of the Transvaal, while under Crown Colony Government, as are now discharged through no fault of their own, are treated by the Transvaal in as generous a way as these other old servants of that country.

MR. CHURCHILL: I have seen a telegram in the Press to this effect, but have no official information with regard to it. I have no reason to suppose that any preferential treatment is to be accorded to the ex-civil servants of the South African Republic, to a number of whom considerable sums have already been granted as allowances or pensions on the recommendation of a Commission appointed by the late Crown Colony Government, but in any case all questions relating to the Transvaal Civil Service are matters which fall wholly within the province of the Transvaal Government.

Martial Law in Zululand.

*MR. G. GREENWOOD (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether the Prime Minister of Natal has recently declared his intention to persist in the maintenance of martial law in Zululand; if so, whether His Majesty's Government are aware of any justification for this action; and, if not, whether they intend to take any steps in the matter.

MR. CHURCHILL: I have seen a statement to this effect in the Press, but there has been no very recent official correspondence, and I cannot at present add anything to my reply to recent similar Questions. I may, however, add that the Governor has telegraphed from Zululand that in none of the districts which he has recently visited has any action been taken under martial law since the Militia was demobilised.

*MR. G. GREENWOOD: May I ask whether the Statement in the Circular Despatch of January 16th, 1867—printed as an appendix to the Natal Blue Book of May, 1906—is not to the effect that with the Governor alone lies the responsibility of declaring martial law, and does that apply only to the Governors of Crown Colonies, or to those of self-governing Colonies as well.

MR. CHURCHILL asked for notice of the Question.

United Shoe Machinery Company.

MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, if he will ascertain from the local consular officer and inform the House whether it is a fact that the United Shoe Machinery Company, whose headquarters are in Boston, U.S.A., have decided to transfer the centre of their operations to this country and to erect extensive plant; and what reasons the directors of the company have announced to the public for this decision.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury): My right hon. friend will be happy to make the inquiries suggested by the hon. Member.

Colliery Accidents.

MR. W. E. HARVEY (Derbyshire, N.E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he will state how many lives have been lost by shaft accidents and overwinding at collieries in England, Scotland, and Wales during the year 1907; and whether he proposes to bring in legislation during this session of Parliament to regulate the speed of winding when men are descending and ascending the mines.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): Ninety-seven lives were lost in 1907 through shaft accidents in mines under the Coal Mines Act, of which six were lost through overwinding. The question of winding speeds is, I understand, being considered by the Royal Commission on mines; and it will be desirable to wait for their Report before introducing any fresh legislation.

Burglaries in London.

MR. MENZIES (Lanark, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the, Home Department, if he can state what was the value of the property stolen by burglary within the Metropolitan Police area during the year 1907, and the value recovered; in how many cases in that year was burglary committed where the police failed to make any arrest.

MR. GLADSTONE: This information will be included in the Metropolitan Police statistics for the year. It is not available at present.

Factory Inspectors.

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether, in the increase of factory inspectors about to be made, any special facilities will be given to the present assistants to fill the new higher posts.

MR. GLADSTONE: This question and other cognate matters are under my consideration.

Cornish Magistrates.

MR. AGAR-ROBARTES (Cornwall, St. Austell): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he proposes to give ample compensation to Frederick William Palmer, who was unlawfully and unjustly sentenced, on Friday, 21st February, to fourteen days hard labour for asking for a temporary loan from the rector of St. Stephen's with which to repair his boots, and who served four days of that sentence in Bodmin prison until he was released by the right hon. Gentleman's orders; and whether he will use his influence with the Government to deal immediately with the appointment of more Liberal magistrates, in view of the fact that Palmer was summarily convicted, without evidence being called, by two Conservative magistrates.

MR. GLADSTONE: In the case to which my hon. friend refers I felt justified in advising the exercise of the prerogative of mercy on the ground that the offence was not of a serious nature, and that the prisoner had employment to go to on his release. The case is not one in which any compensation can be granted from public funds. I have no information as to the political views of the justices who acted in this case, and it would be very improper for me to inquire about them.

Milton (New Forest) Rate Dispute.

*SIR ROBERT HOBART (Hampshire, New Forest): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has received any representation from residents in the outlying parts in the parish of Milton, in the New Forest, including Upper and Lower Ashley, Bashley, and Wooton, against paying the rate for sewage works in which they have no interest or benefit; and whether he will give them protection against this hardship being inflicted upon them by the local district council, or in some manner mitigate this proposed heavy burden.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): I have received some representations on this subject, but it is not one with respect to which I can take action. The Rural District Council have raised loans for the execution of the works mentioned in the Question, and these loans form a charge on the rates of the parish of Milton. I have no power to restrict the charge to an area forming part only of the parish.

Postmen's Scales of Pay.

DR. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, whether he is aware that in the new scales of pay for postmen there is a difference of 8*s*. per week in the maximum between districts in the London postal area and adjoining provincial towns, although in these towns the police are paid on the metropolitan scale; whether he is aware that a number of these towns on provincial rates of pay are as near or nearer to London than some districts in the London postal area; and whether, in view of the fact that the recent committee did not go into the question of what districts constitute London, he will extend the London postal area so as to include all towns within the 12-mile radius.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): In recommending scales of wages for the metropolitan area, the committee accepted the existing London Postal District as representing that area. I have adopted the committee's recommendation on this matter.

Ballachulish Postal District.

MR. WARDLE (Stockport): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, whether his attention has been called to the fact that the postal name of Ballachulish, Argyllshire, has been altered to Ballachulish Quarries; if so, on what grounds the change was made; whether this change was made in opposition to the wishes of the 240 householders in Ballachulish village as against the ten householders in the district to which the Post Office has restricted the name of Ballachulish; and whether, in view of the delay which is caused by this change, he will consider the advisability of reverting to the name by which the village has always been known.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: My hon. friend has, I think, been misinformed. No recent alteration has been made in the names of the two Post Offices at Ballachulish. Except for a short period, nearly twenty years ago, when a change of name was made, which proved a failure, leading to confusion and inconvenience, the Ballachulish Office has borne that name for a very long time. As the change desired by the hon. Member is strongly objected to by the residents near the Ballachulish Office, I should not feel justified in sanctioning it. There is no delay to letters properly addressed.

Single School Areas.

SIR HENRY KIMBER (Wandsworth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, whether he will consent to a Return of the number of single-school areas, as defined in the Education Bill, in the United Kingdom, with their localities, approximate extent, distance of the school from the nearest school in adjoining area, and the number of children attending the school.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. McKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): As I stated on Thursday last, a Return is being prepared giving the names and other information as to non-provided schools in single-school parishes, as defined by the Education Bill. The number of children in attendance and the acreage of the parishes concerned will be included, but to give the distances from each school to the nearest schools in different directions would involve local investigations in some 5,000 parishes, and it would be impossible to supply the information in time to be of any service in the discussions on the Bill. Moreover, in the definition of a single-school parish in the Bill the proximity or otherwise of neighbouring schools is not taken into account.

MR. CARLILE (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): Are we to understand that the right hon. Gentleman proposes legislation on the subject of these particular schools without having taken the trouble to ascertain their number?

Mr. McKENNA: No, Sir. The hon. Gentleman has entirely misunderstood the purport of the Question on the Paper.

Imperial School of Science and Technology.

Mr. RAMSAY MACDONALD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, if he proposes to appoint a Royal Commission to inquire into the constitution of the University of London, with a view to the University taking over the Imperial School of Science and Technology, or whether, in the event of no such Commission being appointed and the school being in consequence maintained as a separate foundation, he will reconsider the constitution of the governing body of the school so as to strengthen it on its industrial side with a view to establishing a connection between it and technological institutions of lower grades.

Mr. McKENNA: No representations have reached me from the bodies principally concerned leading me to suppose that the consideration of this question is urgently desired, and I think it would be premature to go into the matters referred to by the hon. Member on the supposition that no such Commission will be appointed.

Sir PHILIP MAGNUS (London University): Is it proposed not to appoint a Royal Commission until representations are made by the bodies concerned?

Mr. McKENNA: Yes, Sir; the original undertaking was that, upon representations being made to the Board of Education by the bodies concerned, His Majesty would be petitioned to appoint a Commission.

Sir PHILIP MAGNUS: What is the authority for that statement? May I remind the right hon. Gentleman that that there is nothing in the charter of incorporation of the Royal College of Science relating to representations.

Mr. McKENNA: I think if the hon. Gentleman will look at the charter he will find that reference to the possible appointment of a Commission is made.

Mr. RAMSAY MACDONALD: With regard to the latter part of my Question, if the London University should not move, does the Board of Education propose to leave the constitution of the Imperial School of Science and Technology in its present position?

Mr. McKENNA: What I said was that it would be premature to go into that matter on the supposition that no such Commission will be appointed. I cannot undertake at this moment to say what will happen if this Commission is not appointed.

Sir W. COLLINS (St. Pancrass, W.): The Commission will not be appointed unless these representations are made?

Mr. McKENNA: That is so.

Local Grants to Non-Provided Schools.

Sir EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can state what was the average sum per scholar, in non-provided schools, paid out by local authorities in the past year.

Mr. McKENNA: The expenditure of local education authorities upon provided and non-provided schools is not separated in the audited financial statements, and I am unable, therefore, to give the figures for which the hon. Member asks.

Education Bill.

Mr. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, for the convenience of Members in debates on the Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill, he will circulate a print of the enactments proposed to be, by reference, repealed or amended by any of the schedules to that Bill.

Mr. McKENNA: Yes, Sir; such a document is being prepared, and I hope shortly to lay it on the Table.

Denominational Schools and Cowper-Temple Teaching.

Mr. MYER (Lambeth, N.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, under Section 3, Sub-section 3, together with the first schedule to the Education Bill, the transferors of a denominational school can arrange that there shall be no Cowper-Temple religious teaching as part of the school timetable after transfer.

MR. McKENNA: It is hardly possible within the limits of an Answer at Question time to explain particular provisions of the Education Bill satisfactorily, or to attempt interpretations of particular expressions in it. Questions on the Education Bill, apart from questions of simple fact, whether as to the exact purport of the Bill or as to the intentions of the Government, are, I think, better asked and replied to (as a rule) at a time when they can be debated. I will gladly do my best to deal with the point referred to in the hon. Member's Question if he will raise it at a suitable occasion in the course of our debates on the Bill.

Punishment in London Schools.

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that it was stated in a debate at a meeting of the London Education Committee on 31st October that in the East Lambeth Division there were in one year 39,505 cases of corporal punishment upon boys, 9,723 upon girls, and 6,069 on infants, and that in West Lambeth the numbers were 49,979, 7,623, and 5,567, respectively; whether this is at all typical of London schools; and whether he will make inquiries so far as possible into the extent to which this form of punishment obtains in the public elementary schools, and will communicate the results before the Committee stage of the Education Bill.

MR. McKENNA: I have seen a newspaper report in which the figures, which my hon. friend quotes, are given, but I cannot say whether they are typical of London schools or not. The infliction of corporal punishment is subject to restrictions laid down in detailed regulations drawn up by the London County Council. Any specific complaint on the part of parents of alleged excessive punishment would, of course, be inquired into if brought before the Board, but complaints are in fact very infrequent, and I do not think any useful purpose would be served by instituting the inquiries suggested. I do not propose to deal with the matter in the Education Bill.

MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Is it not the case that in some educational areas corporal punishment is entirely forbidden and with very good results?

MR. McKENNA: That is a matter in the discretion of the local authority in each case.

Duke of York's School.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War what is the cost of the site and buildings of the new Duke of York's School; and what does the estimated value of the old site, by the valuers employed at the War Office, amount to.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, Rossendale): The estimated cost of the site and buildings of the new school is about £192,500. The old site has been inspected by expert valuers on behalf of the Office of Works. I regret that I am not in a position to give the hon. and gallant Member the information he desires. It is not in the public interest that I should do so.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: What is to become of the old site?

MR. HARCOURT: I can only refer the hon. Member to the latter part of my Answer.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Is it to be left as an open space or built upon?

MR. HARCOURT: The hon. Gentleman must allow me to answer that Question at a considerably later date.

Potato Disease in North Wales.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, what steps are being taken to prevent the spread of black scab amongst potatoes in North Wales.

MR. WHITELEY (for Sir EDWARD STRACHEY): The Board of Agriculture have in preparation an Order dealing *inter alia* with this disease, and they hope that it may be found possible to issue it at an early date. I shall be happy to send a copy of it to my hon. friend as soon as it has been approved and printed.

A leaflet on the subject both in English and Welsh has been widely distributed, and we are arranging for a further circulation of it in North Wales.

MR. REES: Is the Department aware that meantime the disease has reached North Wales?

MR. WHITELEY: If the hon. Member has any information he can place at the disposal of the Department I am sure it would be welcomed.

Small Holdings in the Island of Vatersay.

SIR JOHN DEWAR (Inverness): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that the Deer Forests Commissioners scheduled the Island of Vatersay as suitable land for small holdings; whether the inhabitants of the district have repeatedly asked Lady Gordon Cathcart, with a view to relieving the serious congestion of population, to create small holdings on the island, and whether she has refused to do so; whether, on the passing of the Parish Councils Act of 1892, the parish council of Burra petitioned Lady Gordon Cathcart to the same effect and with a similar result; whether the said parish council then petitioned the county council of Inverness, requesting them to put their compulsory powers for the acquisition of land for small holdings under the Act of 1894 into operation; whether a committee of the county council of Inverness then visited the island, and, after an exhaustive inquiry of nine days duration, reported to the effect that land was urgently needed, that the Island of Vatersay was suitable for small holdings, and could be used for this purpose with advantage; whether the county council refused to adopt the report of their own committee; and whether he will lay the various petitions and reports upon the Table of the House along with the letters already called for.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): So far as I am aware, the facts are broadly as stated in the Question. It should be added that recently at the instance of the Government the proprietrix offered to place the island in the hands of the Congested Districts Board for settlement by tenants, but on terms which the Government have not been able to accept. With reference to the publication of the proceedings of the county council of Inverness-shire, I am in communication with that body.

Durness (Sutherland) Crofters.

MR. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the Crofters Commission has refused to grant the application of the Durness (Sutherland) crofters for more grazing land; and if so, why; and whether the crofters referred to require the land for their stock.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am informed the facts are as follows. Crofters of Durness district applied for a large extent of land forming part of the neighbouring farms of Keoldale and Balnakille. Applications were objected to by the proprietor, Mr. William Ewing Gilmour, and by each of the farm tenants under section 13 (3) (b) of the Act, on the ground that the taking of the land applied for would cause material damage to the letting value of the remainder of each of said farms. After hearing parties and inspecting the subjects the Commissioners were of opinion that the said objection was well founded in point of fact. They therefore sustained the same and dismissed the applications. As regards the last clause of the Question, if crofters restrict their stock to the souming allowed their own land will maintain it. If, on the other hand, they keep excess stock, feeding must be obtained elsewhere.

MR. MORTON: May I ask whether there is any way of getting crofters back to the land except by fresh legislation?

MR. SINCLAIR: I understand not.

MR. MORTON: Is it not the fact that these crofters who applied for land were overstocked to the extent of 500 head?

MR. SINCLAIR: I am not sure of the facts. I believe it was the reason for their desiring more land.

Untenanted Lands in Waterford.

MR. MOORE: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland how many acres of untenanted land have been offered to or acquired by the Estates Commissioners in the county of Waterford.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): Up to the 22nd of last month, 732 acres of untenanted land in county Waterford had been offered for sale to the Estates Commissioners, and of this they had purchased 184 acres.

Lord Ashtown's Waterford Estate.

MR. MOORE: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland if he can state why Lord Ashtown has been selected as the first and only person in the county of Waterford from whom the Estates Commissioners have instituted proceedings to acquire land compulsorily for the purposes of The Evicted Tenants Act, 1907.

MR. BIRRELL: The expediency of acquiring any particular land for the purposes of the Evicted Tenants Act is, under the Act, a matter for the decision of the Estates Commissioners themselves. It is open to the owner to appeal to a Judge of the High Court if the Commissioners should initiate proceedings for the compulsory acquisition of land as to which the restrictions of the Act apply. As the matter therefore may be the subject of a judicial decision, I do not propose to inquire what the reasons of the Commissioners may have been for instituting proceedings for the compulsory purchase of land from Lord Ashtown, or from any other owner.

Evicted Tenants in County Waterford.

MR. MOORE: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland how many evicted tenants there are in the county of Waterford included in the number of 2,000 fixed by The Evicted Tenants Act, 1907, who have not been provided with holdings.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners inform me that the number of evicted tenants or their representatives not yet provided for in county Waterford, but for whom the Commissioners propose to find holdings if possible, is 131.

MR. MOORE: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland if he will state the names of the evicted tenants for whom the Estates Commissioners are attempting to acquire lands compulsorily from Lord Ashtown in the county of Waterford.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have not yet decided what evicted tenant, or tenants; they will put into occupation of this untenanted land, if acquired. It may be the former tenant, William Corrigan, or other evicted tenants.

Stranorlar Evicted Tenant.

MR. C. MACVEIGH (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Estates Commissioners has been called to the case of Mrs. Margaret Bell, who was evicted from her farm on the Marquess of Conyngham's estate, near Stranorlar, county Donegal, about twelve months ago for non-payment of rent; whether he is aware that the landlord permitted the Londonderry Provident Building Society to take possession of Mrs. Bell's farm under cover of a small loan made to her and not fully paid up; whether he is aware that the building society have obtained compensation from the Local Government Board for land acquired for labourers' cottages, and is otherwise making profit out of this farm; whether he is aware that the estate is being sold to the tenants, and that the building society is trying to purchase Mrs. Bell's farm in this way, whilst she can get no reply to her application to purchase; and whether, seeing that she may lose her farm, he will direct that an inspector be sent down to inquire into the matter, and that Mrs. Bell be either reinstated or compensated for the loss of her farm before the sale is sanctioned by the Commissioners.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners inform me that proceedings for sale of the estate of the Marquess of Conyngham have been instituted before them, but the case will not reach its turn to be dealt with for a considerable time. In 1904 Mrs. Bell was awarded £93 10s. compensation in respect of her interest in two acres of land which were being taken for labourers' cottages by the rural district council. The Local Government Board have no knowledge that the building society referred to received the compensation, but if such was the case it is assumed that the society obtained payment either in its capacity as mortgagee of Mrs.

Bell's interest, or as occupier, if the mortgage had been foreclosed. The payment of compensation in such cases is made by the district council independently of the Local Government Board. Upon the facts as stated, the Estates Commissioners do not consider the matter to be one in which they should interfere.

Labourers' Cottages in the Mount Bellew Union.

MR. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that applications had been made for several labourers' cottages in the electoral division of Toughboy, Mount Bellew Union; can he state whether any have been granted; and, if not, will he say why this has not been done.

MR. BIRRELL: Applications for the erection of nine labourers' cottages in the electoral division referred to were put forward by the Mount Bellew Rural District Council. Three of the applications were withdrawn at the inquiry, and the other six were disallowed by the inspector for the following reasons. In two cases the labourers already had proper house accommodation; one applicant was not an agricultural labourer; and in the remaining three cases the sites were half a mile from the public road and inconveniently situated as regards approach and a supply of water.

Wood Quay, Galway.

MR. GWYNN (Galway): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the attention of the Board of Works has been called to the repeated loss of life by drowning at Wood Quay, in Galway city; and whether the Board will take steps to induce the Corrib Navigation Trustees to rail this dangerous place?

MR. RUNCIMAN: The Board of Works inform me that they have no record of loss of life at Wood Quay, and that they are advised that the Corrib Navigation Trustees have no power of raising money for the purpose named in the question.

Irish Mail Service Subsidy.

MR. MOONEY (Newry): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that the amount paid by the Post Office to the London and North Western Railway Company for the carriage of mails is to be increased by the sum of £5,500; if he can state from what date this increased payment will be made; if he can state whether the whole of this increase is in connection with the company's Irish mail service; and if he will take steps to insure, before such increased sum is paid, that the Irish mail train run by the London and North Western Railway Company in connection with the City of Dublin Steam Packet Company's boats from Holyhead to Kingstown will be at least as fast as the London and North Western Company's boat train run in connection with their own boats.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: As the hon. Member was informed by the Secretary to the Treasury on Tuesday last, the payment to the London and North Western Railway Company for the conveyance of mails will be increased by £5,500 a year from the 1st April next, when the payment of £6,500 a year now made by the Treasury for the acceleration of the Irish Day Mail Services will cease. In return for this payment the railway company have agreed to carry out certain improvements which are mainly in connection with the mail services to and from Ireland. As regards the speed of the trains to Holyhead, there appears to be little difference between the times allowed for the mail trains and those of the company's boat trains, if allowance is made for the number and duration of the stops and the weight of the trains?

MR. MOONEY: Am I to understand from the right hon. Gentleman that any part of the contract in consideration of this increased service is that the train run in connection with the mail boat shall run at least as fast as the London and North Western trains?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The subsidy of £6,500 was in respect of the acceleration of the day mail between London and Dublin. It was not found practically that that subsidy was justified under the circumstances, and it has been withdrawn. With regard to the other subsidy, it is not in connection with any question of the acceleration of the mail, but it is in respect of various improvements in the mail services mainly in those to and from Ireland.

MR. MOONEY: Cannot the right hon. Gentleman give a definite Answer to my Question as to whether, under the new arrangements, the train run in connection with the day mail boat will be at least as fast as the London and North Western train, or are they to get £5,500 for another train slower than their own?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: It is not in connection with that train; it is in connection with other matters that the £5,500 is granted. The £6,500 for the acceleration of the train will cease.

MR. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork): What are the alterations to be made in respect of which the new subsidy is given?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I should like to have notice of that Question.

MR. MOONEY: That was my Question, and I have got no Answer to it, except that the train is not going to be slower than before.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.): If this £6,500 for the acceleration of the day mail is to be withdrawn, will the acceleration which it purchased cease?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: No, the train will run as before. If the hon. Member means will it be slower, my Answer is that it will not.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman if one of the conditions upon which the £6,500 was given was that the morning mail from Euston should start half an hour later, and is it now intended that it should revert to the original time of starting?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I do not understand that either in the matter of time or speed will there be any alteration for the worse.

Foot and Mouth Disease.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction in Ireland whether he has any information that a ship called the "Fram" is sailing from Dunkirk with a load of fodder for Ireland, and what action his Department intends to take in connection with this matter, seeing that foot and mouth disease exists in that district.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): I may be allowed to state how the matter stands. In the first place, an order against the landing of hay or straw imported from foreign infected countries will be issued, I think, on Wednesday. This Order has been issued in concert with the Board of Agriculture in Great Britain. I received information on Thursday last that a ship called the "Fram" was about to sail from Dunkirk with a cargo of straw for Dublin. That was an infected country, and I anticipated the General Order by issuing a Special Order prohibiting the landing of the cargo on its arrival. On Wednesday the Irish Order will be issued prohibiting the landing of hay and straw from ports in Great Britain. Of course a fortnight ago an Order was issued prohibiting the landing of animals. I think the Department has taken all necessary action, and I am glad of the opportunity of making this statement, in view of the anxiety that the matter has caused.

Administration of the Factory Acts.

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD: On behalf of the hon. Member for the Barnard Castle Division of Durham, I beg to ask the Prime Minister, whether, in view of the character of the increase in the number of accidents, fatal and non-fatal, in places under the Factory and Workshops Act, he sees his way to give the House an opportunity of adequately discussing the whole subject.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): The Government fully recognise the importance of this matter, but in view of the announcement just made by the Home Secretary of the intention to make a substantial increase in the inspecting staff, there does not seem to be any urgent necessity for an immediate discussion.

The Censorship of Questions.

MR. LLEWELYN WILLIAMS (Carmarthen District) had on the Paper the following Question:—To ask the Prime Minister, whether the Royal Commission recently appointed to make an inventory of the ancient and historical monuments and constructions from the earliest times to the year 1707, and to specify those which seem worthy of preservation, has yet commenced its labours; whether it is the intention of the Government to take steps to preserve the ancient monuments specified by the Commission; and whether he is prepared to recommend the appointment of a similar Commission for the discovery and preservation of ancient and historical monuments in Wales. On being called upon to put the Question the hon. Member said: I am not responsible for the form in which this Question appears on the Paper; I endeavoured to put a sensible question, but if you read it through you will find, if the first part is correct the last part is unnecessary, and as a protest against the action of the clerks at the Table, I refuse to put the Question. Instead I shall ask leave to substitute the following Question.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to make a statement now, and especially one of such a controversial character. I understand that in this instance the Question is printed in the exact form in which the hon. Member himself handed it in.

MR. LLEWELYN WILLIAMS: That is not so. I beg to ask the Prime Minister, a Question of which I have given him private notice, viz.——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order.

Licensing and Education Bills.

MR. LYELL (Dorsetshire, E.): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he will consider the advisability of proposing a resolution allocating time for the discussion of both the Licensing and Education Bills lately introduced; and whether he will take into consideration the possibility of being able by this means to allot, in consultation with the leaders of different parties in this House, such length of time to the various stages of these Bills as shall ensure an adequate discussion of all important points.

MR. ASQUITH: We shall be very glad if a general agreement can be arrived at in the House with regard to the allocation of time necessary for the further stages of the two Bills referred to, but it is too early yet to know whether any such agreement is practicable.

Licensed Property and Death Duties.

SIR HENRY KIMBER: I beg to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will lay upon the Table a Return of the death and succession and legacy duties received by the Inland Revenue, in each year since the case of Sharp v. Wakefield was decided, in respect of licensed property; and at how many years purchase the value of such property has been taken for the purpose of the assessment of such duties.

MR. ASQUITH: No separate record is kept of the death duties derived from licensed property. Each case is dealt with on its merits and by reference to the particular circumstances affecting it.

The Licensing Bill.

MR. ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I desire to ask when the Licensing Bill will be available for Members.

MR. ASQUITH: I hope to-morrow.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I should like to put a Question concerning the order of business, and in particular to know whether there is any prospect of the Home Rule debate coming on, and, if so, when.

MR. ASQUITH: It would be more convenient to have the Question concerning business put later in the week, but I am in a position to say at once, however, that until certainly the 22nd or 23rd of this month we must be occupied with the necessary financial business of the year, and therefore the debate to which the right hon. Gentleman refers cannot possibly take place at an earlier date than that.

NEW BILL.

ECCLESIASTICAL ASSESSMENTS (SCOTLAND) (No. 3) BILL.

"To regulate Ecclesiastical Assessments in Scotland," presented by Mr. Smeaton; supported by Captain Pirie, Mr. Dundas White, and Mr. Morton; to be read a second time upon Monday, 20th April, and to be printed. [Bill 134].

REDUCTION OF ARMAMENTS.

*MR. J. M. MACDONALD (Falkirk Burghs) rose to move: "That, in view of the continued friendly relations with Foreign Powers announced in the gracious Speech from the Throne, this House trusts that further reductions may be made in expenditure on armaments, and effects be given to the policy of retrenchment and reform to which the Government is pledged." The hon. Member said: I desire to say at the outset that the Motion that I now rise to move is not framed in any spirit of hostility to the Government. By the ordinary procedure of this House, the House never has brought before it a statement of expenditure on armaments as a whole with the view of having the sense of the House taken upon it. Nor is the Government ever called upon to justify its proposals with regard to our defensive armaments either by reference to the policy it is pursuing or by reference to the actually existing international situation. We have only statements laid before us with regard to details of expenditure and no large or comprehensive review as to what our requirements really are. In these circumstances if an unofficial Member desires to raise this large and general question he has to resort to the inconvenient expedient of moving an Amendment to the Address, or he has to persuade the Government to give him some other opportunity for discussing it. I have to thank the Government for having given me this opportunity, and I shall avail myself of it in what I hope is no hostile spirit. In any case, I shall try to argue the question, not with an eye to Party or sectional interests, but solely with regard to the interests of the country. I do not propose to trouble the House with many figures, but it is necessary for my purpose to make a rough comparison of the Estimates for 1908–9 with those of some former years. The Estimates for 1893–4 amounted roughly to £32,000,000. At that period they had been increased by more than a million beyond the amount at which they stood in 1887–8 when Lord Randolph Churchill resigned rather than accept the Estimates for that year. It is perhaps not without interest to recall what he then said in justification of his action. He said—

> "I remember the vulnerable and scattered character of the Empire, the universality of our commerce, the peaceful tendency of our democratic electorate, the hard times, the pressure of competition, and the high taxation now imposed, and with these facts vividly before me, I decline to be a party to encouraging the military and militant circle of the War Office and the Admiralty to join in the high and desperate stakes which other nations seemed to be forced to risk."

Although his action seemed to be without effect, I do not think it is altogether true that it was so, for we find that during the next six years the total defensive Estimates of the country increased by only about £1,000,000. But in 1894–5, a new era in expenditure opened. A proposal in that year to increase the Estimates by £3,500,000 was made to the Cabinet, and that proposal produced a difference of opinion among Members of the Government. Mr. Gladstone and the minority opposed it, while a majority approved; and rather than make himself responsible for it Mr. Gladstone resigned. He would not, he afterwards said, be a party to—

> "A policy that will be taken as plunging England into a whirlpool of militarism."

Between 1894–5, and 1904–5, there was a steady annual rise till the expenditure culminated in a Vote of £65,789,000, or more than double the Vote for 1893–4, the last year of what I may call low Estimates. Comparing the Estimates of 1904–5 with those now on the Table there is a diminution of £6,000,000; but this expenditure is still £27,750,000 in excess of that of 1893–4. If that increase is analysed and traced to the separate Votes it will be found to be due, so far as the Army is concerned, mainly to additions of men and horses; and, so far as the Navy is concerned, mainly to additions of men, to the maintenance of many more ships in commission, to the consequent large increase in cost of repairs, and finally to the cost of coaling for cruising. In the Estimates now on the Table we are asked to vote 27,000 more men for the Army than ten years ago, and 28,000 more men for the Navy. And here I desire to clear away a misunderstanding. It seems to be generally supposed as regards the Navy that the increase of expenditure is due to demands for the building of new battleships and cruisers, and that any reduction in the total Estimate must necessarily mean a reduction of this Vote. That I think is a mistake. The sum provided for new construction and armaments in 1908–9 was almost exactly the same as in 1897–8, but the proportion under this head in 1897–8 was nearly one-half the total expenditure; while in 1908–9 it will be less than a third. The main cause of the enormous increase in ten years is therefore not to be found in new construction and armaments, but, as I have said, in additional officers and men, in maintaining and repairing a larger number of ships, in the purchase of coal, and in all the other Votes relative to the administration of the Navy. These are the facts and figures on which I rest my case, and they suggest to us two questions for our consideration. The first is, What is there in the international situation that justified the enormous increase in our defensive forces made year after year from 1894 to 1904? The second is, What is there in our present international situation that justifies us in continuing to maintain forces so enormously in excess of what were sufficient for our purpose ten or fifteen years ago? As to the first, the answer is clear and is not, I think, disputed. It was our relations with France and Russia that justified the increase which took place between 1894 and 1904. I do not want to argue the question as to whether or not it is a sound justification. For the purposes of my argument I accept it. With both countries there were outstanding differences that might have led to war with either of them; and the character of the alliance between the two Powers was such that war with one of them would almost inevitably have meant war with both. That was the fear that induced this House and the country patiently to bear the additional burdens year by year put upon them. But that fear has been partly dissipated by the agreement with France signed in 1904, and it was completely dissipated by the result of the Russo-Japanese War; and our security against any attack from Russia was still further confirmed by the agreement by which the differences between us and that country in Middle Asia were amicably settled. No responsible Member of this House will now assert that we are bound to maintain our present defensive forces because of a fear that within any measurable distance of time, for which we have now to prepare ourselves, a war with either of these countries is possible. What then is there in our present relations with the Great Powers of the world that justifies a continuance of the present rate of expenditure? What new danger has taken the place of the danger that has now disappeared and that makes it necessary for us to maintain an expenditure £28,000,000 in excess of what was sufficient to meet our requirements fifteen years ago? I shall be told no doubt, that the expenditure has been reduced by several millions since 1904, and that the reduction would have been greater than it appears if allowance were made for the automatic increases from which we cannot escape, for additions due to the payment of Sinking Fund and interest on loans, and for the transfer to the Estimates of considerable sums for the completion of works originally intended to be paid for out of loans. I am aware of all this; but it is no answer to my point. The largest reduction in any one year was a reduction of roughly £3,750,000 in the Navy Estimate of 1905–6 under the late Government. But that reduction did not mean a diminution in the efficiency and fighting strength of the fleet. On the contrary, we were told that the very means by which this reduction was effected, were the means by which at the same time the fighting strength of the fleet was enormously increased; and we were told last year that this strength had been in no way diminished since then. In the face of these assurances to say that there have been reductions in expenditure has no bearing on the real question at issue. I look not at what has been taken away but at what is still left; and I ask again, What is the danger that now confronts us and that justifies us in maintaining a strength greater by far than any strength we have ever before possessed at a time when the outlook was peaceful and gave a reasonable prospect of a continuance of peace? That is the real question at issue—the question to which neither the House nor the country has ever had any reply, either from the Government or from their predecessors in office. Last year the Secretary of State for War, speaking on this subject, told us that he had never been able to work out the standard of our military requirements. He had never made any attempt to estimate the dangers that confronted us or to adjust our forces to them. That he seemed to regard as no part of his duty. He told us indeed that, given a peaceful policy, he hoped that our requirements would be small; and he added as the sole justification for the maintenance of the Estimates he then asked us to accept, that at any time clouds might come over the horizon. That is not a reason that will bear examination. It gives us no real standard at all. It is vague, uncertain, and entirely imaginary; and if we allow ourselves to be influenced by it there can be no limit to our expenditure except the limit of endurance. As to our naval requirements, the Government adheres to the two-Power standard and a margin over and above. Why do they do this? To that question, again, we have had no answer. Last year the Secretary to the Admiralty told us that when that standard was originally adopted it was determined by reference to two specified European Powers. Those Powers were France and Russia. It was not, he said, a standard in the abstract—a mere *chimera bombinans in vacuo;* it was a concrete thing. Is it an unfair inference from this to say that our adherence to that standard now is adherence to an abstraction, to a chimera, which has no real relation to the actual facts of our situation among the nations of the world? My right hon. friend went on to say that—

> "There may be conceivable circumstances in which a two-Power standard would be too much, and there may be imaginable circumstances in which a three-Power standard would be too little."

To this we can all agree. But the question is, What are the circumstances that now determine the maintenance of our present standard? He went on still further to say that what the standard should be is in its essence a political question, not a party question, but a question for Parliament. Here again we can all agree. It is a question for Parliament; and above all it is a question for the responsible Government of the day. And here I may be met with the objection that, subject to their responsibility, confidence ought to be placed in the Government on account of their superior knowledge of the real situation of affairs. Confidence in a Government by their supporters is undoubtedly one of the political virtues without which government, as we know it, could not be carried on. But, like most rules of conduct, it admits of limitations and exceptions. On an occasion, not very dissimilar from the occasion of our debate to-day—it was in a debate on the Army Estimates—Burke, in reply to this argument that the House ought to have confidence in the Government, said that—

> "Confidence might become a vice, and jealousy a virtue, according to circumstances; that confidence of all public virtues was the most dangerous, and jealousy in a House of Commons of all public vices the most tolerable, especially where the number and charge of standing armies in time of peace was the question."

This jealousy is, no doubt, always a source of discomfort to a Government; but it has been the attitude generally adopted by the House all through its history towards proposals relating to the number and charge of armies and navies in time of peace; and few of us looking back over that history will deny that, when kept within reasonable bounds, it has been a source of untold benefit to our country. We are ready to place confidence in the Government; but the Government must in its turn justify that confidence by placing before us a reasoned statement in support of their proposals with regard to our military and naval Estimates. They must, in short, tell us why they maintain the present numbers of the Army, and why in the Navy they maintain the two-Power standard and the margin over and above it. There are four foreign Powers which possess at this moment considerable navies. They are the United States, France, Germany, and Japan. Against which two of these Powers are we maintaining our present naval strength? Japan is our ally. She is, therefore, not one of the two Powers that give us the measure of our naval requirements. France is our friend, and we are not maintaining the two-Power standard against her either alone or in alliance with any other Power. The idea of a war with the United States is one that no man among us seriously entertains. Germany remains; and here I come on the one danger spot on the horizon of our international politics. The danger exists; but it is of such a character that I am convinced that if it is brought out into the open and frankly discussed it will disappear. It is an artificial danger, not springing from any conflict of interest associated with the permanent welfare of either country. There are men among us who assert confidently that a war between us and Germany is inevitable. They assert it as confidently as ten or fifteen years ago they asserted that a war with France and Russia was inevitable. They assert it not because they think that we have anything to gain by such a war. We are not, in fact, to be the aggressors. It is the Germans that are to be the attacking party. And these men are industriously engaged in the Press and on the platform in spreading among us a suspicion of the designs of that Power. By their action they are fostering and encouraging the very danger that they profess to dread. In Germany, too, there are men who say that a war between them and us is inevitable. But in their view we are to be the aggressors, and not they. Those who know German opinion tell us that every German throughout the length and breadth of the Empire—every German, at least, who gave any attention to public affairs—has been convinced for the last two years, up to quite recent days, that we had evil designs against his country. He lived in daily dread of an unprovoked declaration of war from us. His fear was absolutely chimerical. No responsible man among us ever dreamt of an unprovoked attack by us against Germany. That is undoubtedly true. But what was the origin of the fear entertained by Germany with regard to us? It undoubtedly was—I say it without hesitation—that we were maintaining a power in excess of our apparent requirements. The international situation had altered enormously to our advantage in 1904, and in the two succeeding years. Why then did we not reduce our strength in proportion to the advantage we had gained? Who looking back over the history of our relations with Germany during the last six or seven years will honestly say that he is astonished that Germans interpreted our action as hostile to them? We hear that during the last month or two, largely in consequence of the warm welcome given to the German Emperor on his recent visit to us, truer views of our feeling towards the people of Germany are beginning to prevail in that country. But the danger has not yet gone by. There are men among us, and there are men among the Germans, who with a frothy and feminine exaggeration of patriotism are, knowingly or unknowingly, doing all they can to stir up ill-feelings between the two peoples. These feelings can be allayed by a policy of moderation. There is nothing in the situation of the two peoples to justify their continuance. And I will boldly say that it is for us to give the example. There is one other point on which I wish to say a few words. The policy we have been pursuing during recent years in relation to expenditure on armaments is, I am convinced, a mistaken policy, even if we look at it solely as a means of preparing for war. Two courses, it seems to me, lie open to any Government in fitting a nation to bear the strain of a great war, if a great war should come. Every interest of the people may be subordinated to the interest of maintaining a great Army and a great Navy. All the available resources of a country may be used up in maintaining the establishments necessary to meet the risks of war. We have seen many illustrations of this policy in the history of Continental nations. The extreme example was that of the French Kingdom under Louis XIV. That monarch sought to maintain an army greater than that of any other European Power, and a Navy equal to coping with the British Navy. In pursuance of that object he neglected all the real and permanent interests of his people; and he sowed the seeds of that impoverishment and discontent which led by inevitable stages to the French Revolution. The very means by which he sought to secure the position of his kingdom among the other kingdoms of the world became the means by which it was ultimately undermined and destroyed from within. That I admit was an extreme example of the policy, but it is an example that ought always to be present to the mind of the statesman when considering the distribution of the resources of the people among their several wants. More moderate examples of the policy we can see on the Continent of Europe at this day. I refrain from specifying any particular Power. But there are Governments that have been, and are now, putting so severe a strain upon the resources of their country for the purpose of maintaining great armaments as to create between themselves and their subjects a gulf which has been widening and which must go on widening till at last the stability of the State is exposed to far more serious risks from within than any risks which in ordinary circumstances it would have to encounter by attacks from without. That is one course open to us in preparing ourselves to meet the risks of war. The other course is in time of peace to subordinate the demands of our military and naval departments to the wants of the people. This is the course which, taking our history as a whole, we have hitherto tended to pursue; and it is a course to which we owe much of, if not all, our greatness as a nation. What other country in the world, looking back over its history, can boast of a people so loyal to its government, so contented, on the whole, with its condition, so able to bear the strain of war when war came, as ours? And if that be a true boast, as surely it is, we owe it to the fact that we have never allowed, taking our course of action as a whole, the claims of war, in time of peace, to over-ride the claims of the people. But it is the burden of my complaint that in recent years we have been tending to depart from this wise course. We have been spending more, far more, on our defensive establishments than we have ever spent before, and we have been spending it without any proved necessity for it. Nor has the waste of our material resources been the only evil that has resulted from our adoption of this course. We have been concentrating more of the attention of the country on this question of armaments, and we have been devoting to the solution of military and naval problems more of the intelligence at the disposal of Government for the performance of its various duties to the people, than we have ever done before. And we have been correspondingly neglecting those great social and educational problems by the true solution of which our real greatness, and the position which we are in future to take among the nations of the world, must ultimately be determined. Of the two policies which I have attempted to describe, and which now lie open to our choice, the first is essentially military and autocratic in its character and essentially opposed to the permanent interests of the people. The other is, I submit, the traditional policy of this country, which has always refused to follow the example of Continental Powers and to be drawn into the whirlpool of militarism. It is a policy sanctioned by the greatest names in the long roll of our statesmen. It was sanctioned by Sir Robert Walpole, the first and greatest of our peace Ministers. It was sanctioned by Sir Robert Peel. And it was sanctioned by Mr. Gladstone. I appeal to the House and to the country to adhere to this policy as the only policy consistent with our permanent welfare and our real greatness. But before I sit down there is one word that I must say with reference to the Amendment that stands in the name of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. I take no exception to that Amendment. I cannot conceive that any reasonable man could. It is in fact a mere form of words, of whose real substance and meaning we can know nothing till we have heard the Chancellor's speech; and it must be obvious, from what I have said, that my attitude towards it (and I think I speak on this point for many more than myself) will be determined by that speech. I beg, Sir, to move.

*SIR JOHN BRUNNER (Cheshire Northwich): Sir, I have the honour to second the Motion of my hon. friend but before doing so may I thank my hon. friend for the zealous, logical, calm, and temperate statement he has laid before the House. I shall not trouble the House with any figures; I am not an expert, though I have had a great deal to do with this kind of work, and I shall endeavour to state my case apart from figures as simply as possible, and in absolute sincerity. It was about half a century ago that an hon. Gentleman in this House proposed a standard for the Navy equal to that of any other two Powers. That policy was approved by Mr. Gladstone and accepted by the late Marquess of Salisbury. I am bound to acknowledge the wisdom and justice of that two-Power standard. It was originally adopted as a weapon against two countries who were, with reason or without reason, suspected of animosity towards this country. One of these two countries, by the help of King and people, has become our friend; the other, by the wise statesmanship of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, is now also bound to us in terms of amity. The reason for the two-Power standard then has gone. So long as the reasons for the policy of the two-Power standard existed, there was in all the world no anger or alarm at our conduct. It was recognised that we who were an insular people with a world-wide Empire were entitled to maintain a Navy larger than other countries in the world. Why that policy has been continued I can only conjecture. But I take it it has been because the statesmen of this country have thrown off the responsibility of the decision in this matter and put it into the hands of experts. I have employed experts for over thirty-three years, in matters of all sorts, and paid for their opinion, but I have never allowed them to dictate my policy. I have always decided what it was right and wise for me to do, and then asked the experts how it was to be done. I think it is the right policy for the State to have their own opinion as the head of the Government or of a Department. In private concerns we never allow experts to dictate our views, and I certainly hold the opinion that that is the right course. I am angered when I see in the Press that the Government must be guided and advised by their responsible advisers. I am one of those who think the men in the Government should be strong enough to decide their policy for themselves and bear the responsibility. They certainly should be strong enough to keep the experts quite out of sight and prevent them from dropping confidential documents about and popping in and out of newspaper offices. I want strong men at the head of the Government. In my opinion, and I am as I said not an expert, we have a Navy far beyond the two-Power standard, and, as the House knows, it is universally regarded as anti-German. That has been openly stated. It is to be found in all our newspapers. And what has been the effect of that in Germany itself I shall have a word or two to say upon in a minute or two. A very large proportion of our newspapers have for years been nagging at Germany. We have far too many newspapers, and the result of their competition, keen beyond precedent, is to be seen every day in the desperately unworthy expedients which they adopt. It has become almost impossible for honest men to carry on a newspaper and live upon it. They are not all on one side of politics. They live by sensations and scares, the more sensational the more profitable they are, and while they rake in the profits it is the people who have to pay the damage, except, of course, in the case of soap. I object to government by sensation-mongers as much as to government by experts. And seriously I would ask, are we to allow these men, carrying on what has been called by German editors "interested agitations," to lead us deeper into the mire? Are we to allow ourselves to drift from folly into crime? Let us return to the days of manly restraint, reticence, and moderation, and let us abandon bluff. There has been an immense amount of bluff both in Germany and in England. Let us also refrain from talking about German deficits, German taxation, and the probable exhaustion of the power of the German people to maintain their expenditure. Who would dare to fix the limit of the taxation we would be willing to bear if we were threatened by Germany? I hope we shall cease to taunt the German people in any such fashion. If the two-Power standard was adequate ten years ago—I did not consider it justifiable then—why is it not adequate now? Ten years ago we were on the verge of war with France, and I remember four Englishmen meeting four Frenchmen with grave faces and anxious hearts to consider what they could do to preserve peace and ease the dangerous relations. I remember it was suggested to send a deputation to Paris. I remember with intense pleasure the effect of the visit of those men to Paris and the perfect impression they produced three years afterwards. I remember and am glad to remember that now France and England are on terms of cordial friendship, and that the first beginning of that friendship was the visit of British trade unionists to Paris. We have now a friendly Convention with Russia, whose position has been otherwise altered; and Japan is our ally. In these circumstances, I scout the idea that we need more ships of war than we did ten years ago. Last Whitsuntide I travelled in Germany with the Royal Commission on Canals, and found that practically everyone there was apprehensive of an unprovoked attack by us on the German Navy. In Berlin we heard of a secret report emanating from the Admiralty describing how this attack could be made, and how troops could at the same time be landed in Schleswig-Holstein, which report, it was said, had come under the eyes of the Kaiser. The anger created by this document was sedulously fanned throughout Germany, and the result was the jingo majority of 1907 and the naval programme. I am glad to say that our relations are improving, and responsible leaders of opinion in Germany have expressed their intense admiration of our great act of magnanimity in making a gift of a free Constitution to the Transvaal. We never had a definite standard in the case of the Army; I therefore take the standard of ten years ago and ask why we should be spending more to-day. I quite agree that it is to the good that the pay of the men and their comfort should have been increased. But we are to have more men, and there I cannot follow my right hon. friend the Secretary for War. There is to be a striking force of 160,000 men, and this necessity depends largely on the demands from India. But are our needs there as great now as they were before my right hon. friend made his statement lately in the House? Has the Convention between us and Russia improved our position in India? Has it lessened the need for a defensive force against invasion? If not, what is the value of the Convention? Are we being bamboozled, and is it all fudge? My praise of the right hon. Gentleman is sincere, and my admiration of the great act of statesmanship is very great, because I believe that our force in India is sufficient, and if it is not, why is the House not told so by the Secretary of State for India? If it was sufficient in the past, then with the improvement of our position with regard to Russia it is more than sufficient to-day. Let the House lay down the policy and insist that our numbers at home should be decreased, and I will be ready to back the opinion that the experts would be able to find a sufficient number of men to send out as drafts to India. If the experts did not find the means, then I would get another set of experts. To make the country really strong we want productive, not unproductive, expenditure. I want the Government actively to help trade, and I want to abolish unskilled labour because I want to see a highly educated people. For Germany has beaten us owing to its better system of education. I am not hostile to the Government, but I warn them not to dwell in a fools' paradise. I assure the Government that if all the hon. Members who sympathise with the Motion of my hon. friend were to vote against them, His Majesty's Ministers would be in a minority. I hope that the debate will be interpreted abroad as a friendly message to the people of Germany, because in my opinion those who take the view I indicated of friendliness in relations with foreign Powers will win, if not to-night, at least in a short time to come.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, in view of the continued friendly relations with foreign Powers announced in the gracious Speech from the Throne, this House trusts that further reductions may be made in expenditure on armaments, and effect be given to the policy of retrenchment and reform to which the Government is pledged."—(*Mr. Murray Macdonald.*)

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Asquith, Fife, E.): Sir, I can assure my two hon. friends who have supported this Motion with so much force and feeling that in the dominating motive which I am certain has actuated them in bringing it forward—namely, a desire to do something effectual to reduce the growth of naval and military expenditure not only in this but in other countries—they have the complete sympathy of every Member who sits on this bench. Among all the avoidable curses which in these days afflict the civilised world, there are few I think that bring a greater sense of despair than the competition in armaments. Looked at even from the purely economic point of view it means the annual diversion from productive to unproductive employment of an almost incalculable quantity of potential wealth, both in money and in men. I have complete sympathy, therefore, with the intention and the motive of my hon. friends. Further, I quite accept their disclaimer—couched though it was in rather menacing terms by my hon. friend who has just sat down—of any hostile intention to the Government in bringing forward the Motion. I need hardly point out to them and to the House that a Motion of this kind, if adopted, must and would be judged, not by the spirit in which it is conceived, but by the sense in which it will be interpreted; and I cannot but think, and the Government think, that a Resolution of this kind deliberately passed by the House of Commons a week after the Army and Navy Estimates have been circulated, would be construed, and must be construed if passed in the form in which it now stands, as a declaration that the Government had failed to make such reductions as were required for the interests of the State—at any rate, that they had been slack in redeeming the pledges which they gave to the constituencies. I need not say that the Government cannot admit the accuracy of either of these propositions; and hence I have thought it to be my duty to put down an Amendment which I now move. I should not have thought it right to meet the Motion of my hon. friend by a direct negative. On the contrary, we adopt, and we gladly adopt, the preamble with which his declaration is prefaced. We invite the House, however, in our Amendment to make a declaration in favour of economy and of support to the Government in all the efforts it is making towards this end. The Government will then be more solemnly pledged than ever before to do everything in their power to promote this economy; but at the same time we ask the House—we are bound to ask the House—to give explicit recognition to the governing consideration by which all economies must in the long run be regulated—namely, that they are consistent with the adequate defence of his Majesty's Dominions. Something is said in the Motion of my hon. friend about the pledges in favour of economy given to the country by the Government and their supporters. I quite agree that one of the heaviest counts in the indictment which many of us preferred against the late Administration was this, that during their term of office the expenditure on the Army and the Navy had enormously and unnecessarily increased, and increased to a degree which was not and could not be justly measured merely by the sums annually voted by the House, for the actual outlay was substantially added to by capital expenditure out of money borrowed for the purpose. We were undoubtedly pledged, and are pledged, to do everything in our power as promptly and as effectively as we can to effect some mitigation of that enhanced scale of expenditure. But some of us pointed out at the time of the general election that while it is very easy to raise the level of expenditure for purposes like these it is very difficult to cut it down again. When pledges are spoken of I should like to cite some words which I used, not on one occasion only, but often. It is only a sample of what I said even at the time when I had just assumed the office of Chancellor of the Exchequer, and on which I laid stress at the general election. Speaking at Perth on 11th January, 1906, I used these words—

> "It is very easy to pile up expenditure, but once you have raised the standard of expenditure in the Army, Navy, Civil Service, and other Departments of the State it is extremely difficult to cut it down again to the level from which you started. New interests have been created, new expectations held out, new and expensive services have been begun and developed, large works of construction are in the course of erection, and you cannot in a moment as by a magic wand bring things back to the condition in which formerly they were."

This was an expressive and authoritative statement which the newly-formed Government made at the time of the election; and I am bound to say, though I spoke more or less as an outsider—as one at any rate having a superficial and preliminary acquaintance with the duties of his office—that after more than two years experience in which I can honestly say that almost day and night I have been battling—I will not say with my colleagues, though in that I should not be saying anything far from the truth—in every Department of the State, not merely to bring about reductions, but to prevent increases in expenditure, I found out how prescient I was then in the words I had uttered, how serious, grave, formidable, almost insuperable, were the obstacles when inflated and reckless expenditure has once established itself to those who conscientiously and resolutely desire to lessen it. Apart from that, I ask the attention of the House to the actual facts in order to see what we have done during the two years. I will take first of all the case of the Navy. The total outlay on the Navy consists of three different heads. First of all, there are the sums voted by the House in the Estimates, from which, of course, it is only fair to subtract the amount of the annuities under the Naval Works Acts, which represents the payment of interest and reduction of principal on works created. In the second place, there is the money raised and spent from loans; and in the third place, there has been in the last few years another item of considerable importance, though it has largely escaped the attention of the House—namely, the stores in stock which have been drawn upon for consumption without being replaced. These three items together represent the total outlay on the Navy for any given year. What did they amount to during the last few years?

I begin with the year 1904–5, and I use round figures. The expenditure in that year was £41,400,000; in the year 1905–6 it was £38,300,000; in the year 1906–7—for a part of which only we were responsible—it was £36,000,000; in the year 1907–8 it was £34,750,000; and in the year 1908–9 it will be just short of £34,000,000. So that if you compare the total actual outlay—and I am speaking of gross expenditure—for the year 1907–8 with the year 1905–6, you have a reduction of £3,500,000; and if you compare the same year with 1906–7, you have a reduction of £1,250,000. Let us take the figures in reference to one particular item—the item of new construction. Here, again, I will not make a comparison with the years 1903–4 or 1904–5 because they were exceptional years. In the years 1905–6 the item for new construction was £9,690,000; in 1906–7 it was £8,860,000; in 1907–8 it was £8,100,000; and in the present year it was £7,540,000. So that the Estimates now before the House, compared with those of 1905–6 show a reduction in respect of this item of £2,150,000, and, compared with those of 1906–7, a reduction of £1,320,000. That is a very solid, substantial, and successful effort to reduce expenditure. But when you are comparing what appears to be the outlay on the Navy in different years, you ought to analyse the figures and read between the lines. Let me make some explanatory notes from that point of view. First as regards loans. Under the administration of the late Government a great deal was spent on the Navy which did not appear on the Votes at all. For several years the loan expenditure reached nearly £3,500,000 a year. I have never said that under no conceivable circumstances is it right to defray capital expenditure on any service out of borrowed money. I shall never say anything of the kind. But I do say unhesitatingly that the system followed during these ten years was wasteful and extravagant; that both the Army and the Navy got into the habit of resorting to borrowing for defraying the cost of services which ought to have been defrayed out of revenue, and that through the necessary withdrawal from direct Parliamentary criticism and control of the money raised by loans, works of an expensive and unnecessary character were undertaken with no productive result. That item of expenditure, which in some years was nearly £3,500,000 under the last Administration, has sunk this year to little over £1,000,000; and it will now soon disappear. On the other hand, and this is another consideration to be taken into account when dealing with the apparent expenditure on the Navy, our expenditure has been ostensibly swollen by the growing charge for the annuities necessary to repay these loans raised in the past. If you go back to 1901–2, the amount of annuities charged on the votes was only £122,000. In 1906–7 it was £1,094,000; in 1908–9 it will be £1,264,000; and in 1910–11 it will be £1,350,000. Thus in eight years the apparent annual cost of the Navy in consequence of meeting these loans out of annuities will have risen by £1,228,000.

Then there is the question of stores. Everyone knows that in the year following the Estimates of 1904–5 there was an enormous apparent reduction in the Navy Estimates, due to the initiation of the policy which is known as "scrapping"—the discarding of obsolete ships which had been hitherto kept in commission. I say nothing now as to the wisdom of that policy. It is a matter of acute controversy in naval circles. But one result of the policy of scrapping on a large scale was this—that there was set free a huge quantity of surplus or redundant stores, otherwise needed for the purposes of these discarded ships. Ever since the year 1904–5 the Navy has been living to a considerable extent on these redundant stores. Instead of Parliament's being obliged to provide money on the Estimates to supply these stores to the Navy, the Navy, through the stores set free, has been able to supply itself. During the last three years the naval expenditure has been aided by these redundant stores by sums which have varied from £768,000 in the first year to no less than £1,242,000 in the last. Like other things, except the widow's cruse, these stores have come at last to an end; and, during the next financial year, we shall only receive aid to the extent of £500,000, and in the following year none at all. We have, therefore, to provide out of cash—and that is one of the reasons for the apparent increase this year for the requirements of a Navy which has been living on capital in this respect. It is thoroughly acknowledged by my hon. friends that such emergency and contingency expenses are not likely to be recurrent as those we have to provide for—the cooling or refrigerating magazines for the great battleships which we now know are absolutely essential to their safety; and the extra cost of fuel due to what we think is a temporary rise in the price of coal. The Navy contracts had to be made when the price was still exceptionally high. These things are beyond the region of controversy; and when these facts are taken into account, I say that during the two years when we have had actual control, we have made substantial progress in redeeming our pledges. And I add that I do not believe the Navy was ever in a more efficient condition than it is at present. It is not possible to suggest that that substantial reduction has been incompatible with maintaining and even with improving the fighting efficiency of the Fleet.

I pass from the Navy to the Army, and here, again, I deal with gross expenditure. There is no question here of surplus stores, and so the actual outlay means the sums voted by Parliament and spent—not always the same thing—and the money actually raised and expended from loans. The figures circulated by the Secretary of State deal only with net expenditure. I again take the gross. In the year 1904–5, the expenditure was £36,300,000; in 1905–6, it was £32,800,000; in 1906–7, it was £32,050,000; in 1907–8, it will be about £30,691,000; and in 1908–9, it is £30,570,000. If again I compare the year 1907–8 with the years 1905–6 and 1906–7, we see that there is a reduction on the expenditure of 1905–6 of £2,109,000, and on that of 1906–7 of £1,359,000.

Here, again, the same analysis will be necessary. The average annual expenditure out of loans for the three years ended 1905–6 was £2,500,000. That my right hon. friend has brought down to £320,000. On the other hand, the loan annuity, which in the Army as in the Navy has been growing all the time, which we have got to defray out of the Votes, and which in 1904–5 was £651,000, in 1907–8 was £1,223,000, and in 1909–10 will amount to £1,158,000. Thus the House will see that in the course of five years the apparent, not the real, cost of the Army, in consequence of the extra charge of the annuity, has risen by £500,000. If you add to that the non-recurrent expenditure which my right hon. friend has had to face in connection with the winding-up of the Volunteers and with the initial expenses of the Territorial Army, the House will find that in the Army, as in the case of the Navy, we have made very substantial progress in the direction of retrenchment. I now take the actual outlay on the Army and Navy combined, and make the same comparison. As compared with 1905–6, the reduction for 1907–8 on the Army and Navy together is £5,633,000, and as compared with 1906–7, £2,553,000. Those facts are, I think, sufficient to show that we have kept steadily in view the pledges we gave, though I quite agree that the reductions are not so large as some of us hoped for.

I shall be asked "what about the future?" The Motion of my hon. friend is prefaced by a reference to the growth which we have witnessed in recent years of friendly agreements and intimacies between ourselves and other Powers. I propose, as I have said, in the Amendment which I am about to submit to retain that reference. The happy working of a wise and skilful diplomacy, conducted with equal earnestness and skill and tact both by Lord Lansdowne and my right hon. friend the present Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, has established relations based upon written covenants, but cemented, I am glad to say, by reciprocal good will, which remove some, at any rate, of the dangers with which we used to have to reckon in days gone by. There are, to speak first of the Navy, some combinations—I will not particularise them—which used to trouble the minds and colour the policy of statesmen which, to say the least of it, have become in the highest degree improbable and which we may hope in a very few years, at any rate, will have passed into the region of the inconceivable. And even where, as in the case of Germany, there is no express compact, we have the best reason to hope and believe that the two peoples are every year advancing nearer and nearer to a complete mutual understanding. We, on our side—I say it advisedly—have no reason to witness with suspicion or with apprehension any naval expansion there or elsewhere, which should simply correspond to the economic and defensive needs of the country and a rapidly-growing population becoming more and more dependent both for food and raw material on overseas sources of supply and with an expanding maritime commerce which she is bound to protect. Those are perfectly legitimate limits of naval expansion.

On the other hand, I say emphatically, that our shipbuilding policy, and the whole of our naval policy, is a purely defensive one. We not only do not wish to take the lead, but we want to do everything in our power to prevent a new spurt in competitive shipbuilding between the great naval Powers. We do not, as the Estimates which are now circulated sufficiently show, build against programmes which are merely on paper. The policy of the Government is most clearly defined in a single sentence of the Memorandum of my noble friend the First Lord of the Admiralty, which I will read to the House. After dealing with the shipbuilding programme for the new year, my noble friend says—

> "This programme suffices for 1908–9; whether, and to what extent, it may be necessary to enlarge it next year, or in future years, must depend upon the additions made to their naval force by foreign Powers. His Maj sty's Government have every intention of maintaining the standard of the British Navy which has hitherto been deemed necessary for the safeguarding of our national and Imperial interests."

What does that mean? Our naval position is at this moment, as I believe, as the Government believe, one of unassailable supremacy, and such it must remain. The command of the sea, however important and however desirable it may be to other Powers, is to us a matter of life and death. We must safeguard it, not against imaginary dangers, not against bogeys and spectres and ghosts, but we must safeguard it against all contingencies that can reasonably enter into the calculations of statesmen. For that purpose, we believe it to be our duty to maintain our standard of relative naval strength. Both my hon. friends have said something as to the historical origin of what is called the two-Power standard, and I daresay they are correct in the statements which they made on that point. But I do not think the historical origin of the standard matters very much. The combinations of Powers and the relations between Powers necessarily shift from time to time. The standard which is necessary for this country—you may express it by any formula you please, though I believe it to be a convenient and practical formula—the standard which we have to maintain is one which would give us complete and absolute command of the sea against any reasonably possible combination of Powers. I do not think it desirable, on the contrary, I think it in the highest degree undesirable, in the public interest to speculate as to what the possible groupings may be; whether this Power or that may or may not become, in the future, the enemy of this country. Of this I am perfectly certain, and I believe I can make this statement in the face of this House and in the face of Europe, that there is none of the great Powers of the world at this moment, I believe without a single exception, which views with animosity, jealousy, or misgiving the Navy of Great Britain being maintained at what we call the two-Power standard. I do not believe they do. I see no evidence that they do; I do not believe any evidence can be produced that they do. But I may add that, further than that limit, the limit laid down by the First Lord of the Admiralty in his Memorandum, we have neither any temptation nor any inclination to go.

I pass to what is, undoubtedly, a difficult question, the question of the Army, because it raises considerations of a different kind. It is not on the Army, in the long run, that we rely for the defence of this kingdom and the protection of our possessions. But, as everybody must agree, though we may differ about numbers and so on, our Regular Army has certain defined and indispensable functions, as to which there is now a general consensus, and which no other instrument, neither the Navy nor the Territorial Force, nor any combination of the two, can adequately discharge. There are two principles affecting the size of the Home Army, and I speak, of course, of the Regulars, which have been adopted and pursued, with general agreement, for the best part of forty years. Their history and their justification are very carefully set out in the Memorandum of my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War. The first is that we ought to get rid, as far as possible, of foreign service for the Regular Army and leave to the self-governing parts of the Empire the cost and responsibility of local military defence. The second is that we ought to make our home establishment a central reserve force for Imperial purposes, and, therefore—and this is where the question of numbers comes in—to proportion its numbers and strength to the troops required for service in India and in the outlying parts of the Empire. That principle lies at the root of what is called the Cardwell system of linked troops, which is the governing, though it is not the only, factor in determining the size of our Regular Army.

What is the enormous increase in the cost of the Army, something like £8,000,000 during the last ten years, due to? It is not mainly or substantially due to any great increase in numbers. The establishment abroad—I think the figures will be found in the Memorandum of my right hon. friend—has grown in those ten years by less than 5,000, and that at home by less than 3,000. What, then, has been the main cause of the increase? By far the largest cause, I think, is the higher pay which has been given to the men and the officers. I need not go into the figures, but I am sure I am not exaggerating when I say that at least £2,500,000, £2,000,000 at any rate, of the additional cost of the Army is represented by the increased pay, the greater comfort in various ways of the men alone. I do not know whether if we had to go through that process again, we should find it possible to justify every step that has been taken, but I am certain that neither this nor any other House of Commons would go back on what has been done. You cannot reduce the wages of the soldier. You cannot possibly, in these days particularly, ask a man who has gone to serve his country in the Army to accept a lower standard of comfort and of remuneration than that which at present prevails. I do not believe that that is practical politics, and I do not believe that there is any party in the House in favour of it. Then how are we to reduce the cost of the Army? That is the serious matter for us. I agree with my hon. friend who has just sat down in saying that there never has been set up in regard to our Regular Army any such standard as the two-Power standard for the Navy and for a very good and simple reason. The Navy is our vital instrument of national defence, whereas the Army exists for much more defined and much more limited purposes. How, then, are we to reduce the cost of the Army? As I have said over and over again in this House, there is only one way in which it can be done—that is by reducing the number of men. [AN HON. MEMBER: By 50,000 men?] I should like to mention one or two considerations of a more general kind which you have to bear in mind—those of you who are anxious, as I am, for a reduction in the number of men. In the first place, the whole problem of the size of your Regular Army at home must in the long run, under the Cardwell system——

COLONEL SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) interjected a remark which did not reach the Gallery.

*MR. ASQUITH: Of course, if you are going to abolish the Cardwell system, I agree; but my hon. friend has first to persuade the Government and this House to abolish it. But so long as the Cardwell system exists, the size of your Army must bear strictly definite relation to the size of the force that you keep in India and the other parts of the Empire. In talking about India both my hon. friends referred—it was very natural for them to do so—to the Anglo-Russian Agreement, in regard to which so many congratulations were offered the other night—[AN HON. MEMBER: And rightly.]—and quite rightly, to the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. No one rejoices in that Agreement more than I do, or appraises its value more highly; but it is only fair to remember that while, as I hope and believe, that Agreement will produce in time a very considerable effect on the military situation in India, Anglo-Indian military requirements never have been and never can be governed solely—I might almost say mainly—by the possibilities of an invasion on the North-West frontier. That is only one of the contingencies against which you have to guard; and your force in India, which was fixed as far back as the time immediately after the Mutiny, was fixed in reference to a large number of considerations quite independent of the possibility of invasion—considerations many of which still have, or ought to have, as much weight as they had at the time. I do not think it is expedient or desirable to go into detail as to what those considerations are. They are perfectly familiar to anyone who has studied the matter, and I only allude to them in order to enter a *caveat* which my hon. friend will thoroughly appreciate, against the notion that the Anglo-Russian Agreement, important as it is, must necessarily lead in a short space of time to any substantial reduction in the garrison. But this I will say, and I am sure it will be gratifying news to both my hon. friends, that my right hon. friend the Secretary for India is now, and has for some time been, in close communication with the Indian Government in regard to the whole question of the maintenance and distribution and size of the military forces in India. I think the House ought to be satisfied for the moment with that declaration. I cannot anticipate what will be the result of the deliberations which are taking place, but the House may be quite certain that they will be continued in a serious spirit and with a desire to arrive at a thoroughly satisfactory result. Leaving India for the moment out of the question, there are other parts of the Empire where we still maintain garrisons which, in my opinion and in the opinion of the Government, it is our business to reduce. My right hon. friend, in his statement circulated with the Estimates, states what as the result of a decision of the Cabinet is to be done in that direction during the coming year. He says—

> "The policy of concentrating our forces is still being continued, and in pursuit of this policy the Government has, during the last two years, materially reduced our garrisons abroad, and aims at reducing them still further wherever withdrawals can safely be effected. With this object in view, it has been decided to bring home from colonial stations during the coming financial year one cavalry regiment and four battalions of infantry. This arrangement has the full assent of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who is of opinion that the time has arrived when the interests of South Africa admit of some reduction of the garrison."

I hope and believe that is only a first step. We have granted self-government to the two colonies in South Africa, and the necessity for the maintenance of a large military garrison there has, we believe, ceased to exist. There is no part of the world, and I think the right hon. Gentleman will correct me if I am wrong, where it is so costly to maintain British troops as it is in South Africa, and if we bring home, without danger to the peace and good order of South Africa, as we believe will be the case, first this instalment and then gradually more and more of the garrison out there, we shall be establishing not only an immediate saving in the cost of the men who are brought home, but, by being able to dispense with expensive expedients like provisional battalions here and producing a complete balance between the units at home and abroad, we shall make a double economy which will have visible and substantial effect. Before I leave that point, let me say in regard to this question of Army reduction that, since we came into office, my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War has reduced the numbers of the Regular Army by 21,700 men—the announcement does not seem to receive very much credit from hon. Gentlemen opposite—there again, I believe, not only not impairing but substantially increasing the efficiency of the forces.

I have endeavoured to describe to the House what I may call the political limits which circumscribe the finance of the Army and Navy. Those limits depend upon policy, and policy, I quite agree with my hon. friend who has just sat down, ought to be determined, not by the opinion of experts, but by the decisions of the Cabinet. But I must not be understood as alleging or admitting that even within those limits there is no room and no need for further economies. Experience shows that many things in the judgment of experts are indispensable or were indispensable so long as the Exchequer was readily accessible, and still more so long as money could be raised easily by loans which posterity had to pay—many things which were then regarded as indispensable assume a very different complexion under a more rigid financial system, and are found to admit of substantial curtailment, or even in some cases, without any damage to the real interests of the country, of indefinite postponement. The abolition of the loan system is in itself a powerful guarantee of this kind of economy. But I repeat—and I should not be telling the House the whole truth if I said I was satisfied—I am not satisfied. I welcome, and I am asking the House leave to adopt, an authoritative declaration in favour of economy, carefully safeguarded, as I think every such declaration should be, by the due and full consideration of our national and Imperial risks. I welcome such a declaration on international grounds as making for peace and good will, and I welcome it also on domestic grounds as a warning to us, a warning which, I can assure my hon. friends, the Government did not need to have clamorously dinned into their ears, which they are only too ready to take, a warning to all of us, in whatever quarter of the House we may sit, to be on our guard lest we drain away into the channel of unproductive expenditure that reservoir of resources, limited as it is both in area and in depth, upon which alone we can draw for the enriching work of social reform. I beg to move the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 3, to leave out all the words after the word 'House,' and add the words 'will support His Majesty's Ministers in such economies of naval and military expenditure as are consistent with the adequate defence of His Majesty's dominions.' "—(*The Chancellor of the Exchequer*).

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover): The hon. Member for Falkirk Burghs who moved the original Resolution said that he regarded the Amendment moved by the Chancellor of the Exchequer as a mere form of words, and that he was anxiously awaiting the speech of the right hon. Gentleman to know what interpretation his Amendment might properly bear. That is precisely or as nearly as possible precisely our own position. We have heard the right hon. Gentleman's speech and we cannot say that we are satisfied with the final form which the Motion will take if the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Amendment is incorporated with what he calls the preamble. For what has the speech been? It consisted of three parts. The first section was of a purely party, I might even say partisan character. He taunted the Opposition with having been guilty of reckless extravagance, but the force of the taunt was a good deal diminished when the right hon. Gentleman pointed out that the economies effected in the Army have been reached by making a large reduction in the number of men. The second section of the speech was almost purely departmental. The third, I admit, did something, though not much, to remove the vague and therefore unfortunate impression which has been created by the terms of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Motion. In the third part of his speech he pledged the Government to the maintenance of the two-Power standard for the Navy. In the third part of his speech he touched, but not with sufficient firmness in our opinion, on the necessity of maintaining the Army in India at its present strength and consequently of our means being adequate to reinforce that Army. I say he did not touch upon that with sufficient firmness and that is to put the case mildly, because he informed us that the Government is corresponding with the Government of India with a view, if possible, I suppose, of arriving at some reduction of the Army there.

*MR. ASQUITH: The Government is corresponding with the Government of India as to the size and general condition of the military forces in India, not with the object of arriving at any reduction.

MR. WYNDHAM: Not with the object of arriving at any reduction; then the announcement made by the right hon. Gentleman does not bear upon this debate. In the earlier part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, when he reiterated these accusations of reckless extravagance against the Opposition, he took great credit to himself because the Government had avoided having recourse to loans, and I am not surprised when I consider the position in which the Government find themselves. I take the item of new constructions or rather the construction of new ships by the Government, in the statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty. He has claimed that there has been a successive reduction from year to year under that head, and he gave the figures for the last four years. I challenge him to say whether the Government believe that they will not have in the near future an increase of that programme of new ships and have to increase it materially—to increase it to such an extent that the Navy Estimates not only of next year, but the year after will not be lower but much higher than the Estimates of this year. That paragraph, if I may say so, in the statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty is of a purely illusory character. The Government announce the construction of a certain number of new ships. I need not recite what they are. I may come to that later, but it is not the point now, they are only providing about one-tenth of the cost of those new ships, and if they continue to spend money at that rate it will take them ten years to complete the ships. But, of course, they will have to spend at a greater rate later.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): In the second year it is always so.

MR. WYNDHAM: You are spending money this year to the extent of £8,000,000 or £9,000,000.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: £7,500,000.

Mr. WYNDHAM: Then I am right in saying you are paying on the programme one-tenth of the cost of these new ships, and in the same programme you announce that in certain contingencies which are more than possible—which are certain—you will have to have another programme. That is to say you are paying for Programme A. this year and you desire Programme B. to be added to Programme A. next year—a much bigger programme in which you will have not one "Dreadnought" but several—two, three, four or five—"Dreadnoughts" will appear in the programme. Is it sound finance to pay one-tenth on account of a programme which everybody knows to be inadequate, and to defer the completion of that programme to a time when it is absolutely certain that you will be embarking upon another and larger programme? There may be objections—technical objections—to proceeding by loan, but to defer your obligations so that they will reach proportions which must smash your fiscal system, is not only unsound finance, but it is scarcely honest finance. And so, too, with regard to the Army. Have these reductions been due to any amazing discovery in the science of economy on the part of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War? He is reducing the Regular Army, I think, by about 32,000 men.

*The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Haldane, Haddington): 21,000.

Mr. WYNDHAM: 32,000 men. I look at the strengths and I find that taking the year stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1905, and comparing it with the strength this year there will be 32,000 men less with the colours.

Mr. HALDANE: At what date?

Mr. WYNDHAM: I am taking your estimates and the actual strength during some portion of 1905.

Mr. HALDANE was understood to say that if they took the troops at that period they would get a much larger apparent reduction than had actually taken place. He should mention that hon. Members had put down a series of questions on this subject which he had answered.

Mr. WYNDHAM: I will look into that matter. The right hon. Gentleman's figure is 21,000, and what I was pointing out is that that is not done by economy; that is done by taking another view of military needs. Then again, in the year cited by the Chancellor of the Exchequer we were paying for the rearmament of the whole of the artillery; as he has stated, nearly a million and a quarter or something like £1,200,000 was spent in rearming the artillery with new guns. That rearmament is complete, and it is no longer necessary to spend the million and a quarter; therefore to accuse the late Government of reckless extravagance is really beside the mark. What we want to know is whether the Government takes a different view altogether of the military and naval needs of the nation from that which we think is taken by the great majority of the people of this country. We are still left in some doubt, even after listening to the right hon. Gentleman, why he accepts this preamble, unless he attaches some particular meaning to it; but if it has a meaning what is it? I am bound to say that the form in which he asks the House to accept the Motion is either meaningless or mischievous. It is composed of two phrases which occur in every King's Speech that I remember. Every King's Speech says that our relations with Foreign Powers are of a friendly description. Most of our wars have been merely military operations since the Crimea, and I think you will find that phrase present in the King's Speech since the fifties. Every King's Speech except one, and I think there it was an omission, says that the Estimates are to be prepared with due regard to economy, and now, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, when he is challenged to give the whole policy of the Government, both as to our naval and military defences, at a time when the attention of this country and of foreign countries is concentrated upon what we are going to do, comes down and asks us to vote for two phrases which appear in every King's Speech. I do not know whether his opinion is different from ours if we retain this preamble. He says that a preamble which states that our relations are friendly with other countries has no bearing upon the question of the necessity of maintaining the two-Power standard. He says that the Government adheres to the two-Power standard, and that they have the greatest pleasure in accepting this preamble, and that he does not differ in a great degree from the sentiments of the hon. Member who put down the original Motion. We say that the preamble ought to have no bearing upon the maintenance of the two-Power standard, but if we are to maintain the two-Power standard we add that that preamble ought to have no bearing upon the adequate and timely provision of all the accessories which are necessary to a fleet of battleships, if that fleet is to be a source of safety and not a source of risk. What are those accessories? Attention was directed to them last year by the Leader of the Opposition, who pointedly asked the representative of the Admiralty on 7th March, why the Government were not proceeding with greater expedition at Rosyth, because a fleet of battleships without a base in the waters in which it might not be unreasonable to expect it to operate, is not a source of safety, but a source of danger, or at least, of panic; because, if your fleet of battleships cannot be in a place where public opinion requires it should be, you would have a panic which would seriously militate against our borrowing power in the event of a great war or struggle for national existence. The right hon. Gentleman pressed for information on another point. He wished that we should know whether the Admiralty were providing a sufficiency of lighter craft—of cruisers, and, above all, of torpedo boat destroyers. He got no answer. Owing to the rules of debate it is impossible upon this or that Vote to get any full account from the Government as to their naval policy. We ought to know what the naval policy of the Government is, not only in respect to maintaining the two-Power standard, but in respect of pushing on with the base at Rosyth, and providing an adequate number of cruisers and an adequate number of torpedo-boat destroyers. My right hon. friend last year brought to the notice of the Government a statement that in home waters Germany has a superior equipment of torpedo boat destroyers on this equivalent than we have. No answer was given last year; we must insist upon an answer being given this year. No doubt we shall be able to press in detail when the Navy Estimates are produced to-morrow. We are not satisfied with the provision put down in the Estimates, and we are certain that to proceed at the dilatory pace contemplated is a mistake which the Government will have to amend if they are to retain the confidence of the country. There is one other point which I feel it my duty to press upon the Government even at this early stage. It has been a matter of comment abroad, notably in the *Siecle*, a paper published in Paris yesterday, that the Government are passing ships into full commission with great rapidity—it has passed more I believe last year than in any preceding period—and that they show continual reductions in cost, while it is notorious that the price of materials is going up, and people ask how that is done. This year we see a reduction in the cost of projectiles and ammunition following upon a reduction last year, but no one can forget the debate we had during last session, a debate in which concern was expressed as to the value of the cordite then stored ashore or on the fleet. The impression was left that the Government felt it their duty to take steps in the matter, and so they have thought fit to take steps. They have put down a vote of £500,000 for cooling apparatus which is to prevent the cordite from deteriorating. They recognise that there is an element of danger which needs their attention, but what of all the cordite in existence? Are the Government satisfied as to the value of that powder, and if they are not how do they account for the decreases in the Ammunition Vote? So far as the Navy is concerned we reject the acceptance by the Government of this preamble, and we say that it has no bearing upon adequate and timely provision for the Navy. Now in respect to the Army. What does the Government mean by accepting this preamble? Do they contemplate further reductions? The right hon. Gentleman has referred to South Africa. It is hoped that it will be possible to withdraw the troops from South Africa; but hopes that the balance between our troops abroad and at home is going to be other than what it is now have often been indulged in by many Governments, and have always been falsified. Are the Government going to throw over the Secretary for War, because if they hold that this preamble is to have a great effect on the Army, they will be throwing him over? In the statement which the Secretary for War has laid before us, he touches upon the danger of a "blow at the heart." By that, I understand, that he does not rule out the possibility of an invasion. He insists upon the necessary co-operation between Army and Navy, and he defines the purposes for which the Territorial Forces are created. They are created to prevent raids. They are created to free the positions of the Regular Army, that may have to be despatched. They are created also in order to liberate the Navy. That is the definition, given by the Secretary for War, of the purposes for which the Territorial Forces are to be brought into being. Will anyone maintain that the amount of money now in the Estimates for these Territorial Forces would enable them to perform any one of those purposes? It is perfectly clear that the Territorial Forces are going to cost twice or three times, perhaps four times, as much as is now down in the Estimates if they are to fulfil the purposes for which the right hon. Gentleman says they are brought into being. At any rate, it is certain that until some progress has been made with that force—I am not blaming the right hon. Gentleman for not having made progress; it does not come into existence until the beginning of the next financial year—until some progress has been made with the training and equipping of that Force—training it adequately, as it would exist under war—no further reductions in the Regular Army are possible. In any case, we feel that the Regular Army cannot be further reduced. We regret that the right hon. Gentleman has reduced it. We deny that it should be what the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer says it ought to be, a school for the reserve forces of the Empire, if there are to be fewer than 148 battalions of Infantry in the Regular Army. I regret that the right hon. Gentleman—though he postponed it—still entertains the intention of converting thirty-three battalions of Artillery into mere training schools. It is certain he cannot carry out that—he says he will not—until his Territorial Force is something very different from anything which we can hope it will be in the near or even distant future. What sense, then, is there in asking the House to accept a preamble which would lead to the belief that on the Navy and the Army a sensible reduction can be made now or in the near future? What sense is there in holding out hopes to hon. Gentlemen who sit below the gangway, that great savings are going to be effected? You are only inviting a repetition of such a Motion as that which we have now before us. You are only laying yourselves open once more to the accusation that you are not keeping your pledges. That, I admit, is not our affair. But it is our affair to make it clear that the Parliament to which we belong does not share those hopes, not because we would not willingly see the burden of naval and military expenditure lightened, but because we know that the hopes are illusory and we think the people ought not to be deceived. The Government would not ask the House to vote this year £60,000,000 in round figures for the Army and the Navy, unless they believed that an attack on their country is a contingency which ought to be contemplated—a remote contingency, but one that must be faced. A fleet of battleships without the accessories which are necessary in order that it may be placed where it is wanted, is not a safeguard against such an attack being launched. It is almost inviting such an attack. The Home Army, inadequately trained and incompletely equipped, will not prevent a possibly hostile Power from considering the chance of making such an attack; on the contrary, it will, if I may so express myself, put the idea into the heads of those who have to consider the problems of war. If such an attack were launched, the Territorial Army, as at present contemplated, could not resist it. If that be the case, how can the Government ask the House to support them by accepting the preamble of the hon. Member, and adding to it an expression of their earnest desire for economy? Unless the Government makes adequate and timely provision for both those purposes, for making the Fleet and the Territorial Force a real source of protection to this country, if it shuts its eyes to inevitable increases and possibilities and refers us simply to well-worn phrases that have no bearing on the subject, it will be piling up obligations for the future and creating in other quarters expectations of a policy which it will be unable to fulfil—and all this just at the moment of all others, when £1,500,000 is to be devoted, not to the purposes of national defence in the face of national danger, but to buy a sword for the Minister of Education to conduct a campaign of religious discord at home.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: This debate goes over a vast variety of topics, but I can state very briefly what the Admiralty has to say in defence of its Estimates. I admit that the situation is paradoxical. Everybody knows that new construction is the dominating item of the Estimates, upon which in the long run every other item depends. This year while those Estimates have gone up by nearly £1,000,000 the new construction has gone down by about £500,000. That is a paradox which may be easily explained. It is extremely dangerous to draw conclusions founded on comparisons between these Estimates and the Estimates for recent years. There is no more abundant source of error and confusion. The net Estimate alone tells very little of the total expenditure of the year. It is equally dangerous to leave out of account the complication and confusion caused by the Loan Acts and the subsequent abandonment of the Loan system. Last year, this year, and for two years at least to come, the finances of the Navy will be complicated and confused by the system of loans and abandonments of loans. Two years ago I warned the House that the apparent reduction in the Estimates was not a real or permanent reduction, but that there were elements in the situation which made an increase in the near future perfectly certain. I was then alluding to the automatic increases for which the previous Government were responsible, and I went so far—uselessly as it turned out—as to make a calculation of what, if no remedy were found, would be the gross Estimates expenditure in the very year we are now considering, the year 1908–9. Two years ago I warned the House that unless some relief were found the gross figure for 1908–9 would be £35,000,000 sterling. This year the figures are complicated by the transfer of certain works from Loan to Votes, but perhaps the House will take it from me that the actual figure will be just £1,500,000 less than I estimated as the gross Estimates for 1908–9. I now address myself to the finance of the Estimates. To some extent what I have to say has been anticipated by my right hon. friend. I have first to call the attention of the House to the absolutely automatic expenditure of the following kind. There is to be an increase on Vote 1 of £150,000 on pay, consequent on regulations made for the most part before the present Government came into office. There is a similar increase of £70,000 on the pension and half-pay Votes. There is a £50,000 increase in the loan works annuity, and £38,000 increase in the amount of the annual subsidy to the Cunard Company. The automatic increases absolutely binding on the Admiralty amount to £308,000. These form one part of the automatic increases. But there is another, which is not a matter of legal obligation, though equally inevitable. I refer to the question of stores, to which my right hon. friend alluded. He gave figures which showed how this arose. The redundant stores were entirely the creation of the present Government's predecessors, who did three things. They reduced certain establishments abroad, they reduced the standard of reserve at home, and by a courageous stroke of the pen—if I may use the phrase of the right hon. Gentleman opposite—they set free stores which would otherwise have been used, to the amount of £3,500,000. In 1905–6, the last year of the preceding Government, the value of stores drawn from stock, without replacement, in aid of cash expenditure, was £768,000. The redundant stores were used in lieu of cash. In the next year, the Estimates of which were prepared by the late and administered by the present Government, the amount of stores used was a little over £1,000,000, and in the last year the amount rose to nearly £1,250,000. Last year we saved, by the use of actual stores, £1,241,000, and did not go to the market, because we had stores to that value in our hands and used them. Next year we shall have stores in that position only to the extent of £500,000. The difference between the £1,241,000 we had last year and the £500,000 which is all we have this year, is, in round numbers, £741,000, and, as a matter of course, we must go to the market with cash to make up that difference. I claim, therefore, to add that sum to the £307,000 of legal binding obligations, and so I get automatic and inevitable increases amounting to £1,050,000, which more than counterbalance the £900,000 of net increase in the aggregate estimate. The House will observe that I am not going so far as my noble friend the First Lord of the Admiralty in his Memorandum. I take no credit for other increases which are mentioned in my noble friend's statement. I am not counting the £300,000 which fell upon us this year because of the new arrangements for cooling ships' magazines, nor the sum due to the increase in the price of coal and other articles, though it must be obvious that the fact that prices have gone up is no reason why naval efficiency should go down. I have treated these items as merely fluctuations. I foretold all this two years ago, when I explicitly mentioned these stores, but to my horror I was told at the time by some of those who are now criticising the Estimates in the Press that I failed in economy. My well-meant warning as to economy was then misconceived, but I am determined there shall be no mistake next year. Next year we will have to face further automatic increases of the same kind. There will fall on Vote 1. £150,000, due, not to increase of numbers, but to increase of pay consequent upon regulations passed before we came into office. The Annuity payable will show an increase equally automatic of £60,000; pensions and retired pay will show increases amounting to £35,000; and, finally, there is the £500,000 of stores which next year will no longer be available, whose place we will have to supply by cash purchases to an equal amount, that is to say, we must have for this purpose another £500,000. The result is we will have to face in 1909–10 automatic increases amounting to £745,000. I think it my duty thus to make the future situation absolutely clear.

I hope the House will allow me to clear up as far as I can the complication and confusion caused by the system of Loan Acts. These were first introduced by a Liberal Government in 1895, and were put an end to by my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer last year. I will give round figures. The latest of these Loan Acts, that passed in 1905, which was a summary of all the preceding Acts, contained a schedule specifying the works authorised to be constructed by the Admiralty at an estimated cost of £32,200,000. In 1906 the new Board of Admiralty revised this schedule, and struck out items amounting in the whole to close upon £2,400,000. This reduced the authorised works to £29,800,000. The Act of 1905 authorised them to borrow to an amount not exceeding £27,600,000, the difference between the borrowing powers and the expenditure authorised being in more exact figures £2,240,000. This difference would, in the ordinary course of events, have had to be met by a new Loan Act, which was due in 1907, but my right hon. friend has declined to renew the Act, and the balance is therefore left to be provided by the annual Navy Votes. Of our borrowing power I estimate that at the close of the present financial year there will have been expended £26,700,000 which leaves an unexhausted borrowing power amounting to about £900,000, the whole of which will be used up in the coming financial year, when our borrowing power will be finally exhausted. Of the amount transferred from loan to Votes, amounting to £2,240,000, £980,000 is borne by the Estimates of the current year, and £390,000 will be borne by the Estimates of the next year, 1908–9. The balance of £870,000 will fall on the

Estimates of 1909–10. That will finish the whole affair. The long series of Loan Acts will have become obsolete, fit for the scrap-heap of some future Statute Law Revision Bill, by which they will be formally repealed. But not altogether; there will still remain the annuity in repayment of past expenditure—*non omnis moriar*. In the coming year that amounts to £1,260,000 and it will go on increasing for two years to come. I venture to renew the suggestion which I made last year, that when, in the year 1910, we shall have finished all the loan works, it will be good business to absorb the annuity into the body of the National Debt, and relieve Navy Votes from a burden which represents not present but past expenditure. The economies effected might be summed up as follows: By the two operations I have mentioned, the revision of the schedule and the transfer from loan to votes, loan expenditure has been reduced by £4,600,000 and the amount of the annuity will be correspondingly reduced, ultimately, by £240,000. For the first time the House has been taken into the confidence of the Admiralty as to the true total expenditure on the Navy for the current and previous years; for the first time there is placed in the forefront of the Estimates a statement which shows absolutely what the true total expenditure is. The result, I think, is extremely interesting. The gross expenditure on the Estimates includes all appropriations-in-aid. I abate the amount of the annuity of the Naval Loans Bill, and I add, first, the expenditure during the year for loans, and, secondly, the value of stores drawn without being replaced in the manner I have described, and finally I take the expenditure on behalf of the Naval services which appears in other Votes. That gives you for the first time a true account of all the public money devoted to the service of the Navy in any one year, and the results are somewhat remarkable. I do not think my right hon. friend brought out the full meaning of these figures, but if you look at the table you will see that the true difference between naval expenditure last year and this year is less than £14,000 increase, and of this £14,000 increase £12,000 is accounted for by these miscellaneous services borne by the Votes of other Departments to which I have referred.

Passing away from that, I will venture upon a comparison which the Chancellor of the Exchequer was too magnanimous to make, namely, a comparison between the climax of expenditure in 1904–5, and the expenditure of the present year. On that table it appears that comparing the actual expenditure four years ago with the Estimate now there is a reduction of not less than £7,000,000. I may be allowed to go further, because I will point to this fact, that the expenditure four years ago came largely below the Estimates, and if we compare Estimate with Estimate now and four years ago the difference would be not £7,000,000 but more nearly £9,000,000. To sum up the conclusion on this head, the result of our two years' administration of the finances of the Navy—first, the total expenditure as shown by this table has been reduced in that time by £1,500,000, or if we compare Estimate with Estimate, by £1,800,000. Secondly, the expenditure on loans has been reduced in the manner I have described by £4,600,000. And thirdly, and most important of all, new construction alone has been reduced in that period by the very considerable figure of £1,700,000. I do not know that these figures will be so agreeable to some hon. Gentlemen opposite as to some of my hon. friends on this side. I hope hon. Members opposite will not chide me if I venture to make still another calculation. I have been comparing our Estimates with expenditure in the last two years but it is not to be forgotten that we succeeded to a programme which was outlined and placed before the public in an instrument known as the Cawdor Memorandum. The Cawdor Memorandum programme if executed this year would have called for an expenditure of £9,500,000 for new construction. That statement is received with different feelings on the two sides of the House. I am not making a Party attack, but merely a statement of fact. If you compare the Estimate that we now propose in respect of new construction with the Estimate that would have been necessary if the Cawdor programme had been carried out, the difference is not £1,700,000, but

£2,000,000. I have dealt not at undue length I hope with the finances of the Navy.

What I have now to say will be devoted to the leading items in which expenditure is reduced. The first topic is that of new construction including the new programme of the year. I have already said that the total cash provision in the Shipbuilding Vote for the building of new ships of all kinds—whether laid down last year or the year before and undergoing completion now, or whether they are to be laid down next year it is all new construction—is £7,545,000. The relative provision for new construction in Vote 9 (Armaments) is £1,115,000. If we take both these Votes together the reduction from last year amounts to £567,000. The provision for new construction in the present year is the lowest that has been known for ten years. Just a word about the new programme. I am not going to enter into details, but I may be permitted to remind the House what the new programme of ships to be laid down this year is. We are going to have one battleship and one armoured cruiser, both to be built in the dockyards. We are going to have six protected cruisers of the "Boadicea" type, one to be built at Pembroke and five by contract. We have sixteen destroyers all to be built by contract. We have submarines of the value of £500,000 sterling, most of which will be built by contract, though some will be laid down at Chatham. Here are the figures that I interrupted the hon. Gentleman by mentioning. The total cost of carrying out the programme from first to last will be in round figures £7,770,000, of which there will fall next year £750,000 which I believe is about the usual proportion, because the habit of this country is to lay down ships late in the year and the House does not discuss the Vote till July, when all necessary Amendments have been made and announced to the House. I am not going to anticipate the discussion of the Vote, but there are one or two points that I would like to speak to in quite general terms. This new programme constituted as I have described is substantially in amount and even in detail what I foreshadowed in this House last July. I think—and I hope hon. Gentlemen opposite will not challenge this statement—I may venture to say it was then accepted by the House. At all events, there was no serious criticism directed to it, and it has not been materially changed since last July. In view of a great deal that has been said out of doors it is important that this should be borne in mind, namely, that the programme which is proposed now is that which was settled in substance six months ago. I trust the House appreciates the significance of that declaration.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): Will the right hon. Gentleman say if that applies also to the amount of money provided?

*Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I believe it does. I do not know whether the calculation was actually made.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE: I mean the provision in the coming Estimates.

*Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Oh, yes. The hon. Gentleman who has been at the Admiralty himself knows that we lay down our ships late in the year and the great burden of any new programme falls not upon the first year but upon the second. I am not going to enter upon the controversy of the two-Power standard, but I may be asked on both sides of the House whether this new programme now proposed is sufficient to maintain what is called the two-Power standard. The question what the standard should be I have always said, and I say now, is a question for the Cabinet and in the last resort for this House and for the country. I absolutely disclaim on the part of the Admiralty any authority to fix a one-, two-, or three-Power standard. The standard has been determined for us and all we have to do is to execute it. On the second part of the question there ought to be no more misunderstanding about this than about the other. While the Admiralty does not pretend to fix the standard I claim on behalf of the Admiralty that on the subordinate question whether such standard is being maintained or not the decision of the Admiralty must be conclusive. If you cannot trust the naval experts and your Board of Admiralty with all the knowledge it has at its command, you had better seek another Board of Admiralty. I have the authority of the Admiralty for saying, and I think this ought to be sufficient for the House, that the programme now proposed and the provision now made fully maintain the two-Power standard. Perhaps I may be permitted to remind the House of the statement that I made as to the relative strength last July. I took two Powers that are never likely in our time or in any time I hope, to be found in alliance against us, namely, France and Germany. I took them as illustrations of two Powers with strong Navies. Will the House permit me to give the figures I gave them. I showed by the authority of the Admiralty that as regards ships of what may be called the pre-"Dreadnought" type we were in a position of undoubted superiority over the two other Powers, while as regards newer ships contemporary with or subsequent to the "Dreadnought" the position was this. In the autumn of 1910 we shall have nine battleships and three cruisers complete. France will have two battleships and no cruisers and Germany will have four battleships and two cruisers. That is the statement I made on authority a year ago. These figures still hold good. I am advised that if certain alterations take place the result may be that at the end of 1910 Germany will have seven battleships and three cruisers completed. Then France and Germany combined will have a total of twelve ships of this general character against the twelve ships of Great Britain. This, I am informed, is the very worst that can happen at the end of the year 1910. As to the items of the programme I propose to defer further explanation until Vote 8 is reached, but two things are obvious. It is in the main a cruiser programme, and a replacement programme. The new cruisers and the new destroyers are simply taking the place of ships which must be withdrawn in a short time from sea service. I hope Members on this side of the House will agree that it is a modest programme. It has amazed—I will not say amused—me to find that the new programme is less than the programme of the two hon. Members who have brought forward to-day this Resolution. I have read in an article by one of our journalistic advisers that, as a matter of course the Government will lay down at least three "Dreadnoughts" in the coming year. As a matter of fact we are only laying down one. On this slender basis, on this portentous blunder, has been based the whole of the agitation which has culminated in this attack on the Navy Estimates.

*Mr. J. M. MACDONALD: We did not attack the Navy Estimates of this year. The figures which the right hon. Gentleman quotes are figures which were drawn up before the Navy Estimates had appeared and on the assumption that the programme this year would be the same as last year.

*Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: That is exactly what I have stated. I admit that my hon. friend has been extremely moderate and modest in his criticisms, and he has my sympathy in a great deal of what he has said. But some of the promoters of the movement have made the blunder of assuming that three "Dreadnoughts" would be laid down as a matter of course, when at the outside we shall only lay down two counting the armoured cruiser. As a matter of fact we are only laying down one.

*Mr. J. M. MACDONALD: We can hardly be held responsible for the newspapers.

*Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: There are some newspapers from which one can derive pleasure and information by the simple process of not reading them at all. Turning to the question of repairs, I have not hesitated to avow myself a partisan of the policy of repairs, and I cannot be a party to any neglect of this most important matter. A great programme of new construction may be a more showy affair, but it is certainly not more essential to the efficiency of the Navy. I prefer rather than build so many new ships to keep the old ones in good and sufficient repair, and that is the outstanding feature of these new Estimates. Last year it was insinuated that we were allowing the repairs to get into arrears, and I then took upon myself to repel that insinuation in a way which I think was satisfactory to the House. It is difficult to form an exact estimate. The provision last year was, by way of precaution, raised considerably above the figure at which it had been fixed by the technical advisers of the Government, and yet it proved insufficient. The money we propose to take next year for repairs amounts in round figures to £2,500,000; that is £700,000 more than the estimate for the preceding year, and £500,000 more than the actual expenditure will probably turn out to have been. That is a higher amount than has been expended in any year except the year 1903–4, when the costly experiment was tried of sending repairs to be executed by private contractors.

*MR. BELLAIRS: Higher than 1904–1905.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Yes, higher than 1904–1905. In the year 1904–1905 a climax was reached in repairing and the expenditure fell below the estimate. In the year 1904–1905 the expenditure on the repairs fell below the estimate by £230,000, and in 1905–1906 by £437,000; in 1906–1907 it exceeded the estimate by more than £300,000, and in the current year it would exceed it by more than £200,000; and now the Government are obliged to propose a still higher figure for the forthcoming year. This increase is the outstanding feature of the Estimates. At this stage the House may naturally ask for some explanation of this most remarkable increase. It has taken place notwithstanding the avoidance of unnecessary repairs on obsolete and obsolescent ships, and notwithstanding the fact that ships in commission now make good their defects to a much greater extent than before without dockyard assistance. I will indicate a few of the causes of this large further expenditure. As the torpedo craft become older, more numerous, and more used, the cost of maintaining them goes on increasing. The higher speed and greater power adopted in the past is making itself felt in the dockyards, and boiler repairs are continually increasing in importance and cost. Minor alterations and additions, like the refrigeration of the magazines, are counted as part of the repairs. Finally, there is the increased sea service of the Fleet, especially of those ships which are now manned with nucleus crews and form part of the Home Fleet, but which, under the old system, would have been resting in the Fleet and dockyard reserves. These are all sound reasons in justification of this very large Vote. The policy of the present Board is that no accumulation of arrears should be permitted, and their technical advisers are satisfied that the Fleet is in an efficient state in this respect. In many respects the Works Vote is this year the most important of all. It makes provision for some new enterprises of considerable magnitude. A new lock has become necessary at Portsmouth in consequence of the growth in the size of battleships and cruisers. This service has already been approved by the House, and the cost is estimated at about £1,000,000. Then I have been challenged about Rosyth. The Government has finally decided to proceed with the Rosyth works. [Some cries of "Oh!" on the Ministerial side.] The Government has finally decided to proceed with Rosyth. It has not been an easy matter to settle at all. It has been before the House for many years.

MR. WYNDHAM: Five years.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I think about eight years. With the exception of some minority protests, on the whole I venture to say that it has been accepted as sound policy that there ought to be a base on the east coast somewhere, and the selection of Rosyth in the end has been a case of the survival of the fittest. We took plenty of time to examine all the alternative sites, and we came to the conclusion that Rosyth on the whole offered the greatest advantages. Let hon. Members not suppose that we are carrying out now the scheme which many of them protested against when it was first mooted six or seven, or, as I think, more years ago. Our scheme will cost £3,250,000. The original proposal of the late Government would have caused an expenditure of £10,000,000.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): No.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I will give the hon. Gentleman the figures to-morrow. The original scheme, or one of the original schemes at any rate.

MR. ARTHUR LEE: It was not put before the House.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I am not sure, but it was adumbrated to the House. It was a scheme for naval bases, and Rosyth was one of them. The only other thing I shall refer to, and this is new, is the provision for the torpedo range at Loch Long. A torpedo is a horrible instrument, I loath the look of it; but it is as delicate as a watch and needs most careful adjustment and attention. Like everything else in naval warfare the torpedo has developed, and the range of 3,000 yards, which was the length of the range hitherto, is no longer sufficient. We want a range of 7,000 yards, and the requirements of proper water area are not easy to fulfil. A great many different sites and schemes were examined, and Loch Long, again, became a case of the survival of the fittest, and the range will be established there. The only thing I have to add by way of solatium for these large new charges we are going to propose this year is that the proposal of Loch Long takes the place of a proposal to excavate on the land an area—a drain, or long artificial river—in which torpedoes might be tested. Our proposal which will take the place of that will mean a saving of 70 per cent.

MR. ARTHUR LEE: Does the hon. Gentleman suggest that the Loch Long scheme was arranged by the present Government?

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I said that that scheme was to take the place of the excavation scheme. I said nothing about the Government. I know my obligations to both sides of the House—my dependence on both sides—for the acceptance of the policy I am putting before the House. I hope that no hon. friend of mine will go away to-night with the notion that I have ceased to be the economist I once was. I am as strong an economist as ever I was, and I have impressed economy on my colleagues. For many a long weary year I stood almost alone in protesting for economy, not only in naval and military matters, but, what is sometimes too much forgotten, in civil expenditure as well. I ventured to make that personal appeal to my own friends, and I say in conclusion that the proposals I am now defending are the proposals of the Admiralty and the Government, and if any one man is more responsible for them than another it is myself, for it is my duty to represent in the Department the feelings of the House on that subject and all others. I thank the House for giving me the opportunity of making this short personal apology. I thank it sincerely for the great attention it has given to my statement.

*MR. SIMON (Essex, Walthamstow) said the right hon. Gentleman had not really directed his observations to the question raised by the Resolution. He had placed before the House a technical and detailed statement, but the Resolution raised the large question of public policy. Those who remembered or had read of the retirement of Lord Randolph Churchill would remember that he wrote a letter in which he expressed his determination to retire from his position sooner than be responsible for the Estimates then brought forward. He said—

> "The great question of public expenditure is not so technical or departmental as might be supposed by a superficial critic. Foreign policy and expenditure on armaments act and react upon one another."

There were many Members who supported the foreign policy of the present Government, but who felt constrained to ask: Had that successful and peaceful foreign policy its counterpart in general financial policy? It was for that reason that he desired to return to the speech of the right hon. Member for Dover. The right hon. Gentleman had said that he was not altogether satisfied with the declarations of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. For his own part—and he thought he was expressing the opinion of many on that side of the House—he could not imagine a worse omen for the Chancellor of the Exchequer in a Government pledged to retrenchment, than that his Estimates should be received with approval by predecessors whose own expenditure was uniformly extravagant. He would very much sooner hear the Chancellor of the Exchequer denounced and abused for his parsimony than praised for his bounty.

He rejoiced to know that the statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer caused some perturbation on the opposite side of the House. They must all admit the truth and the sting of the observation made by the right hon. Member for Dover, that the Amendment moved by the Chancellor of the Exchequer might well be put forward by many Chancellors of the Exchequer in many circumstances. It was an Amendment which, dissociated from the spirit of the speech in support of it, might come from a Conservative Chancellor of the Exchequer. He had not the slightest doubt that the gentlemen who were responsible for the financial policy of the late Government would be quite prepared to get up in the House—the Leader of the Opposition himself would get up—and assert with a wealth of ingenious paradox, that the late Government, in addition to all its other virtues, was the most economical Government of all time. The present Government was pledged to retrenchment, and the real question which they had to discuss was whether or not it had sufficiently realised, or was going to assure its supporters that it would sufficiently realise, the great part which in any Liberal Government a satisfactory foreign policy ought to play in the definite reduction of armaments. When all allowance had been made for the explanation given with so much candour and skill by the Secretary to the Admiralty, they were still left with the striking fact (which no discrimination between net and gross figures, and no observations about automatic increases, would alter)—the astounding fact that the Estimates now laid on the Table, amounting to £60,000,000 for the Army and Navy, exceeded by £20,000,000 the Estimates which were thought satisfactory in the year preceding the Boer war, and exceeded by £25,000,000 or £27,000,000 the Estimates which were thought satisfactory in the last year of the last Liberal Government. The observations of the Secretary to the Admiralty were really not to the point of policy which was the real motive for the Resolution before the House. The question had been asked, What justification was there for the increase which had taken place? And no really satisfactory answer had been given. It might be said, and no doubt it was true, that during the last few years there had been a great increase in some directions in the wealth of the country. It was astonishing how willing even tariff reformers were to assert that there had been an increase in the wealth of the country when they were going to spend that wealth on armaments, but the real justification put forward that afternoon was a justification which ranged over other points, and he desired to examine them. Much had been said by the Secretary to the Admiralty, and also by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, on what were called automatic increases. An automatic increase unfortunately was always automatic when it was an increase in expenditure, but the raising of the money to pay for it was never automatic. It was, on the contrary, a deliberate process, and a painful process. He did not see the force of the argument that much of our expenditure was caused by automatic increases, unless they were prepared to meet them in the only way with which they could be met—by deliberate reductions in the House of Commons. It was really a hopeless position for the House of Commons in one year to adopt some formula which was going to grind out automatic increases for years to come and then to regard themselves as tied and obliged to pay that money, and tied in this sense also that they found it impossible to economise in any other direction. Something had been said by the mover and the seconder of the Resolution on the position of expert advice in this matter. He did not in the least desire to adopt what some people seemed to think a contemptuous attitude in regard to expert advice. The right hon. Gentleman who spoke last had claimed, and rightly claimed, that when a technical formula was to be examined in order to see whether it was satisfactorily applied, technical advice was the right kind of advice to choose. So it was. But the fact remained that they in the House of Commons had a far more serious duty to discharge than could be discharged by the most competent expert. They were there to protect the taxpayers of the country, but the expert and technical adviser would be grossly exceeding his duty if he allowed a consideration for the taxpayer's pocket to enter into his calculations at all. There was no unwillingness on his part to recognise the great skill, diligence, and patriotism of the most eminent technical gentlemen who advised the Government;

but their functions and those of Members of the House of Commons were two totally distinct things. They had only to consider one small portion of the field. They had not to adjust all the competing claims on the public revenue for different objects, each of which if examined in isolation might seem to be of overwhelming importance. Some people were disposed to think that *experto credite* meant "trust the expert." It did not mean that. The fruit of experience was that there never had been a time in history when the expert came forward and said that too much money had been spent on his particular object. He yielded to no one in admiration of the First Sea Lord, and when the First Sea Lord went down to a Lord Mayor's banquet and said that too much money was being spent at the Admiralty—on that day he should think it was wise to be guided in matters of expenditure by the First Sea Lord. There was a general consideration which seemed to him should lie at the root of such a discussion. The real question of policy which divided Members was this—was the way in which to provide for national danger hereafter to spend large sums of money now on warlike armaments and preparations for war? or might there not be much to be said for a different policy based on the proposition, to use words which must meet with approval on the other side of the House—

> "That the more you reduce the burdens of the people the greater will be your strength when the hour of danger comes."

Those words were used by Mr. Disraeli in 1857, directly after the Crimean War. There was then in the House a great discussion on the whole policy of war-like preparations and in that debate Mr. Disraeli gave notice that he would move a Resolution to insist that as a general principle, the policy after a great war, should be that the expenditure on armaments must be reduced. It was a melancholy and a striking circumstance that after this country had gone to war in order to rid itself, as they were assured, of an enemy threatening it and a danger which was imminent, and after that war had reached a successful conclusion, the amount of money thought to be necessary to provide against a future enemy was £20,000,000 more than when the successful war began. That was a very astonishing fact, and it did not require the technical knowledge of great Army and Navy experts to discuss it. What it did require was courage and resolution, when a Government was in power, to carry out those principles which they in the House of Commons, as well as the Government, had united in declaring were necessary for the salvation of the country. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had declared, and he believed the right hon. Gentleman, that the task put upon his shoulders was a difficult one, and that he was not satisfied with the present situation. Neither were they. He could assure the right hon. Gentleman who spoke last that, so far as he was concerned, the position which he felt it his duty to take up was not inspired by any journalistic leaders. It was merely an attempt, possibly a misguided attempt, on his part, and on that of other loyal supporters of the Government, to urge the Government to take advantage of the present situation. He was unable to understand how the financial situation could be improved unless, following the very successful foreign policy of the Foreign Secretary on which he congratulated the right hon. Gentleman, and on which the Government were able to congratulate themselves, there were considerable reductions on the expenditure on the Army and Navy. It had to be remembered that between two different kinds of expenditure there was this governing distinction. If they spent money in great quantities on the Army and Navy that money, well or ill spent, had little or hardly any indirect benefit upon domestic and social reforms. But it was a profound mistake to suppose in regard to money spent on social reforms, or revenue applied to productive uses, that the national credit did not rise step by step. And it was in the foundations of national credit after all, more than in any other single element, that our powers of persistence and ultimate success in war depended. He spoke his own individual opinion, but he desired to avow that in taking up this attitude he did not do it from any unwillingness to join hon. Gentlemen opposite in their aspirations for the future of the Empire, or from any unwillingness to admit that provision for success in some great war in the future was the greatest duty imposed upon the consciences of our people. He shared with them in that belief, but it was essential that we should take steps now in order to raise National credit and to provide, as the

Mr. Simon.

Chancellor of the Exchequer said, a reservoir from which we might draw in time of war. His proposition was that when a great war was over it was absolutely essential that definite reductions should be permanently made in expenditure, if only to restore our National credit to the position it was in before the war. The Napoleonic Wars were fought on the income tax, and the moment they were over the income-tax was reduced. When the Crimean War broke out the income-tax was 7d. in the £. It was doubled while the war was going on, but when the war was over it was reduced again. When the Boer War began the income-tax was 8d. in the £; during the course of the war it reached 1s. 3d. in the £. It had since been reduced to some extent, but was still 1s. in the £ for many purposes. What he wanted to know was, if there was going to be another war were they going to double the income-tax again? If not, it seemed to him absolutely necessary that steps should be taken to restore public credit and diminish the strain put upon the people. And to do so in time of peace there must be economies. There were hon. Gentlemen above the gangway who in the course of a few weeks would be considering whether they would vote for the repeal of the sugar duty. He asked these Gentleman before they determined what duties they wanted to take off, to consider in what department of public expenditure they were going to economise. With all possible belief in the financial and economical fervour of the Government, he urged them to afford to those hon. Members, who looked on this matter as of so much importance, some further assurance, not by mere platonic assertions that economy was a good thing, but by avowing that further economy was essential to sound public policy, and that economy was the very basis of reform—to join with them in asserting that as retrenchment must follow peace, so retrenchment must precede reform.

COLONEL SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) said that if he were to criticise the speech of the mover of the Motion it would be to say that the whole of it was merely a platonic assertion that reform was advisable. Two years ago it was his privilege, with others, to urge upon the House a definite scheme of reform, but they urged it on the Government for a definite purpose and by a definite method. To say that economy was desirable, that they must retrench after war, and that all money spent on armament was unproductive, was more suited to the platform or the Press than to the House of Commons. That was the view he took, and for this reason: they were there to deliberate how to save money, and if any hon. Members brought forward a Resolution that reduction was necessary, they ought to specify how the reduction was to be made. Without that they were wasting the time of the House. The position was the same as if hon. Members were to insist upon old-age pensions, and then, when asked how the money was to be found, were to reply: "That is not our business, but the business of the Chancellor of the Exchequer." That was the kind of thing which they all said when they were in a position of less responsibility, but when they were present in this House they must all recognise their responsibility and feel that platonic references, or, as his hon. friend had put it, platitudinous references to economy were of no avail. Why did he say that he did not regard this Motion as a continuation of the debate which he led and did not regret leading two years ago. It was, first of all, because it was so general in its character and did not distinguish between naval and military expenditure. The essence of the debate which they then had was that they must reduce expenditure on the Army, because looking at the world as it then was it might be necessary greatly to increase our naval armaments in the course of the next few years if we were to maintain that sea predominance upon which he believed every Member of the House quite irrespective of Party was united. There was a difference of opinion as to what that sea predominance was. His hon. friend who seconded the Motion suggested that we now had a three-Power naval standard, and he thought the hon. Member even suggested a four-Power standard, but himself accepted the view that naval predominance was essential. He (Colonel Seely), of course, also accepted that view, and it seemed to him a very important thing that the House should agree that they were determined to maintain sea predominance. Therefore, the question was what our sea predominance should be, and he said, there and then, the kind of predominance at sea we had now. If it were true, as it was true, that in this absurd game of beggar-my-neighbour between certain Powers, each Power thought the other would get tired of expenditure first, or faint under the strain, if they agreed, as they all did in their hearts, that even if the strain became intolerable, knowing that our whole future rested upon sea predominance, they were prepared, sooner than give it up, to fight to maintain it—if that was once accepted as a principle it carried one further than a two-Power standard, and made it easier in dealing with foreign Powers to get that return which they all sought. Therefore, taking the strong view that he did as to how essential it was to secure sea predominance, even without declaration that they would fight to maintain it, he could not support a vague declaration that reduction was essential which would involve a great reduction of the naval service. He would not follow his hon. friend and several other speakers into the details of naval policy with regard to which better occasions would arise on the next and future days, but he did say that, looking at the question as broadly as one could and with such knowledge as a Member of Parliament had, if they asserted that sea predominance was essential, in view of the fact that our naval expenditure unlike our army expenditure was decided—and it was just as well to be frank about it—by the expenditure of others, then there was no standard which could be laid down other than the standard laid down by others. In this it differed from our military power, and when they looked at the expenditure of other Powers he thought they must agree that any considerable reduction which would satisfy his hon. friend on the Naval Estimates of this and future years was possibly inconsistent with maintaining a predominance at sea. He would ask why this vague Resolution was moved? Why did not hon. Members concentrate on one matter, either the Army or the Navy? To justify a Motion of this kind the Member moving it should show what he endeavoured to urge upon the House two years ago. He thought that no great economy in the Army was possible unless they abandoned the Cardwell system, which admittedly had served us well in many respects, which admittedly was most valuable at the time when it was introduced into this House by Mr. Cardwell under Mr. Gladstone, but which he asserted two years ago, and still believed, was not suited to our present needs, especially in view of the great added expenditure on the Navy which stared them in the face, and must mean the reduction of Army expenditure. He was impenitent in this matter, but this must be said in favour of the Secretary of State for War. He said it last year and he repeated it. Fault was found, by the seconder of the resolution, and the matter was referred to by the mover, with this vast expeditionary force of 160,000 men, The hon. Member said, and said, he thought, truly, that this was too large a force to maintain. He agreed; but when he urged the abandonment of that system which if they did not abandon they must maintain, he looked down the list of the gallant few who supported him on that occasion but he did not find the name of his hon. friend among them. If he might put a plain question to the hon. Member, in order to enable him to decide how to vote, he would ask: Was he and those who were going to vote with him, determined to throw over the Prime Minister, who was wedded to the Cardwell system and the whole of the Cabinet, and to insist upon this military revolution, for revolution it would be, and make our Army what our Navy now was, a long service force with no necessity for retaining an equal number at home to the number abroad. Would hon. Members do that? He knew they would not, and when he urged it upon them they deliberately said "No." His proposal was far more modest than the proposal that was made now, and if hon. Members would not adopt the only practicable plan of reducing Army expenditure he did not see how he could support them. It was too late. In spite of the admirable Memorandum of his right hon. friend some of them believed that the Cardwell system was not the best system. He quite recognised that the whole House was against him in this matter, but then it did not follow that one was wrong. His right hon. friend had shown very clearly in his Memorandum, and he had never seen the case better stated for the Cardwell system, that great reductions must be made before great economies could be effected. That was true, but they were prepared to face that great reduction, partly because they believed that to maintain the Army at its present standard and the Navy at the great standard at which it must remain, was unwise for the social reason, that as the Navy decreased unemployment the Army increased it. That was because the Navy took a man young and gave him a training which was useful to him in after life; it took him for the rest of his life, and as the result the sailors never contributed to the ranks of the unemployed, but in the case of the Army, the State did that very thing which they constantly condemned in employers. Instead of taking men and teaching them a trade, or, if they could not teach them a trade, giving them a life career as some compensation, they took them for their own purposes, just at the time when they ought to learn a trade, kept them for the time convenient to the State and their Army system, and then threw them back upon civil life without their knowing any trade, and in an enormously large number of cases they went to swell the ranks of the unemployed. It was for this reason that he had so persistently urged the view which he had put forward. Again, he knew he had not the whole House with him, but every time this argument was brought home to them that every man enlisted into the Army was potentially adding to the ranks of the unemployed the more they did to roll away the fallacy which they thought overlay what they considered the true faith. He must before he sat down point out how the House had finally committed itself to this expenditure by refusing to reverse the policy which had been pursued in the past, and also how unfair it was of hon. Members to accuse his right hon. friend of bloated armaments and extravagant expenditure, for having an expeditionary force of 160,000 men. Hon. Members by 200 to forty-eight had decided against abandoning the Cardwell system, and, in fact, by doing so, they told his right hon. friend to have an expeditionary force of 160,000 men, for he was forced to maintain this large number of troops at home, and surely if they were to have a force at home the argument for making it into an Army by adding a few men here and there at small cost was overwhelming. The argument of the seconder against the 160,000 could really best be tested by an illustration. Let them suppose that a man had a powerful motor costing £1,000 and somebody urged that he did not want it at all. If they were to suggest that in order to economise he should take away the steering wheel and tyres and other portions of the mechanism and sell them, surely no one would say that he would be anything but a fool to do so; but that was in effect what they would do if they abandoned the expeditionary force while retaining the Cardwell system. The Cardwell system forced them to retain the whole of that force. On the occasion of the late war, Lord Lansdowne he thought it was, speaking for the Government, said that 192,000 men were left in the country at that time who could in no sense be called a real Army, and that was quite true of the Army here before they started. They were not a real Army, for they had none of those subsidiary services which made an army effective. He therefore defended his right hon. friend for making the force here into an expeditionary force. He did not think they wanted such a big one, but as the House had insisted upon having all those men he thought they had better make use of them. He had tried to show why he could not support the Motion which had been made by his hon. friend. He did not believe that any good purpose would be served by abstract remarks in favour of economy. His hon. friend had refused to adopt the only method which would lead to a substantial economy, and he did not propose to reduce the Civil Service Estimates. Therefore, when he proposed a reduction in the Navy Estimates he could not go with his hon. friend. For those reasons, whilst sympathising with the objects which his hon. friend had in view, he could not support the Resolution.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): I am glad that we have got back to the Motion before the House, although the Secretary to the Admiralty has made an attempt to draw us away from it. I do not propose to follow him in the statement he has made to-day. The whole tendency of that statement was to show that the increase which has taken place in our naval and military expenditure has been inevitable, that he had warned the House that it was bound to take place, and he rejects the Chancellor of the Exchequer's suggestion that there can be any possible decrease in the immediate future. The Secretary to the Admiralty also pleads that he at any rate is a true economist, and has done everything he can to reduce these bloated Estimates. We have now come back to a discussion of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Amendment, and I am afraid I have been unable to detect any sign of its being warmly welcomed on his own side of the House. The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Abercromby division of Liverpool, who has just sat down, has described the Amendment as platitudinous, and as almost wasting the time of the House to discuss it.

COLONEL SEELY: I referred to the original Motion.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: As the mover of the original Motion has stated that there is nothing whatever in the Amendment, the hon. and gallant Member's criticism may apply to both. Although I am the author of a still-born Amendment I deplore the necessity for this debate, and still more the irresolute attitude of the Government towards the great question of national defence. All this marching and countermarching, all this Lobbying and intriguing, might have been avoided if the Government had only had the courage of its convictions, and not wobbled and vacillated in response to every current of irresponsible opinion. It is a lamentable procedure that the defence Estimates of the country, after having been carefully adjusted to the national needs, and approved of by the Chancellor of the Exchequer and his professional advisers, should, in response to a demonstration made by hon. Members opposite, be re-opened, put up to auction, to the lowest bidder, and knocked down to the hon. Member for Falkirk and his friends. It is also humiliating that the explanatory statements of the First Lord of the Admiralty, and in a less degree perhaps of the Secretary of State for War, should be couched in terms which seem to apologise for the very existence almost of the defensive forces of the Crown and certainly openly boasted of every penny they had succeeded in skinning off the Estimates. The only marvel to me is that the disarmament party have not withdrawn their Motion after reading those explanatory statements, and substituted a vote of thanks to the Government instead. I presume that they do not intend to press their Motion to a division, but if they do we of conrse shall vote against it. That, however, does not mean that we shall feel constrained to vote for the Amendment of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Amendment adopts what my right hon. friend the Member for Dover has pointed out is the irrelevant and dangerous premiss contained in the preamble of the Motion by which our naval and military strength is to be made dependent upon the existing state of our friendly relations with foreign Powers. It is in fact proposed that our armament should not be based on the principle of the existing armaments of foreign Powers, but upon the momentary and ever-shifting state of our diplomatic relations. If battleships and docks and other requisites of the Fleet and the *personnel* necessary to man the Fleet could be ordered like a pound of tea at Harrod's Stores, there might be some sense and relevance in the argument. A new Fleet, however, cannot be evolved in less than a decade, and who is bold enough to say what the state of our diplomatic relations with any Power or combination of Powers may be ten years or even one year hence. There have been in the past many confident prophets in these matters, and I should like the House to direct its attention to the well-known case in the King's Speech when in the year 1792 it was stated that "the friendly assurances received from Foreign Powers induce me to think that some immediate reduction might safely be made in our naval and military establishments." On the same occasion Mr. Pitt said that "unquestionably there never was a time in the history of this country when, from the situation in Europe, we might more reasonably expect fifteen years of peace than we may at the present moment." I need not remind the House that before the end of that year we were embarked in the great struggle which only ended on the field of Waterloo. There is only one sane method of computing the necessary standard of our naval strength, and that is by reckoning the actual forces in existence in other countries. After all, every Power, however friendly at the moment, must be reckoned in these matters as a potential enemy. This unfortunate fact has been fully recognised by our good friends on the Continent. The Prussian Minister of Marine has recently stated that the increase of the Germany Navy is necessary because the "friends of to-day might become the enemies of to-morrow." I hope there is no country that will be our enemy to-morrow but we cannot afford to gamble upon it, because it is the very existence of this nation which is at stake. Unfortunately we live in a world of men and not of angels, and that being so it would be well for us to recognise the truth of the dictum laid down by President Roosevelt that "the stronger our Navy the kinder the feelings of other nations towards us: a strong Navy is provocative of peace. If the Government had achieved any success, in the direction of reduction of armaments, at the Hague Conference I am sure it would have deserved the warmest congratulations of all the civilised world, but it achieved nothing except a rebuff and a perfectly plain intimation from the most important quarter that the subject was not even ripe for discussion. The enthusiasts of peace at any price are urging upon the Government that they should now make fresh advances to Germany direct. Apart from the futility of that proceeding the mere suggestion has been received with great resentment in that country and has been regarded as impertinent and almost unfriendly. These enthusiasts are willing to run all risks in order to exploit their views, and we have had a striking illustration in a recent speech of Lord Courtney who went so far as to suggest that we ought to send a missionary to the Reichstag. He said that this country ought to be prepared to run some risks in the way of a reduction of armaments whether other Powers did so or not. Last year the same noble Lord advocated the same thing and he then spoke of it as a "glorious risk." It might be a glorious risk for the missionary, who has generally been willing to welcome the crown of martyrdom, but there is nothing glorious in it for the people of this country, because in case of war it would mean the ruin and starvation of millions of the working classes and of the poorest of our people. These enthusiasts seem to have a firm belief that if we never contemplate the possibility of war, never speak of it, or write of it, and above all never prepare for it, we shall be regarded as so inoffensive that no foreign nation will have the heart to touch us. As I said before, I think it is unfortunate that this debate has been raised, because it is impossible to avoid direct references to individual Powers who are now friendly to us and with whom we hope to live at all times in amity and peace. But the necessity has been forced upon us by the authors of this Motion, and we have been obliged to examine their statements with regard to the armaments and programmes of those Powers, which if by any deplorable circumstances they should become as hostile as they now are friendly would be the most formidable enemies we should have to face. The case of Germany has been specially referred to. There is no secret whatever that Germany, which already commands the land, is frankly and openly seeking to create a fleet of sufficient strength to imperil the supremacy at sea which we now possess. No doubt it is true that there are in the German Reichstag people who are counterparts of the hon. Member for Falkirk and his friends —men who deplore the costly and ambitious policy on which the German Government is embarked, but they, I am afraid, are only as voices crying in the wilderness. Apparently they have had no effect whatever on the policy of the German Government; and, unfortunately for us, that Government is not so easily intimidated by motions and round robins as are His Majesty's present advisers. Moreover there is no sign of any unwillingness in the Reichstag to vote gladly not only the necessary Estimates but complaint is even made that the Government scheme does not go far enough. When the German Minister of Marine was questioned as to why he asked for less than the country was willing to grant, his response was that the programme for 1911 onwards was only a provisional programme which could be increased if the German Liberals wished, and he would be very glad to increase it if the majority gave him their support. Contrast that with our Government, who seem to welcome pressure from advocates of a smaller Navy; and I think that it would be a very unfortunate result of this debate if the impression was created in foreign countries that, whatever may be the opinions of some sections of this House, there are any considerable or influential sections in this country who are not just as willing to make the sacrifices which are necessary to secure our national safety as are the people and Parliament of Germany. It has been suggested in many quarters that financial considerations will block or at any rate hamper the execution of the German naval programme. But it has been shown by a very able series of despatches from *The Times* correspondent in Berlin that there is absolutely no ground whatever for that optimistic view. He has pointed out that if there was one thing which he noticed it was the determination of all classes and parties in Germany to spend many more millions on the Navy. We cannot count on the German programme being cut down on the ground of financial stringency. It is perfectly clear that the Germans mean business. We have no right to complain of that, any more than we have a right to complain of the action of the United States Government or any other Government which is increasing its Navy. After all, they are only awakening to a sense of the consequences of all that is meant by the phrase "command of the seas," and they do not intend that we should retain a monopoly of that command. They are perfectly within their rights; we have no just cause of complaint. But we must face the situation with calmness, good temper, and above all, I hope, with determination. I regret that the House has had no chance to accept, or at any rate vote on the Amendment which I have placed upon the Paper, because its terms are at least firm and unambiguous, which is a good deal more than can be said for the Amendment of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Let us consider his Amendment for a moment. He asks us to "support the Government in such economies as are consistent with the defence of the Empire." That is a very slippery slide for anybody who believes in national defence to commit himself upon. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in moving that Amendment knows perfectly well, no one can know better, that so far from economies being possible on the present Estimates, he has cut them down to a point where even the very modest programme of this year, if it is not to be a sham programme, will necessitate the bringing in of Supplementary Estimates before the end of the present financial year, and must lead to enormous increases in the next and following years. He knows perfectly well that if he translates his advocacy of the two - Power standard into action, we must lay down next year five "Dreadnoughts" instead of two, as prop sed in the programme of the present year. The present Estimates deliberately shirk their fair proportion of the burden of even the modest programme which they announce. Almost every item indicates a policy of deferred expenditure, and consequently the Chancellor of the Exchequer knows perfectly well that no reduction is possible next year in these Estimates, whilst, on the contrary, there must be a large and progressive increase of expenditure. Consequently, the Amendment of the right hon. Gentleman is a mere tactical manœuvre calculated to throw dust in the eyes of the House of Commons, and to hold out to the hon. Member for Falkirk and his friends hopes which he knows cannot possibly be realised. It seeks further to commit the House to the policy of postponing the evil day by putting off expenditure in the hope, I suppose, that something may turn up, probably a general election, which will divert attention for the moment from the needs of national defence, and possibly may even relieve the Government of having to meet the liabilities which it is now afraid to face. No doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer will carry his Amendment. But after all, what does it matter? The country is not interested in his Amendment to the Motion of the hon. Member for Falkirk. What excites the interest of the country, and I hope also its resentment, is not that the Chancellor of the Exchequer amends the Motion of the hon. Member for Falkirk. but that he should have amended the Estimates in obedience to the dictation of the hon. Member for Falkirk and his friends. That fact, coupled with the abject and apologetic statements of the First Lord and the Secretary of State for War, is, I think humiliating to all who believe that, after all, the safety of the country is more important than the favour of the hon. Member for Falkirk, or even the production of a showy and electioneering Budget. I will only say this, in conclusion. The statement has been made in many quarters outside, and by the Radical Press, that we who advocate an increased expenditure on the naval defence of this country are indifferent to the claims of social reform. I repudiate that suggestion. We recognise that there must be additional expenditure on social reforms, but we wish first to lay the foundations of that national security, without which the best designed and most lavishly planned schemes of social reform will collapse like a house of cards at the first flip of a hostile finger. It is because we wish that the structure of social reform shall not be a castle built upon a quicksand that we venture to urge the preliminary sacrifices (however great and continuous) which are necessary to secure our national safety. In conclusion I do do not think I can do better than by quoting in this connection the wise and statesmanlike words of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Speaking only a month ago, he said—

> "We have a stronger reason for preserving our Navy than any foreign nation can have for building a Navy. For upon the strength of our Navy and upon maintaining that strength unimpaired depend not only our trade and our empire, but the very independence and life of this country."

***MR. J. M. ROBERTSON** (Northumberland, Tyneside) said the right hon. Gentleman who had just spoken naturally denounced any movement in the direction of a policy which would put the relations of European nations upon a better footing. He was guilty some years ago of a very inflammatory speech, as to which he had since denied the accuracy of the reports, but had never given any account which would reduce it to anything like an excusable utterance. At that time he played his evil part in extending that feeling of ill-will which was so constantly fostered by a number of politicians of his school, not only in this country but also in Germany. To-night he had made a lamentable effort in the same direction. The question at issue, however, was rather between a number of the loyal supporters of the Government in their general policy and the Government in their expenditure on armaments. They never expected the Opposition to do anything but support a policy of expenditure, irrespective of common-sense, and declaim about the necessity of defending the country, without showing the slightest need for such expenditure. Whatever line the Opposition took, the issue between the Government and their supporters must be worked out. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty had said that the mover of the reduction was at issue with his newspaper advisers. He did not think his right hon. friend was quite entitled to take such a line. In any case he seemed to have entirely misapprehended the document to which he referred. That document did not lay down and justify a programme of three "Dreadnoughts" per annum, but was one which showed that if we went on building three "Dreadnoughts" we should have an enormous preponderance over Germany. It did not preclude the writer from maintaining that even three "Dreadnoughts" woud be in excess of the needs of the country. If it was arguable that they should be in accord with certain journalists who otherwise co-operated with them, they were certainly entitled to argue that members of the Ministry should be in accord with each other, and that their utterances should be consistent. One difficulty raised by the Chancellor of the Exchequer was that it was not at all inconsistent with the argument made out by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in a recent debate on the Address. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had denied, further, that Russia was the main factor to be taken into account in our military expenditure on India. He was putting the Foreign Secretary aside for the moment. Two years ago the Indian Viceroy, Lord Minto, did treat Russia as the main factor in our military expenditure in India, and put forward the astonishing argument that at a time when Russia was humiliated and practically prostrate she was more dangerous than ever. There ought to be a little more concord between His Majesty's Ministers and His Majesty's Viceroy in India, on such a point as that. To come to a matter of still closer concern, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had told them with the most obvious sincerity and conviction that the whole object of our Navy was defence, and that all the other Powers knew it. The Foreign Secretary in the recent debate on the Address on the capture of private property at sea had indulged in an elaborate argument, the purpose of which was to show that our policy as regarded defending and persisting in the right of capture at sea was justified on this score, that the Navy exists as a great weapon of coercion against foreign powers. It must be in the recollection of the Secretary to the Admiralty that that was the position taken up by the Foreign Secretary, that we were to hold to capture at sea because it was the best means of bringing an enemy to his knees. It was not put forward as a means of defence at all. Whatever was the need of harmony between Members of that House and journalists, there ought to be co-ordination between the utterances of His Majesty's Ministers. That brought them to what he considered was a point of central importance that had been overlooked so far. What they had to look to was the general question of policy. They were not met there to discuss the points in which expenditure might be usefully cut down. He had listened with amazement to the argument of the Member for the Abercromby Division on that head. If the debate on such a Resolution as this took that form they would never get at the real issue at all. They would be in the hands of naval and other experts all the time, and would never come to the real issue on which, whatever Ministers might think, a very large number of the most thoughtful people in this country were deeply impressed and were determined to come to some practical conclusion. He had listened with astonishment and pain to the language of the hon. Member as regarded another matter. He seemed to claim that almost everyone in the House agreed to the proposition that if, in the insane and foolish beggar-my-neighbour policy of for ever increasing expenditure, we found the burden intolerable, we should be prepared to fight whatever other Power it was that was increasing its expenditure also. He desired in the most emphatic and solemn terms to repudiate such a proposition; and he trusted that many of his hon. friends would agree with him in repudiating it. If they took the word "intolerable" in a literal sense, it did not matter what they said they would do. If they literally could not go on bearing their expenditure and had to do something else, the proposition might pass as a figure of speech. But as the word "intolerable" was habitually used in a loose and rhetorical way, his hon. friend's utterance on this point amounted to a most lamentable threat to any other Power that the time might come and might come soon, when we should go to war with it precisely because it increased its naval expenditure. What should we think of any particular foreign nation that held out such a threat to us? He was sure we should resent it in the strongest way. He could not but conceive that foreign nations would deeply resent such a threat, and did not suppose for a moment that any of them would endorse such a proposition. We were no more justified in going to war with a foreign Power for merely increasing its naval expenditure than any foreign Power was justified in going to war with us for the same reason. On this point he would think he was much more in sympathy with Ministers than was the hon. Member. He had supported him and voted with him in his demand of two years ago for a reduction of Army expenditure and, like him, did not repent in the least of the course he then took. He was only the more astonished to find the hon. Member now arguing that there must be no general demand for retrenchment, and that everything of that nature was platitude, to use his own expression. To come to the main issue, the question of the policy of the Government was raised by their refusal at the Hague Conference to abandon the right of capture at sea. He could not but think that in regard to the line of argument adopted by the Foreign Secretary in the debate on the Address, there was a deep fallacy involved, and that it was shared by a number of Members on both sides of the House. One hon. Member opposite had delivered a very able and ingenious speech on that occasion, the purport of which was that war must be war, and that it must be made as abominable as possible. He could not see why, holding that view, any hon. Member should not argue for poisoning wells. Waiving that particular issue, he wished to point out that the assumption that was made, that the more property was injured the sooner the war would be brought to a close, was really grossly fallacious. The hon. Member opposite drew an illustration which he seemed to think supported his argument, from the case of the devastation of the Shenandoah Valley in the American Civil War, and he spoke with something like exultation of the utter destruction of the means of life that was effected by Sheridan in that case. The hon. Member seemed to see something ennobling in the conception of so devastating a valley that a crow could not fly over it without carrying its rations with it. The devastation was never as thorough as that, and it never for an instant aimed at bringing the enemy to his knees. That would have been a very gross delusion indeed. They could not possibly have starved out the South by devastating the Shenandoah Valley, and it did nothing to bring the war to a close. The Shenandoah Valley was a very important means of communication for the North between Washington and the theatre of war in the south. That means of communication was frequently being interrupted by the southern armies entering the Shenandoah Valley. The whole military theory of Sheridan's operation was this: By making the Shenandoah Valley untenable by the enemy's army he would leave it free for the passage of his own forces; but there was no hope whatever of bringing the enemy to his knees by merely starving out the people of the Shenandoah Valley or for any other purpose devastating it.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): I think the hon. Member has missed my point. I did not suggest for a moment that the devastation of the Shenandoah Valley was done in order to bring the people to their knees by making life intolerable. I only used it as an illustration of the fact that private property is not immune on shore, and that if you really were going to withdraw private property from the operation of war you had better begin in the interests of humanity ashore rather than at sea, where it is more humane.

*MR. J. M. ROBERTSON said he did not see that the hon. Member's argument in that case amounted to anything at all, for he had to admit that on land loot was prohibited, and what was contended for as regarded the capture of commerce at sea was the permissibility of looting. The Shenandoah Valley was not a case of loot, so that if the hon. Member spoke only in that sense he was not speaking relatively to the contention of the other side. Let them take another case of what might be called devastation for devastation's sake, the famous devastation of the Palatinate in the reign of Louis XIV. That historic act of devastation had been condemned by every great soldier as futile and useless, and it had been recognised by historians as not only having failed in the purpose of bringing the enemy to his knees, but as having united a large part of Germany against the French King. In the debate to which he had referred, the Foreign Secretary, practically taking the line of the hon. Member opposite, had interpreted the famous historic phrase: "methods of barbarism," as having been applied solely to the concentration camps in South Africa. He did not see how anyone could ever suppose that the phrase applied to the concentration camps. Concentration camps were never methods of barbarism. They were methods of vulgar and hypocritical civilisation. It was the policy of the destruction of property and of crops and houses that most of them had in view when they interpreted the phrase. He took it that the insistence on the right to capture the enemy's commerce was strictly a method of barbarism in this sense, that it was an adherence to the old barbaric principle that plunder was the main purpose of war and a good way of getting the better of the enemy. In that very case of the South African war they had the best of recent illustrations of the futility of the war policy of mere destruction and plunder, for it was the peculiar infamy of the promoters of that war that they protracted it, as was now generally admitted, for eighteen months beyond any reasonable time in the hope of forcing the enemy to surrender by a policy of destruction, and after all they had to make terms with the enemy. Thus their policy of destruction was a failure by their own confession. In the whole argument of the Foreign Secretary that the right of capture at sea was a powerful weapon for bringing war to an end, there lay a deep fallacy, which was that plunder was a good way of getting the better of the enemy. The theory that they brought a war to a conclusion by stealing the enemy's property had nothing in it. He wondered what wars the Foreign Secretary was thinking about when he said that the capturing of commerce would bring a war to a conclusion. The right hon. Baronet must have been thinking of war in the abstract, and not in the concrete form. The last great war between England and France after the French Revolution lasted for twenty years, and commerce was being captured the whole of the time, and never once was it pretended that that policy did anything to bring the enemy to his knees. In the old days when men insisted upon the policy of the capture of commerce at sea the policy of this country was one of interference with the affairs of Continental nations, and for that purpose it might be useful, but surely they had passed far away from that ideal of foreign policy now. If, as the Chancellor of the Exchequer claimed, however inaccurately, the purpose of our Navy should be a purpose of defence, what could justify the maintenance of the policy of insistence on the capture of commerce at sea; what excuse was there for refusing to accept the claim of foreign Powers that we should abandon that demand? He had tried to find a rational basis for the policy of the Government in this matter. It had been pointed out that when the commerce of all nations was insured it was a ludicrous argument to say that they would bring the enemy to his knees by captures, because our own underwriters would have to pay the damages. The Foreign Secretary had argued that in that case the prizes of war would go as an indemnity to the underwriters. He did not know on what authority that statement was made. Such a course would revolutionise the law as regarded prizes of war in this country. The law and the practice as regarded prizes at sea was that they belonged to the captors, and the prize money had always been shared in that way. Now the Foreign Secretary told them that that practice would be put an end to, and the prize money would go to the British underwriters. The Foreign Office, as far as he was aware, had made no attempt to ascertain the views of foreign nations upon this matter. To judge from the arguments of the Foreign Secretary in a former debate, our Government stood blindly to the position that we would make no concession as regarded the capture of commerce, that we insisted on our ancient rights. By that very confession we maintained our Navy, not for purposes of defence, but for purposes of aggression against other nations who happened to have commerce at sea. The right hon. Gentleman had said that if they gave up that right they would run dreadful risks, that the state of war would continue, and they would never get at that enemy. He said the enemy's fleet would remain in harbour, and the state of war would continue. That did not seem to him to be the worst state of war. The right hon. Gentleman had suggested that if the enemy got his fleet bottled up after a certain time this country might lose command of the sea by making a mistake; but this country might also bottle up its fleet and then the enemy might make the same mistake. That was the kind of Pickwickian argument they had been listening to. He did not think he needed to discuss that argument further, because if they were in such danger they might as well give up the Navy altogether. He knew there were two views on the subject of the capture of commerce at sea. There was one set of experts who maintained that an enemy could not do any harm to our commerce in a naval war; there was another who maintained that an enemy could do a great deal of harm. He challenged the Government to decide which of these two positions they took. If it were true that an enemy could not damage our commerce seriously at sea in time of war, what excuse had we for maintaining the present vast fleet, and especially the cruisers? The Secretary to the Admiralty had told them that his programme was largely one of cruisers, and what were they for? By the account of a naval expert they were the eyes of the fleet, and were further, for the protection of commerce. From that point of view our commerce in time of war would be in danger, and we required cruisers to defend it. Consequently if the Government waived its right to capture commerce at sea they would not need any cruisers. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was committed to the view that our commerce was in danger, because when he said the maintenance of the command of the sea was to us a matter of life and death, he must, he took it, be held to have been referring to the danger of the interception of our food supplies. But the Government had only to agree to the claim of foreign Powers that capture of commerce at sea should cease to put our food supply out of danger. Our food supply would then need no defence, and there would be no justification for the size of the Navy as it existed to-day. If, on the other hand, it were true that our commerce ran no danger from an enemy, that, owing to wireless telegraphy and so on, we were put in such a position that our commerce was practically safe, then what was our Navy for but for the purpose of harassing the commerce of other States? As against the lamentable position taken up by the hon. and gallant Member for the Abercromby Division of Liverpool, he would put it to the House that while they claimed the supremacy of the sea the only result would be that all foreign maritime nations would be justified in arming themselves in self-defence. So long as they maintained the claim to capture commerce at sea they were holding out one of the worst temptations to our people to go to war. He had actually read articles which affirmed the proposition that if they only destroyed the German Navy the trade now going to Germany would come to this country. So long as such delusions prevailed it was this country that ran the risk of being tempted into war by the prospect of loot and plunder that was held out to them under this practice of the capture of commerce at sea in time of war. It was the duty of those who sat on those benches to try to gather what was the opinion of the wiser members of their Party and of the wiser minds throughout the country, and he ventured to say that those wiser minds were not in accord with the policy of the Government, and still less with the policy of the specialists and extremists as to military expenditure.

*MR. CLYNES (Manchester, N.E.), in supporting the Resolution, said he could not quite understand the Amendment moved by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The Labour Party for their part regarded the Resolution as being much too mild to meet the views expressed by the Liberal Party on the subject of national expenditure, especially in respect of armaments. The Resolution merely asked the Government to agree to further reductions in expenditure on armaments. He submitted that the cry raised at the last election by thousands of Liberal speakers was that the late Government was driving this nation to the verge almost of ruin by the excessive burden of expenditure. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was fair enough never in any sense to mislead the country by raising hopes in regard to expenditure which he believed could not be fulfilled. The right hon. Gentleman's moderation of promise on these subjects could always be verified by reference to his speeches, but at the same time he stood, as it were, as a kind of silver pipe in the great band of Radical trumpeters who on thousands of platforms prior to the last election told the country day by day how thousands of pounds had been needlessly expended. As in ten years the cost of armaments had increased by £20,000,000 the country was surely led to the conclusion that with the advent to power of a Liberal Government very great relief from public burdens would follow. He was conscious that in advocating reduction in expenditure he and those who thought with him would be charged with being friends of every country but their own. Those who said he and his colleagues were Little Englanders were men who endeavoured to keep the country as the private property of a little section in it. But the fact that three-quarters of the revenue of the country was expended in paying for our armaments and the cost of our wars in the past was sufficient to make everybody pause. Eight years ago the Emperor of Russia put forward his standstill proposition, but in the years which had intervened the military expenditure of England, France, Germany, and Russia had increased from £165,000,000 to £202,000,000, or something over 22 per cent. It was a burden which to his mind they were called upon to bear, not because there was any great sense of national danger, but because they had to pay a heavy price for the panic mongering of interested parties. They were now asked to approve of a national expenditure, which was consistent with an adequate defence of His Majesty's dominions. Who was to be the judge of what adequate defence was? He asked that question because the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the course of his very lucid speech had pointed out that the late Government had year after year added to the burden on the backs of the people which they were now compelled to carry. Why was that burden added to? It was because they had then, as to a great extent they had now, a House of Commons called upon to register its approval of private Cabinet decisions. What he and his friends asked was that these high questions of national and international policy should be subject more to the free and unrestrained opinion and judgment of those who were elected to hold themselves responsible for the destinies of the various nations. If the expenditure had increased because a willing House of Commons had approved of the decisions of the Cabinet, was that not a good reason why the present House of Commons should be left freer to impress on the Cabinet what the need of the moment and of the immediate future was, and to urge that expenditure on armaments should be reduced? He complained that so far in this debate no one who had spoken authoritatively from either side of the House had uttered a word exhibiting genuine sympathy with the cause of international amity the world over. The hon. and gallant Member for the Abercromby Division even went so far as to refer to the aspiration for international peace as a meaningless sentiment in a House of this kind. He himself thought they would never get a great reduction in the burden of armaments by dealing with small single items in the great total of expenditure with which they were faced. It was not enough for the House to look at the tact and administrative ability of individual members of the present Government or of past Governments. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had referred to the administrative tact and ability displayed in these quarters. The whole House should hold itself responsible to second the efforts of individual Ministers; and more than that, the leaders of parties, the spokesmen of national organised bodies of men, should show themselves untiring in the cause of peace, which stood second to none in the country to-day. It was said the money spent on armaments gave employment to British labour. But in his view the money should be used in more remunerative ways than in the building of battleships. The building and furnishing trades, and various other industries, might be stimulated if one-tenth part of the expenditure now incurred for armaments were used to assist those who were unemployed in connection with these trades. He and his friends did not wish to say that at no time and under no circumstances should we enter into a state of war, but, surely, only the most supreme national reason, involving the nation's life and honour, should justify us in employing such instruments of war as we now had at our disposal. Against which Power were these preparations directed? Japan was our ally; Russia, as far as naval strength was concerned, offered no grounds for fear; surely we did not fear immediate danger from our friend and neighbour France; and who could contemplate anything like a naval encounter with our kith and kin in America? There was only one nation left, and our Navy was certified by experts to be at least four times as strong as that of Germany. These facts justified the Government in agreeing to the terms of the Resolution, and even in going further in the administrative effort to reduce the burden under which the country was now groaning. We might provide one element of safety for ourselves in the further recognition of the rights and interests of other people. It was a good thing to guard our own, but it was equally good to acknowledge that other people had as much right to their share of the world as we ourselves had. We entered into treaties and arrangements with other lands for reasons of strategy and for purposes of trade; but we should go further and proclaim that we as a nation were ready to enter into treaties that would ensure the conditions of permanent peace and prosperity over the world at large. Members connected with all parties in the House had freely indulged in sentiments as to the necessity for international amity, but when they came to the House as men charged with international responsibilities they were told that these were pious expressions of opinion. It was their business to urge statesmen to make them into more than pious opinions and to lay the lash of their censure in the quarters that deserved it, especially on the sensational Press. Many connected with the Liberal Party were strongly anxious for conditions of enduring international peace, and it was for the purpose of securing these that they had been elected. It was easy for the rich classes to bear the burdens and to refuse to support the principle of international arbitration. But on the financial side of the question the burden fell heaviest on the poorest classes of this country. Of the 40,000,000 of people in this country only 1,000,000 were well enough off to pay any income-tax directly to the Treasury, and until expenditure was diminished the burden of the poor could not possibly be made any lighter, but was bound to be increased by an automatic and ever-growing process. The methods pursued by nations to-day in regard to international interests differed, after all, very little from those of savages of former days; and were they to confess that notwithstanding all our education and strivings after a higher ideal they must keep armed to the teeth out of fear of their nearest neighbours? It would be a good thing if the leading statesmen of the various nations were to recognise their obligations in that regard. It was said by a few that the international burden was counterbalanced by the gain derived from the physical training of the recruits for the Army and Navy; but any advantages of a purely physical character would come in a much fuller degree if the money was spent in organising and properly directing the forces of man for peaceful purposes instead of for purposes of discord and war. If one-tenth of the effort and expenditure involved in naval and military preparations were spent on peaceful purposes men would show themselves better developed in every way. Although the matter of money was very serious indeed, especially to the class he and his friends represented, there was yet something even more important than money. A very high human issue was involved in this question, and until that issue was recognised between one election and another and pressed in the Press and on the platform, and expressed more frankly from the two Front Benches in this House, this great burden of expenditure could not be diminished in anything like the way it ought to be. No, the great cries of the victors and the cheers of the successful side had never yet counterbalanced the groans and the agonies of those who were slain in war; and no greater enterprise could be undertaken by statesmen than doing their utmost to set up an international arbitration which would settle all the differences of nations in a peaceful way without the dread arbitrament of war.

*MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis) said he had long been a student of the economy of this subject, and if his hon. and learned friend the Member for Walthamstow would allow him he wished to defend the expert. He would suggest that legal gentlemen were also experts :

> "To prove by reason in reason's despite,
> That white is black and black is white."

He thought that the hon. and learned Gentleman in the course of his speech was doing precisely what he had done so often successfully elsewhere. In the leaflet issued by the Committee of which the honorary secretary was the mover of the Resolution it was said that the rise of expenditure might be certainly exhibited by a comparison between that of this year and that of 1897. He noticed that there was a slow process of education going on in the Party. The comparison used to be made between now and some period early in last century ; then it was made with the expenditure in 1894, and now it was with the expenditure in 1897. But when they compared the expenditure of last year with that of 1897 they did not think it worth while to mention that in the latter year the engineers' strike took place, and that we underspent to the extent of £2,500,000 on the new construction Vote that year. His hon. friends likewise forgot that the two-Power standard had always been applied by Ministers on both sides of the House, including the present Prime Minister himself, to the two strongest Powers. He could give them quotation after quotation from both Front Benches saying that the two-Power standard meant the two strongest Powers. Very obviously when the two-Power standard was applied now it meant the two strongest naval Powers —the United States and Germany—and when his hon. friends took 1897 for comparison they forgot that that was the year which saw the inception of the first German Naval Bill and the commencement of American naval expansion. A paper issued in Germany in support of that Bill showed that then Great Britain had sixty-two battleships and the United States and Germany had twenty-eight battleships. We were twice as strong in battleships and two and a half times as strong in cruisers, as these two Powers in 1897. The hon. Member who moved the Resolution said that suspicion had been excited amongst the other great Powers of late by our great armaments ; but did it not appear to the hon. Gentleman that not the slightest suspicion was excited against us on the part of those nations when our Navy was much stronger than in recent years? It should be remembered that battleships were only one element in naval strength, and that cruisers and destroyers were other elements. Hon. Gentlemen who wanted to go back to the expenditure of 1897 forgot that the cost of construction to-day of a battleship was about 80 per cent. more than in 1897. If they took the ships under construction in 1897 and calculated what the cost would be at the rate paid to-day, the new construction in 1897 would be between two and three times as high as it was to-day. The mover and the seconder of the Resolution had spoken very strongly about sensational journalism which was doing much harm to Germany. He admitted that. He would take an instance in regard to a weekly newspaper which threatened Germany with coercion by coalition, and the same paper had previously talked about Germany's "singularly barbarous attitude" and of her "diabolical" methods of waging war. That was published, not by one of the yellow press papers, but by an economist journal called the *Nation*, and edited by Mr. H. W. Massingham. It was said that a reduction in our naval expenditure would have to be made, but he thought in connection with this Resolution which talked about our peaceful relations with foreign Powers he would read what the Leader of the Liberal Imperialist Party said in 1902. [An HON. MEMBER: Who was he?] The Leader of the Liberal Imperialist Party at the period was the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself, and he said speaking on the Navy Estimates of 21st February, 1902—

> "For my part I think there are two branches of national expenditure in the diminution of which I see no prospect, and for the diminution of which I have no desire. One is the money we spend on national education, and the other is the money we spend on our Fleet."

Navy Estimates to-day were £1,950,000 less than when the Chancellor of the Exchequer made that speech. The right hon. Gentleman went on to point out that we had to take into consideration every Power, and that we had even to take into account our ally Japan. After referring to France, Russia, Italy and Germany he invited them to look further both to the East and the West. In the case of our kinsmen across the Atlantic in the United States there was, he said, growing up one of the largest and best navies in the world, and on the other hand, our new allies as he supposed we must call them were constructing a powerful Fleet. It was impossible, he said, not to take into account when we were constructing a Navy the dangers to which we were exposed. The right hon. Gentleman said then that the two-Power standard represented the minimum of safety. In the course of the debate to-day, however the Chancellor of the Exchequer in [moving his Amendment had said that the Government adopted and gladly adopted the preamble of the Resolution; but in his humble opinion that preamble vitiated the two-Power standard. If we were to take into consideration our peaceful relations with one Power it followed that we could discard that Power in dealing with our Navy. It turned out however, that not one of the vessels which the Cabinet settled at the end of 1903 to build were yet in commission. That was to say the statesmen of 1903 had to take into consideration our naval strength in 1903 and he did not believe anyone who lived in the period of 1903 was able to forecast in the slighest degree the grouping of the European Powers now. They had now to take into consideration what the state of affairs would be somewhere about the end of 1911 or the beginning of 1912, because the 1908 programme must safeguard the position of the country right up to the completion of the 1909 programme. He thought that was fairly obvious to anybody, but he did not believe that any statement by the Government or any argument would drive the economist party from that continual pressure for economy they had been exercising for some time past. If they were driven from one position they took up another, and they would consistently go on applying that pressure. They formed the tail of the Liberal Party, and their efforts were the old characteristic efforts which had always wrecked the Liberal Party, that of the tail attempting to wag the Party. That was always the case, and they seemed to grow by what they fed upon. The more concession was made to them the bigger the tail grew, and he supposed it would be all tail if concessions went on. Therefore he wished the Government had met this Resolution with a direct negative, and then he could have supported them heartily. On this occasion the tail of the Party was masquerading, more or less, in the capacity of sandwich men. On one board there was the principle of disarmament and on the other the principle of economy. He remembered what a great statesman Lord Randolph Churchill, who had been quoted more than once in this debate, said on this subject. He stated that the Radical Party was always prevented from governing by what it was pleased to call its principles, and in the process of the act of governing it invariably committed suicide. He thought this idea of pushing economy to an extreme was one of those cases to which Lord Randolph Churchill referred, although he himself wrecked his own career by a similar course. A few nights ago the tail of the Party was masquerading as sandwichmen with Macedonian misrule on one board and Congo atrocities on the other, but he must point out to hon. Members that if they wished England to act as policeman in Europe and Africa, armaments became more and more of a necessity. We could not go on acting as policeman all over the world without armaments and he would point out also that we had treaty obligations which the First Lord of the Admiralty and the Secretary of State for War must bear in mind. Hon. Members must remember that we had occasionally to coerce Turkey as they did at the beginning of their reign as Liberals. This action with regard to Turkey might cause a war and we might have to send 100,000 troops to meet the Turkish troops who were very efficient soldiers. In that event the Navy would have to safeguard the transport and act along the coasts of Syria, the Levant, and Egypt. That was only a suggestion which occurred to him at the moment, and which he threw out, and he must point out that the hon. Members who were most strenuous in calling upon the Government to act as policeman in international difficulties and who made strenuous speeches, spitting fire right and left, did not have to do the work, but other men had to go and do it in the persons of our soldiers and sailors, and they ought to be provided with adequate weapons and all that was necessary. Hon. Members could not play the part of Peter the Hermit and William Penn the Quaker, at the same time, yet they were attempting to play the part of Peter the Hermit in regard to our policing Europe and the part of William Penn when they wished for disarmament. What was required? What did hon. Members desire to reduce with regard to the Navy? They could reduce either *personnel* or *materiel*. If they reduced the *personnel* they would have to break contracts with men, and if they wished to reduce *materiel* he would remind them that some figures which he had obtained from the First Lord of the Admiralty that afternoon showed that the total expenditure on *materiel* in the Navy as compared with the German expenditure was 1·18 as against 1. He would ask his hon. friend whether his object was to get a permanent economy or a temporary economy by disarmament? He thought he should get no answer, but perhaps the Labour Party would give one. Was the economy they desired to effect to be temporary or permanent? [Some LABOUR cries of "Permanent."] They at any rate had had the courage of their convictions and were entitled to say to the electorate that armaments stood in the way of old-age pensions. But those who only hoped for temporary economy were grossly deceiving electors if they said that the Navy stood in the way of social reform. He was in favour of measures of social reform, but he hoped to get them by a revision in our system of taxation. What had been the history of this question of disarmament? Napoleon the Third in the sixties raised the question in every country in Europe, and history was repeating itself to a very great extent. Napoleon the Third was visited by the King of Prussia, and the French Prime Minister told the French Parliament not to be deceived by mythical German armaments. The French nation proceeded to set an example in disarmament. That was in 1869, and in the succeeding year, 1870, the Prussians took Paris, and exacted an indemnity. The result was, therefore, anything but satisfactory. He might instance the case of Lord Goschen. He raised the question in 1899, and this was followed by the German Navy Bill of 1900. The Unionist Party set the example by making the substantial "cut" which had been referred to, and this was followed by the German Navy Bill of 1906. The Government raised the question in 1907, and made a specific offer at the Hague Conference; the result was the German Navy Bill of 1908. And yet his hon. friends went on talking about disarmament. Their principle of economy was of limited application. It meant penurious treatment for soldiers and sailors and extravagant treatment as regarded social reform. His own view with regard to the experts who had been referred to in such disparaging terms was that they were bound to go to them for advice, but that they were not bound to take that advice. They would never get economy of a permanent and justifiable kind unless for a time they placed one Minister in charge of both Services and found out what was vital for the two. The right way for a Minister to approach the problem was to ask the experts if every measure they submitted was vital to the safety of the country. After all, they were the real experts on that question. They were bound to do what was vitally necessary, but, of course, they were entitled to ask the experts their reasons and make them prove that it was vital. If it was merely useful, then, if the British Nation was too hard up, the proper attitude of the Minister would be to say we could not afford merely useful things, but only those which were vital. That was the only way in which a Minister could promote economy. In order to bring the two Services into harmony and prevent overlapping their best Minister for a time only should be put in charge of both fighting services. He wanted to point out to the House the official German figures, and he begged hon. Members to listen to them carefully. Since 1904, side by side with British reductions of 13·2 millions sterling per annum, there had been an increase in the German Army and Navy Estimates of 16·2 millions sterling per annum. The relative increase, therefore, of the German Army and Navy Estimates in the short space of four years as compared with Great Britain was 29·4 millions sterling. If that extra expenditure did not convince hon. Members that they had got substantially changed conditions, all he could say was that there was no convincing them at all. In addition to that the Admiralty had to take into consideration the fact that the German Navy Bill which had already been sanctioned provided for a still further increase of £5,000,000 per annum by the year 1911. He had been much struck of late months by the fact that the literature circulated in the House had been all of one kind. The Peace Society, the International Arbitration Society, the Financial Reform Society, the Cobden Club, and his hon. friend, through his committee, had all been at work, arguing against naval expenditure; and if industry was to be the sole measure of success they had deserved to succeed. He and those who were associated with him had, he thought, much reason to be ashamed, for they had not met and repudiated, as they could be repudiated, the arguments of his hon. friend by literature of a similar kind. In diplomacy it was universally recognised that whatever promise might be made to a foreign nation, if some new event supervened and, as the late Lord Salisbury said, created a stricken field, then those promises could be violated as we violated them in Egypt; we had then a stricken field to upset all calculations, and, like sensible men, we adapted ourselves to the changed conditions. With regard to all this solemn twaddle about promises at the general election, he maintained that since then there had been a stricken field created, and promises made under utterly different conditions had no sort of application to the changed conditions of 1908. The fact that there had been an enormous increase of nearly £29,500,000 per annum in the German Army and Navy Estimates relative to our own was of considerably more importance than all the opinions they might have uttered at the general election. Facts were stronger than opinions, and opinions had to suit themselves to the new facts. He was sure his hon. friends would not be convinced by these changed conditions. He had been struck by the fact that they were so dissatisfied with the reductions that had been achieved in the British Navy Estimates that they had promoted a memorial of 136 Liberal Members of Parliament to the Prime Minister for further reductions. Those hon. Members did not get elected for economy. The main issue, so far as he recollected, was one in which they showed posters of the big and the little loaf. They pictured themselves as the bountiful big loaf, and their opponents as the famine loaf, and they proceeded to say that seven loaves out of ten came from abroad and that it would be a monstrous injustice if one out of the ten had a small tax put upon it. If that would be a monstrous injustice, what adjective was left to describe conduct which by reducing the Navy would expose the whole seven imported loaves to danger? They would get a famine loaf then with a vengeance. The working-men were entirely on his side. There was another strong formula they used at the general election. It was the old watchwords: "Peace, Retrenchment, and Reform." He used it himself many times; but his hon. friends had taken "retrenchment" out of the context altogether without considering the governing word "Peace." Peace in this country had always been preserved by the strong British Navy; and he would ask hon. Members whether they had ever known reforms carried out when the country was at war. Retrenchment was in direct proportion to the strength of the Navy. The prosperity of the nation, as the banking centre of the world, depended upon the strength of the Navy; and, if once they let down naval expenditure—and they were letting it down—there would be in this country, as there was in every other country in Europe, a successful demand for conscription, and if the conscript was to be paid the market rate of wages, they might then expect their Army Estimates to be doubled at the very least in two years. His hon. friends had told them that they only desired reasonable compression of armaments; but who was to judge between reasonable and treasonable compression. It was only a difference of a "T," and some people found it easy to cross the "T" out. The late Lord

Salisbury said the people were the ultimate judges. He agreed, but who was to advise the people except the experts as to what was necessary for any given contingency? We had in some respects a very small Navy providing for our defence—128,000 provided for the whole defence, allowing some 400,000,000 people to pursue their ordinary avocations in the Empire. There was one man afloat to every 3,000 ashore. These 128,000 men were the only safety between this country and invasion. That was one sailor keeping out over thirty German soldiers. He hoped he had shown that it was a very penurious policy to starve the Navy of the necessary *matériel* to safeguard the country against invasion, to fulfil our treaty obligations, and to protect the food supplies of the country.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) thought they must all have been impressed by the fact that no case had been made out by the mover and seconder of the Resolution or by those who had supported it. Everyone must feel, as the hon. Member for the Abercromby Division had said, that the Amendment was vague, and no one who had spoken in support of the Resolution had suggested any particular direction in which any considerable economy could be achieved. There had not been shown any avenue where very considerable reductions in Navy or Army finance could be presented. He did not think any Member present would suggest that a matter of two or three or four millions represented the principle of economy which the mover of the Resolution had in his mind. If it was only a matter of difference between one "Dreadnought" and two "Dreadnoughts" or between eight and ten millions of expenditure, then there was really no difference in principle between those who supported the Resolution and those who opposed it. There was something much more vital behind it. There were those who believed that our expenditure on the Navy was unnecessary not to the extent of a difference of two or three millions, but of a difference of probably ten or fifteen millions, and those Members while they felt this and spoke in vague terms concerning it could not point out to the Chancellor of the Exchequer nor to the Secretary of the Admiralty exactly where their economies should take effect. The hon. Member for North-East Manchester had talked of the peace and prosperity of the world to be achieved by action on the part of this country in promoting international amity. International amity was a very good thing, but there were other considerations besides good feeling which must establish international amity. International amity, if it meant anything at all except vague expressions of good feeling, must mean something definite and practical. He asked the House if the attitude of Germany and the United States and France in expanding their naval programmes was against the interests of international amity. If it was, we were bound to expand our naval programme to meet that which was against the interests of international amity. The Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Secretary to the Admiralty in particular had referred to the two-Power standard and spoken of Germany and France as being the combination against which we had to put our naval expenditure. But as the hon. Member for King's Lynn had just pointed out, that was not the standard on which our naval expenditure should be based, but rather upon the two strongest naval Powers, which were the United States and Germany. At present these two Powers were expending £40,000,000 in support of their navies, as against our £32,000,000. But there was a more serious thing than that, if they recognised a two-Power standard at all. In 1911 Germany, which was now expending £8,500,000, would be expending £13,000,000 on her naval programme. What did we intend to do? The United States were expanding proportionately. Were they satisfied to approve next year of the same expenditure as had been presented to the House this year for new construction? What should we spend in five years from now? He thought every Member of the House must recognise that if they admitted the two-Power standard at all, they must admit responsibility for meeting the two-Power standard wherever it might be. It had been said by the Secretary to the Admiralty that if the Cawdor programme had been carried out we should be expending this year £9,500,000 on new construction. But he thought that the naval policy of this country was supposed to be continuous. One Government was supposed to carry out the naval policy and programme of the preceding Government. He hoped the Secretary to the Admiralty would not have them understand by what he said that this Government disapproved of the Cawdor programme, of the policy which was accepted by the House on the whole, and by the community at large. He trusted that the policy which had always been pursued would not be forsaken even in the interests of that economy which they all desired. He did not think there was any Member on the other side of the House—the strongest advocate of economy—who felt the necessity for economy more than Members on that side of the House. Members below the Gangway and Members opposite, and the Chancellor of the Exchequer also, talked about the division of industrial energy and the unproductive character of expenditure on the Army and Navy. It was a lamentable thing that they must spend money on the Army and Navy, he agreed, but international conditions and human nature were such that they must do it, and it was better to spend heavily on the Army and Navy and preserve our trade routes and our commerce. Our sea-borne commerce alone represented £14,000,000 a year, and we spent on our Navy £32,000,000. What did that represent as an insurance? He thought about 2½ per cent. Was that unreasonable? He did not think it was, and they were convinced that industrialism and trade were best preserved by keeping a strong Navy to protect our trade routes and secure our markets. Members opposite believed in free trade and the open door; free trade and neutral markets and the open door were only preserved because we were able to back up our hand by a strong Navy which compelled other Powers to take into account our ability to strike at a moment's notice. Let them take China alone. If hon. Members desired the open door there, this country must be in a strong position to require other nations to keep the open door. The hon. Member for Walthamstow had made some reference to our position in 1855, and to a speech made by Disraeli at that time. It might have been useful if in quoting Disraeli the hon. Member had referred also to the fact that in 1855 England was in a panic, that she had to send abroad to hire soldiers, 20,000 of whom were encamped upon this soil to fight her battles. He argued that after a great war there should be immediate cessation of expenditure. He had no doubt Disraeli advocated that, but history had great lessons even for great statesmen, as great Liberal statesmen had discovered, and history had its lesson for Disraeli, because there was a decrease of expenditure on the Army and Navy which subsequently brought a panic in this country and produced a reconstruction of our Army. England was as much disturbed in 1870 as she was in 1855. France was another example of a country which believed in anti-militarism. There was a large party in France which advocated a non-military spirit. That produced in the end Sedan. That non-military spirit produced in France a lack of preparation and insufficiency of military force which subsequently put her under the heel of Germany. In Germany, which he hoped would long remain our friend, they had an example of a nation which had a national policy of conquest. In Silesia, in Hanover, in Schleswig Holstein, in France, in her dealings with Austria, she had a most deliberate policy of acquiring territory and making the country that she conquered pay the cost of the war. So long as they were faced by nations who were building up empires of their own they must also face the probability of nations going to war to acquire territory and making the nations conquered pay the price of the struggle, and it was that that England had to face. Whatever her goodwill, whatever her desire for peace might be, she had to face the fact that there might be other nations in the world which were not satisfied either with the territory which they controlled or with the commerce which they governed, and who looked to the possibility of expansion based on conquest. They might not like it, but it existed, and they could not afford to sit down and watch the progress of armaments in other countries without rigidly adhering to the policy which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had reaffirmed. There was no Member on that side who was not grateful to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as he thought the country would be, for his re-affirmation of the two-Power standard, but he thought there was not a Member on that side who did not regret that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had retained in his Amendment that which was contradictory and misleading. It was absolutely misleading to speak of the friendly relations of Powers with us and then as a sequel to that to speak of economies. The two things were not compatible. To speak of friendly relations with Powers was a mere figure of speech which was used in public documents at times preceding great crises, and such friendly statements had been made on the very verge of war. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was placed in a difficult position. He had behind him those who intended to make it difficult for him unless he made promises of further economy. He had made no promises of further economy and could hold out no hope that next year or the year after there would be substantial reductions in armaments. He had an extract from a speech by the right hon. Gentleman of 14th March, 1906, in which he had said—

> "The Army and Navy present fields of possible extravagance and certainly not of possible or practicable reduction in the case of the Navy by contracting your shipbuilding programme."

The right hon. Gentleman did not now state that there would be any contracting of the shipbuilding programme. We were building this year one battleship. How many were we going to build next year? If we were to live up to the two-Power standard we must build, not one, but three. If we built three battleships would hon. Members opposite be satisfied? If our expenditure was made commensurate with German expenditure would they move a Resolution next year? He thought it was worth considering. He doubted very much whether hon. Members would go further than they had gone now. They had gone only so far as to express the pious opinion that armaments ought to be reduced. They had not said how they could be reduced, and he believed it could not be shown if they remained steadfast to the principle which had been laid down by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. The peace and prosperity of the world at large was a good thing, but the peace and prosperity of England was a better thing. It was that to which they were committed, and that peace and prosperity would be best preserved by also preserving the tradition of the Navy in which the people of this country believed and from which they would not be diverted by resolutions of this kind.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I am loth to intervene at this hour but the time before us is short and it is necessary to leave space for the Secretary for War, who will reply on behalf of the Government to the whole debate. I have not heard the whole of the speeches since the dinner hour, but I heard the whole of the debate before that period, and I do not think any hon. Gentleman will dissent from the verdict I venture to pass, that the speeches were able and interesting, but the debate itself has been very unsatisfactory for a quite simple reason—that we have not all been addressing ourselves to the same issue; the House has not been occupied in discussing the arguments for and against a simple question of policy. Quite the contrary. Partly from the use of the particular phraseology of the Resolution, and partly in consequence of the introduction of subsidiary circumstances, we really have been for a large part of the debate at cross-purposes. If I may say so, one of the most fruitful causes of a certain discrepancy and want of concentration in the arguments on either side has been that while some hon. Members have been discussing economy others have been discussing reduction. Now, economy and reduction are quite different things. The Secretary to the Admiralty, for instance, never discussed reduction; he spent the whole of his time in a long and able address in discussing economy. He was occupied in showing that, as trustee for the taxpayers and administrator of the Navy, he had done a great deal to save here and save there by introducing better methods; and in the same way the Chancellor of the Exchequer rising from the same bench occupied a large part of his speech in contrasting, not different policies of two successive Administrations, but the question of economies which he alleged to have been made by the Administration of which he is a member, to show that they were better stewards of the taxpayers money than those who preceded them. I am not going to discuss this question of economy as distinguished from reduction. If you are going to deal with questions of economy, that is to say, if you are going to ask whether the predecessor of the present First Lord of the Admiralty was a more careful administrator of public funds than the present First Lord, or whether the late Secretary for War was a worse administrator of funds than the present Secretary of State, you inevitably involve yourselves in an endless controversy about departmental details. Do not let anybody suppose that I regard departmental details in connection with finance as insignificant. I quite agree that they are very important. It is very important that the public funds should be administered without waste. It is the business of the Committee of Supply in discussing the Estimates to do what they can to prevent waste. But on this Resolution we should only be lavishing our time if we were to discuss, not questions of reduction, but questions of economy in regard to departmental management. I have only to mention two cases that have come up which show how vain these discussions are. We had, for instance, the question of loans for public works dealt with at great length by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. It is a subject on which the Chancellor of the Exchequer is fond of discoursing. He thinks the whole course pursued by the late Government was one of extravagance. He thinks that the habit of contracting even short loans throws upon—he said posterity, but I suppose he ought to have said the next Chancellor of the Exchequer—the cost indulged in by one Administration. I think the Chancellor of the Exchequer has gone much too far in all his speeches on this subject; and I think, if the present Government runs its natural and appointed course, he will, before leaving office, find that he has gone too far in the matter of these loans. The right hon. Gentleman who seconded the Motion made a very interesting parallel between good business methods and Government methods, and he quoted, as he had a right to quote, the extremely successful business which his enterprise and ability have built up as showing that at all events no business man should regard the opinion of his experts with too profound or too subservient a reverence. I appeal to the same right hon. Gentleman on another matter connected with business, and I ask whether there is a business firm in the world, from the largest railroad down to the smallest industrial enterprise, in which in certain circumstances it is not only proper, but absolutely necessary to deal with great capital expenditure by spreading it over a certain number of years. There is no other way of doing it, and if you refuse to do it in this way the only result is that you will not do it at all. I would, therefore, reply on that branch of the subject which is, I think, subsidiary and apart from the main problem we are discussing, in the following way:—The right hon. Gentleman says that by borrowing money you are throwing upon future Governments and future taxpayers the cost of carrying out your permanent improvements. I say that by the plan he is adopting he is throwing greater burdens on those who are to come after him. If you neglect these works while you are in office on the theory and on the excuse that you have not the money to do it that year, and you refuse to borrow, if the work in consequence remains undone, the result is inevitable. It cannot be avoided. It is that the time comes when they must be done—when the barracks become so abominably insanitary, so utterly impossible to use that they have to be renewed, or the cry for a new naval base conforming to modern conditions of strategy becomes overpowering. Then you have to find money. You have to complete your annual Estimates for the necessary work of the year, or you have to borrow so as to be able to carry out capital expenditure with capital money. I am not going to dwell on the point further; but I have brought it in to show that we really have been led off, in the first instance, I must say by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, secondly, by the Secretary to the Admiralty, from the great issue really raised by the mover and seconder of the Resolution to quite subsidiary and subordinate questions as to comparative skill and dexterity of administration between two successive Boards of Admiralty or Ministries. Do not let us confuse during the short time that remains to us the two great questions of economy, which everybody is in favour of, and retrenchment or reduction, which is quite a different thing, and involves questions of great Imperial policy. If I have, by what I have said, cleared the ground, surely I am right in saying that the true issue has not been put or met from the Treasury Bench. The true issue was put by the mover and seconder of the Resolution and by the hon. and learned Member for Walthamstow. They say that the present Government—and, to do them justice, they say also the late Government—have brought us into such an international position that we ought to have great reductions in our defensive forces. We have been present to-night at one of those Parliamentary comedies —I dare say they are inevitable—in which the responsible Ministers have to find a way out from a situation of difficulty, which situation depends upon the fact that there is a real disagreement between themselves and their followers which they want to disguise, and possibly something resembling a real agreement with their opponents which they wish to forget. I heard a great deal from the Chancellor of the Exchequer and from the Secretary to the Admiralty of economies practiced and of elaborate comparisons between the Estimates of one year and the Estimates of another—comparisons, by the way, which omitted such important facts as that we had to re-arm the whole Army with a new gun just at the time when some of the important diminutions of expenditure by right hon. Gentlemen opposite began to produce their effects. But I do not wish to proceed on these side issues. The fundamental issue is this—Is the general scale of armaments and of expenditure upon the Navy and Army which the late Government thought necessary still necessary, or ought we fundamentally to modify that scale in consequence of recent diplomatic arrangements? That is the question to which I wish to speak. That is the question of which the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not say a word from the beginning of his speech to the end, except that he did admit, quite explicitly, that the two-Power standard was one which the Government were prepared to maintain, although his friends will accompany him into the lobby insisting that the necessity for the two-Power standard has been exploded owing to readjustments in international arrangements within the last four years. I have some questions to ask on the real issue that is before us. First, in regard to the Army. Can we or can we not do our duty necessary for the defence of the frontier of India if we carry much further our reductions in the Regular forces of the Crown?

SIR CHARLES DILKE: At home.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My right hon. friend says "at home," from which I conjecture he thinks you cannot diminish them abroad. But that is not the issue I put. Everyone who has studied the Indian question knows that if there is to be a war for the defence of the North-West frontier of India it is not going to be a short war, and everyone knows also that, if it is not going to be a short war, the natural wastage of war would be especially great in a country of the climatic conditions of India. Do the Government think that with the inevitable wastage of war we could do with a materially smaller number of Regular troops to deal with the difficulties of the first year or eighteen months of such a campaign? That is a question of purely scientific examination. I agree with the right hon. Gentleman who seconded the Motion that you must not treat experts as if they were infallible authorities. But, at the same time, it would be folly to ignore them; and I understand that that is a folly which the Government are not committing and do not intend to commit. The Chancellor of the Exchequer told us that the whole question of the defence of the frontier of India was being subjected to a most close and critical investigation by those scientific advisers, and that they were entering into it without the slightest *arriere pensee* or any desire unduly to force the decision of that investigation in the direction of reductions. No military position in the world is more complicated than the defence of the North-West Frontier of India. Though we spent an infinite amount of time and trouble over it, the subject was not complete when we left office, and I am glad to find that the investigations have been taken over by our successors. But have the Government the smallest prospect that the military authorities in India will admit that we can deplete the resources in this country of Regular troops which will be required for India far below the necessities there? I greatly doubt it; and if that is so, then the conclusion is that we are not merely dependent on considerations derived from the Cardwell system for keeping up the number of our Regular troops, but that we depend on something more fundamental, more essential, and which is not so arbitrary as the mere balance of battalions at home and abroad, for in addition to that we depend on considerations based on the vulnerability of our frontier in India and the possibility of meeting all military exigencies. The Chancellor of the Exchequer says that he adheres to what is known as the two-Power standard. It is not a strictly scientific standard, but it is a good, broad, rough working hypothesis. It is a standard which everyone can understand, and the point of which is quite plain and obvious to the "man in the street," as it is plain to everybody else. It is, therefore, invaluable in practice. I wish that we had it in the Army. The nearest approach we have to it in the Army is the Cardwell system. The two-battalion system gives a rough standard, but it is far less valuable for practical purposes. Then I ask this plain question. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said distinctly that he adhered to the two-Power standard; but the mover and the seconder were as distinct and as explicit in stating that they did not adhere to it. Are these two bodies of men—the Government and those who support them, the critics who move this Resolution and those who oppose it—going into the same lobby on the same question, differing not about a trifle, not about something that is an unessential incident in the situation, but differing fundamentally and on a point which, in the opinion of those who believe in the two-Power standard, they believe in because of its security for national safety as well as national prosperity? There you have the two opposite schools of political and military thought. Are they going to be joined together in holy matrimony over the Amendment of the Chancellor of the Exchequer? If so, then I know a just cause or impediment why they should express publicly and in the face of the world the reason why there is this fundamental difference, and why a Resolution is brought before the House, the whole course of which is to bring light upon this difference of opinion which should not be disguised in the discussion of this meaningless Amendment. I believe myself to be in agreement with the Government on this point and in disagreement with the mover and seconder of the Motion, although I do not think that the division lobby will show that. But let us ask what is the basis of the opinion of the mover and seconder, and of those who agree with them. What is the reason why they wish our ancient policy to be abandoned? What novelty is there in the existing situation requiring us to violate principles which have been accepted by successive Governments and successive parties for many years? I think that I can put the whole of their argument in two or three sentences. They say that the naval and military policy depends on the Foreign Office. The foreign policy of the present Government is a policy of peace and good-will. It has found practical embodiment in the agreement with Russia; and therefore, you ought, it is said, to find in your national Budget some reflection which can be estimated in pounds, shillings, and pence of the exact amount of the good will which you have succeeded in obtaining by your diplomatic dexterity. "Show us," they say, "in your Army and Navy Estimates the pecuniary equivalent of your skill in diplomacy." I think that is an utterly erroneous way of reading either the signs of the present times or of any times. I may put in parenthetically the modest suggestion that peace and good-will were not the invention of the present Government; that their predecessors were anxious to be on good terms with their friends and neighbours; and, if you are to estimate the value of the Foreign Office by these crude methods, we on this side may point to a series of treaties of arbitration and of arbitrations carried out, and finally to agreements with foreign Powers, to which this Government, with all its good-will, can really show as yet no parallel. If the relations between us and foreign Powers are so much better than they were ten years ago, then because we have been in office longer we have done more than our successors.

Mr. ASQUITH: I expressly shared the credit between Lord Lansdowne and my right hon. friend.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman was perfectly fair. I only want to show that these good relations are a ground for economies; they have been so for some time past. Let us now examine that which is the fundamental proposition—that if only you make treaties of amity and arbitration with a sufficient number of your neighbours then you may cut down your military and naval expenditure to the point which suits your pockets, although it may not minister to your safety. That is fundamentally erroneous. Let us consider the particular arrangement which has been most in evidence in this debate—the Anglo-Russian Agreement. Does it make the frontier of the Indian Empire safe in the sense that it would enable us to make great military economies? I did full justice to the effect of that treaty in preventing Russia in times of peace from creating a new base from which to attack India. But that in any case would have been a thing of the far future, which would have involved Russia in enormous expenditure. But as far as the actual and existing frontier of India is concerned we are no safer in case of a quarrel with Russia than we were before. You say we shall not have a quarrel. Let us suppose that it is made more difficult and remote in consequence of the Agreement. Of course, I grant it is more improbable. But are you to allow the safety of your Indian Empire to depend on that improbability? If you could in the course of six months raise from the soil an army capable of meeting all your requirements, I agree that while the two Chancelleries were haggling over their quarrel you might put yourself in a posture of defence. But everyone knows that is impossible. To put the thing arithmetically. Estimate how long it takes you to create a great fleet and army and compare it with the time it takes you to quarrel with some one else. If you think it impossible to get up a quarrel under four or five years, then you may let your defences go down much lower than they are now. But it takes two years to make a battleship and a great deal more to make a sailor. Does it take you more than two years to submit to a quarrel being forced on you? Does anybody think that in consequence of our specially good relations with France, Russia, and Japan, and in spite of the good terms on which, I am glad to think, we are with Italy, Germany, and Spain—does anybody think that, in consequence of that state of things and by reason of it, we ought to leave these islands defenceless? [MINISTERIAL protests.] I hear a murmur of dissent. [MINISTERIAL cheers.] Well, if not defenceless, less defended. If your defences are not adequate, what is less or more to you? If they are more than adequate to any possible difficulty, I agree diminish them. But is that alleged. [Cries of "Yes."] That is alleged by hon. Gentlemen below the Gangway, but is it alleged on the Treasury Bench? And if it is alleged, as apparently it is, by hon. Gentlemen below the gangway, have any single one of them in the course of this debate given the grounds of the faith which is in them? Have they explained to us or to anybody else how we are to meet possible difficulties that may arise with less forces than we have at present? Have they gone over the ships and troops, all the apparatus of those who may conceivably be our enemies and compared them with our own means of defence? Not one of them. They have not gone beyond platitudes, eloquently expressed, but absolutely unmeaning and useless.

*MR. BYLES (Salford, N.): The hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for the Abercromby division, whose speech the right hon. Gentleman evidently did not hear, defended the possibility of largely reducing the Army.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The speech of the hon. and gallant Gentleman to which the hon. Member refers, which I did hear, consisted of a bitter reproach of the hon. Member and his friends because they voted against him on the only possible method of reduction.

*MR. BYLES: The right hon. Gentleman must not misrepresent me. I had the honour of voting with my hon. and gallant friend.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Gentleman is one of the faithful forty. I quite accept the rebuke of the hon. Gentleman, but he does not share that almost solitary glory with either the mover or the seconder of the Resolution, nor with that great body of those who, but for the *concordat* with the Government, would, I suppose, be prepared to vote with them. The fact is, and it really is a fundamental fact, that there is no greater fallacy than that of saying that armaments and policy are mutually interdependent, if you mean by policy what most people mean—namely, the efforts of the Foreign Office at a given time to keep on good terms with its neighbours consistently with maintaining the national honour. It is very important, it is invaluable, to have such a Foreign Office. It may save you from wars, it may save you from the fear of wars, but it is no substitute for national defence. It is not a thing you can put in the place of fleets and armies. Fleets and armies are the only expedient known in this world by which those who desire to maintain their independence can maintain it in spite of the fluctuating movements of human passion. I certainly do not underrate the abilities of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, but neither he nor any other prophet ever born into the world could foresee what is to be the European political weather two years or three years hence any more than you can foresee the weather in the Channel next week or in the Atlantic a fortnight hence. These things are beyond human ken, and until we find some method by which political prophecies of that kind can be made with certainty so long it is absolutely essential for the honour and safety of this country that we should keep a Fleet and an Army adequate to every enemy or combination of enemies which is likely to arise, and which, according to all experience, we may have to meet either at sea or on land. Therefore, I say, that on the broad merits my friends and I range ourselves unhesitatingly against the Motion which you, Sir, first put from the Chair. We are anxious for economy; we are not anxious for reduction. Economy—as much as you please; reduction we think inconsistent with national safety and national honour. That is all I have to say, or indeed that I desire to say upon the broad argumentative issue before us. But on the actual course that my friends and I mean to pursue I must say a word. We are in ignorance, of course, as to how far the Parliamentary signs indicate that an agreement between the movers of the Resolution and the mover of the Amendment has been reached. We do not know, in other words, whether the movers of the Resolution mean to resist the Amendment of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, or whether they mean to agree with it. I imagine that they mean to agree with it. Differing as they do fundamentally and intentionally, they desire to gloss over any difficulties or differences that may separate friends. I do not quarrel with them. If, however, I am wrong in supposing that an arrangement has been come to, and if there is a division, I shall vote against the Resolution first put from the Chair, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question;" in other words, I shall go into the lobby against the mover and seconder of the Resolution, and shall in that respect follow the Government. If that Amendment is carried, then the question will be that the words of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Amendment be there added. If it were in order to move an Amendment to the Amendment of the Chancellor of the Exchequer I would do so, but I understand that is not in order until the Resolution as amended becomes the substantive question. I shall certainly not take the trouble to go into the lobby in favour of the misleading platitudes of the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Amendment, although I shall vote with him that the words of the original Resolution be omitted. But I suggest that the Chancellor of the Exchequer's own views upon this question, and certainly our views, would be much better expressed if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would consent to have put from the Chair his Amendment with the addition after the words "consistent with," of the words "the two-Power standard of naval strength and," so that the whole Resolution as doubly amended would read as follows: "That in view of the continued friendly relations with foreign Powers announced in the Gracious Speech from the Throne, this House will support His Majesty's Ministers in such economies of naval and military expenditure as are consistent with the two-Power standard of naval strength and the adequate defence of His Majesty's dominions." It will be observed that this gets rid of all ambiguity, intentional or unintentional, in the situation; and it will make it perfectly clear that the Government, in modifying the original Resolution, desire to put on record on the files of the House what they have said in their speeches they mean to maintain. A clear issue will then be raised between them and the Gentlemen on the other side of the House who think that the two-Power standard is antiquated and ought to be profoundly modified in the interests of economy. If time permits I will move that Amendment myself, but if it comes on after eleven o'clock it will not be in my power to move it because you, Sir, will at once leave the Chair without Question put. Therefore, practically the only chance of its being put to the House is that the Chancellor of the Exchequer should agree to it. As it expresses what I understand to be his explicit view and the view of the Government of which he is a leading member, I hope he will ask you, Mr. Speaker, to put his Amendment in that form from the Chair. In that case we should get a clear vote upon the subject, and the country and Europe would be able to gather what they certainly will never be able to gather from the debate as far as it has gone at present—namely, that the majority of this House are firmly determined to preserve intact those great principles of naval and military expenditure on which I firmly believe the safety and honour of this country depend.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): I have been accustomed to look upon the right hon. Gentleman as one of the most practised masters of the forms of debate in this House, but I am bound to say that in his concluding sentences I do not think he has quite lived up to his reputation. He makes the extraordinary proposition that the Government Amendment should be amended, and that there should be put into it a reference to the two-Power standard which nobody has controverted—[OPPOSITION cries of "Oh!"]—which the Chancellor of the Exchequer expressly affirms—[OPPOSITION cries of "Why not accept it?"]—and which was not disputed even by my right hon. friend the Member for Northwich. It would be as absurd to put it in this Amendment as it would be to put in that the Army shall be always 50,000 strong. These details are outside altogether the scope of this Amendment; controversy has not been raised upon them, and the long and short of it is the Government cannot accept any such proposal. The right hon. Gentleman began his speech with an observation with which I have a great deal of sympathy. He said that in the course of this debate many topics have been discussed which were not germane to the real question, and so long as he maintained that position, I think he made some criticisms which were of a very fair and appropriate order. There has been some discursiveness about this debate. But then the right hon. Gentleman went on to define the real question. In substance it was this. Ought we to go below the state of things which the late Government had provided? The right hon. Gentleman's proposition was suitable, and he took as his first illustration of it the question which arises in regard to the Indian frontier. He asked whether, if we made reductions on what the late Government had provided, we should be providing adequately for contingencies in connection with the defence of that frontier. The first observation I have to make to that is that the right hon. Gentleman himself does not always seem to have thought that the amount of troops which at one time existed, and existed during the course of his Government, was the proper amount necessary to be maintained for the defence of that frontier, because there were put forward in official Papers and speeches from his Government propositions for the reduction of the Army by a very substantial amount—fourteen battalions, I think, at one time—and therefore I cannot think that the right hon. Gentleman is serious in suggesting that the state of things which he left when he went out of office represents the numerical quantity which ought to be maintained for the defence of the Indian frontier. Thus the question is, What was the state of the Army when the right hon. Gentleman left office? I admit most cordially his keen interest and desire to put things right. But he did not put things right. He did not leave us with an efficient Army, and an Army which was adequately organised, and the question to-day is not one of keeping these numbers more or less, but a question of putting that Army into such a state of efficiency that we will get much more out of it than we got in his time. That is what underlies the policy of the Government, and it may be that it will turn out that with smaller numbers we shall have a more efficient Force for the defence of the North-West frontier, if such an occasion should arise, than was the state of things under the late Administration. The right hon. Gentleman said the Cardwell system is the nearest approach to the two-Power standard that we have in connection with the Army. I agree that it is the nearest approach. In the Cardwell system you have got a system which was devised by Mr. Gladstone and Lord Cardwell forty years ago, as being the most economical mode of providing for the defence of an Empire a great deal of which is overseas. It is a merciful system to the Colonies and Dependencies, and it is a merciful system to India. One reason why I could never agree on this point with the hon. Member for the Abercromby division was because it departed from the Cardwell system, or put a large charge upon the already overburdened Indian frontier.

Sir CHARLES DILKE interjected a remark about the Government of India which was not distinctly heard in the gallery.

Mr. HALDANE: It was considered by Commission after Commission and decided by them to the contrary. I will give references which will place that absolutely beyond doubt. At any rate that was the policy of Mr. Gladstone and Lord Cardwell; it is the policy of the present Government, and has been the policy of most responsible statesmen for forty years past. We think that at present the time has come for the review of all those matters, for the purpose not merely of cutting down, nor of disregarding efficiency, but with a view to getting efficiency. We feel that there are three reasons on which we can justify reduction. One is because it is not inconsistent with getting increased efficiency. The second, and a very important one, is because economy in Army and Navy administration tends to give you a war chest, and a war chest is one of the most important things you can have for national defence. I would ask hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite whether they have any plan by which three successive thirty-firsts of March would have brought them to a point at which they would have paid off £40,000,000 of the National Debt. That will be our position by the next 31st of March. The war chest of the nation will be in a more satisfactory position than that of other Powers. There is a third reason why we can reduce consistently with the Cardwell system, and that is because policy in South Africa has led to a state of things which makes it right and profitable to withdraw a considerable number of troops. That enables us to make a very substantial saving, which is estimated at £170,000 a year. These things we believe to be consistent not only with economy but with increased efficiency. The right hon. Gentleman went on to say that there were two propositions before the House, as I understood him. One was that if you had a treaty such as the Anglo-Russian Treaty, or the French *entente*, you have got rid of any necessity for making any provision for the future. I certainly did not understand anybody on this side of the House to maintain that thesis, though some speeches were made with which I did not wholly agree. Some speakers seemed to me inclined to go too fast in their progress and to proceed without any definite standard; but nobody went so far as that. I did not hear anyone say that we wanted no Army and Navy. I believe the right hon. Gentleman said the counter-proposition was that treaties were not to be taken into account, that you are really no better off when you have them, because you cannot rely on them. To my mind that proposition is an even greater fallacy than the first. I do not say, any more than the right hon. Gentleman, that you can absolutely rely upon treaties; they are are modified, they change, they pass away. I have always held very strongly that while war may come quickly and your notice may be short, preparation for war can never be a short affair; it requires much time and study. Therefore, I agree you can never wholly rely on treaties. Nevertheless, they may and do make a profound change for the better. You never can, in dealing with the affairs of the British Empire, provide for every possible contingency. The right hon. Gentleman in an eloquent period of his peroration used a phrase which I think went too far. He seemed to me to say that it was our duty to provide against any combination of our enemies that was in the least likely to arise. How can you do that? You might make yourself bankrupt and be your own worst enemy. But what I do say is that it is true that no amount of survey of the strategical possibilities can guard you against all the contingencies that may arise. I have studied this question closely and am convinced you cannot lay down any absolute and immovable standard for all the necessities of the Empire. What you have to do is to deal with the most likely contingencies, and these are contingencies which depend upon what your treaties are and your relations with other Powers, so that it may well be that a risk which might at one time be great has ceased to be any serious risk at all, because of those treaties and relations. That must be judged by those who best know the condition of affairs. The Secretary of State for India, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Secretary of State for the Colonies—these are the men who ultimately determine, with the Governments to which they belong, the size of the Army and Navy which has to be maintained, not the Secretary for War or the First Lord of the Admiralty. The hon. Member for Walthamstow pleaded for larger reductions in naval and military armaments, but he did not give us any standard by which we were to judge of those reductions or what was to be the measure of them. I sympathise with those who feel that if we had more money at our disposal as a nation we could do much with it. My right hon. friend the Member for Northwich and I have worked at the University problem together, and we have often felt that, if we had only the cost of one or two battleships to operate upon, it would go a long way to giving us one or two very useful and necessary Universities.

But, after all, national problems remain. The life of the nation has to be carried on, and the extent to which its life has to be guarded depends on your relations with other Powers and what other powers are doing. You cannot divorce your own position from that of other Powers. And it is on the shoulders of the Government of the day that must rest the responsibility of determining to what extent it is safe to make changes in the armaments you are to keep up. War is a serious enough business, and so is preparation for war. We have been caught out more than once when the sky seemed clear overhead. We had a sky that was cloudless and there came the Crimea. The sky seemed clear and there came the Indian Mutiny. And again the sky seemed clear and there came South Africa and caught us unprepared. Matters change, and you cannot be sure that the conditions will remain to-morrow as they are to-day. In time of peace, not less than in time of war, you cannot forget that the views which nations take of each other's armaments and the capacity to make decisions felt are an element which you cannot exclude. In these circumstances I say it is not possible by any mere general aspiration, by any broad principle laid down without reference to any standard, to define precisely or in practical fashion the extent to which you can go in the direction of economy. It always must be a difficult matter to tell the precise point to which you can go with safety. That must always be a matter for the judgment of those who are best informed, but it is also a matter on which broad considerations of policy bear. There are two schools of thought in this matter, and it is not desirable that either school should prevail to excess. The only wise course, bearing in mind the desire which exists to set nations free from the burden under which they groan, is for those who are responsible to take all things into account and to survey the question as a whole, and to arrive at a decision which is at once wise and just.

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided :—Ayes, 73 ; Noes, 320. (Division List No. 29.)

AYES.

Alden, Percy
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Baker,JosephA.(Finsbury,E.)
Barnes, G. N.
Bethell,SirJ.H.(Essex,Romf'rd
Bethell, T. M. (Essex, Maldon)
Brunner,J.F.L.(Lancs.,Leigh)
Brunner,Rt.HnSirJ.T(Cheshire
Byles, William Pollard
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cooper, G. J.
Cotton, Jir H. J. S.
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crossley, William J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Glover, Thomas
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon,RtHn.SirW.Brampton
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert,Col.SirIvor(Mon.,S.)
Hodge, John
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset,N
Hudson, Walter
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jowett, F. W.
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G.(Leominster)
Lea, Hugh Cecil (St.Pancras,E.)
Lehmann, R. C.
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Mackarness, Frederic C.
M'Callum, John M.
Maddison, Frederick
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Mansfield,H. Rendall (Lincoln)
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncaster
Nuttall, Harry
O'Grady, J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearce, Robert (Staffs., Leek)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Richards,T.F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Seddon, J.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Summerbell, T.

Thomas,DavidAlfred(Merthyr
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset,E
Walsh, Stephen
Ward,John (Stoke-upon-Trent)
Wardle, George J.
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Williams,Llewelyn(Carmarth'n
Wilson, HenryJ. (York,W.R.)
Wilson,J.W.(Worcestersh.W.)

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Murray Macdonald and Mr. Alexander Harvey.

NOES

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Acland-Hood,RtHn.SirAlex.F.
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C. R.
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen,A.Acland(Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Asquith,Rt.Hon.HerbertHenry
Astbury, John Meir
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hon.SirH.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour,RtHn.A.J.(City Lond.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring,Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry,RedmondJ.(Tyrone,N.)
Beach,Hn.MichaelHughHicks
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beck, A. Cecil
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn,SirJ.Williams(Devonp't)
Benn,W.(T'w'rHamlets,S. Geo)
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bertram, Julius
Black, Arthur W.
Bowerman, C. W.
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brodie, H. C.
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buckmaster, Stanley O.
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Buxton,Rt.Hn.SydneyCharles
Cameron, Robert
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Castlereagh, Viscount
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt.Hon.VictorC.W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey.
Cecil,Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain,RtHn.J.A.(Worc)
Chance, Frederick William
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Cleland, J. W.
Coates,E.Feetham(Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett,CH(Sussex,E.Grinst'd)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Courthope, G. Loyd
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig,CharlesCurtis(Antrim,S.
Craig,Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Craig,CapatinJames(Down,E.)
Craik, Sir Henry
Crosfield, A. H.
Cross, Alexander
Dalmeny, Lord
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies,M.Vaughan-(Cardigan)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dewar,Arthur(Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, Sir J.A.(Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson,W.H.(St.Pancras,N.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duckworth, James
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne,MajorE.Martin(Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Essex, R. W.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, George Denison (York)
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, John Michael F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Glen-Coats,Sir T. (Renfrew,W)
Glendinning, R. G.
Goddard, Sir Daniel Ford
Gretton, John
Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guinness, Walter Edward
Haddock, George B.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Hardy,Laurence(Kent,Ashford
Harmsworth,CecilB.(Worc'r)
Harmsworth,R.L.(Caithn'ss-sh
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey,W.E.(Derbyshire, N.E.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Heaton, John Henniker
Hedges, A. Paget
Helmsley, Viscount
Henderson,J.M.(Aberdeen,W.)
Herbert,T.Arnold(Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hill, Sir Clement (Shrewsbury)
Hills, J. W.
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Emslie John
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Isaacs, Rufus Daniel
Jackson, R. S.
Jenkins, J.
Jones, SirD.Brynmor(Swansea)
Jones,William (Carnarvonshire
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kenyon-Slaney,Rt.Hon.Col.W.
Keswick, William
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King,Alfred John (Knutsford)
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lamont, Norman
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee,ArthurH.(Hants,Fareham)
Leese,SirJosephF. (Accrington)
Lever, A. Levy(Essex,Harwich
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lockwood,Rt.Hn.Lt.-Col.A. R.
Long, Rt.Hn.Walter(Dublin,S)
Lough, Thomas
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Arthur, Charles
M'Calmont, Colonel James

M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mallet, Charles E.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. G.
Moore, William
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morpeth, Viscount
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Newnes, Sir George (Swansea)
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
Norman, Sir Henry
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Philipps, J. Wynford (Pembroke
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford, E.)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Raphael, Herbert H.
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Rees, J. D.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Colonel
Sheffield, Sir Berkeley George D.
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanley, Albert (Staffs, N. W.)
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Starkey, John R.
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Sutherland, J. E.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Abel (Carmarthen, E.
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tillett, Louis John
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire)
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph
Ward, W. Dudley (South'mpton)
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid.)
Waring, Walter
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Rt. Hn. E. (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Whitbread, Howard
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whiteley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson, A.
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E. R.)
Wilson, Hon. G. G. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winterton, Earl
Wodehouse, Lord
Wood, T. M'Kinnon
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Younger, George
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. G. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I beg to move the Amendment of which I have given notice. [Cries of "I object."]

*MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman cannot move it as objection is taken.

And, it being after Eleven of the Clock, and objection being taken to further Proceeding, the debate stood adjourned.

———

POLLING DISTRICTS AND REGISTRATION OF VOTERS (IRELAND) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

Adjourned at a quarter after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 3rd March, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

King's College London (Transfer) Bill [H.L.]. Report from His Majesty's Attorney-General received, and ordered to lie on the Table.

Interoceanic Railway of Mexico Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order), and committed.

Metropolitan Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]; London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order), and committed: The Committees to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

King's College, London (Transfer) Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order), and committed.

Rochester Bridge Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order), and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

Audenshaw and Saddleworth Urban District Councils Bill [H.L.]; Briton Ferry Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Merthyr Tydfil Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]; Pontypridd Water Bill [H.L.]; Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]; South Wales Electrical Power Distribution Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Viscount Iveagh be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Lord Saltoun; read, and agreed to.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY.

Return giving the strength of each infantry battalion and each battery of artillery on the Home Establishment on 1st February 1908, showing the number of men in each unit who have less than one year's service or are under twenty years of age, showing also the number of recruits at the depot.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION.

Sixtieth Report from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England; with an appendix.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PUBLIC RECORDS.

Addition to the rules for disposal of documents under the Public Record Office Acts, 1877 and 1898: Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

MUNICIPAL REPRESENTATION BILL [H.L.]

[Second Reading.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord COURTNEY of PENWITH: My Lords, I am afraid I occupied your Lordships' attention at rather undue length in presenting this Bill a little while ago, but I hope on this occasion to be as brief as your Lordships would desire. As the House is aware, this is a permissive Bill. Its object is to enable the municipal councils of our English boroughs to substitute for the present method of electing their members the system which is detailed at length in the Bill. The alteration is intended to secure a greater continuity in the composition of these councils and the more assured presence on them of independent members, men who are active and useful in municipal affairs but are not attached to any political party, and who, under present circumstances, have a difficulty in entering these bodies.

The Bill was read a second time last year by your Lordships and referred to a Select Committee. That Committee took great pains to examine the scheme and the operation of the Bill, and they reported very favourably upon it. I think I am fairly representing them when I say that they thought the Bill well calculated to attain the ends sought by it, that it could be worked with tolerable ease, that returning officers could certainly be found capable of carrying it out, and that they would have little or no difficulty in training their assistants to work the system. The members of the Select Committee had the advantage, not only of hearing explanations of the Bill given by those interested in its drafting, but of actually seeing an election of members of a medical council in London conducted on this system, which no doubt had some effect upon their decision.

Whilst the Select Committee thus approved of the object of the Bill and substantially of the method by which it was sought to be accomplished, they thought the conditions under which it might be adopted by the municipal councils were not quite stringent enough, and that it was not sufficiently apparent that whatever was done would be done experimentally. They therefore proposed certain alterations in the Bill to remedy this supposed defect. These alterations have been made, or, at least, I have endeavoured to incorporate quite faithfully all the proposals of the Select Committee. I believe a doubt is entertained by one noble Lord who can speak with authority as to whether we have carried out the proposals of the Select Committee with absolute correctness. It was so intended, and if we have failed, the matter can be remedied in Committee. I can assure the members of the Select Committee that nothing was intended but to carry out with the utmost strictness what they recommended. As your Lordships approved the principle of the Bill last year, at all events, so far as consenting to the Second Reading involves approval; as you referred it to a Select Committee, who returned it with such favourable comments, and as we have made the alterations proposed by the Select Committee, I do not think I need trouble the House with any further remarks at the present moment. I therefore, with great hope that it will meet with the absolute concurrence of your Lordships, move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*Lord Courtney of Penwith.*)

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): My Lords, I desire to say, on behalf of the Government, that we do not propose to offer any opposition to the Second Reading of this Bill, partly, of course, because it is of a very tentative and permissive character, and, even if passed into law, would not of itself involve any important legislative change. My noble friend behind me spoke of the Committee which, as your Lordships know, sat last year. It seemed to me he somewhat overstated the effect of the Committee's recommendation when he said they had expressed approval of the principle of the Bill. What they did, I think, was to express approval of the experiment being tried, which is not precisely the same thing; and it is also important to remember that the function of the Committee was a distinctly limited one. They did not inquire into the whole subject of minority representation, but simply dealt with this particular Bill. It is, I think, important to bear that in mind in considering what the Committee really did.

There is no doubt that, as far as the London municipal boroughs are concerned, there is, as everybody who has looked at the Report of the Select Committee will see, something in the nature of a distinct grievance which might be remedied. In the Metropolitan boroughs, which, as your Lordships know, are in a different position from those in the provinces, the elections are triennial and affect the whole of the council; and the effect has been that on certain occasions there has been an absolutely sweeping change in the composition of the council, far beyond what the change in the opinion of the electorate could be said to warrant. In the provinces, on the other hand, under an entirely different Act of Parliament, one-third of the council is elected every year. That does involve a much more gradual alteration of the composition of the council, and it involves a much greater probability of something like a continuous policy.

One complaint which has been brought against this Bill is the alleged complication of the manner in which its object is to be carried out, and I think that my noble friend probably under-estimates the degree of terror with which his First Schedule is regarded at first sight by those who attempt to peruse it, and with which it might be regarded by the returning officer. On the other hand, I think my noble friend is entitled to argue, as no doubt he does, that it is quite possible that a process which looks extremely complicated on paper, may be far more simple to carry out than a first view would lead one to suppose; and I believe, as a matter of fact, that those who have tried the experiment—and the Committee had the advantage of witnessing an actual election under this system—have found that it is easier than the appearance of the Schedule would lead one to imagine.

On general grounds, as I say, we do not desire to offer any opposition to the Second Reading of this Bill. But I think it is important to give one word of caution, as we know that my noble friend looks further ahead and hopes to see this plan employed for the purpose of Parliamentary elections. I should, therefore, like to guard myself by saying that it must not be supposed that we either say or deny, by giving assent to the Second Reading of this Bill, that this plan is the one which ought to be adopted, supposing any plan has to be adopted, for the purpose of meeting the difficulty of minority representation on the large scale. I am anxious to make that perfectly clear, in order that we may not be told at a future date that we have adopted the principle of the noble Lord's Bill for the larger purpose.

LORD BELPER: My Lords, as I had the honour of acting as Chairman of the Select Committee, it is, perhaps, due to the House that I should say a word about our proceedings. I am sure, in the first instance, that the Report entirely carries out the view I held myself, and, I think, the view of the great majority of the Committee. As the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council has stated, our duties and functions were certainly limited. We had not to express an opinion on the principle of the proposal; but we did satisfy ourselves that the machinery of the Bill would work perfectly well, and that it carried out in an effective way the object of the measure—namely, that of giving fair representation to minorities.

We had a very ample opportunity of having the Bill explained to us by the officers of the society with which my noble friends Lord Courtney and Lord Avebury are connected; and I am bound to say that it took some time and a good deal of explanation to make us fully acquainted with its intricacies. But when we had mastered the proposal, and had had an opportunity of seeing an election carried on under this system in the Royal College of Surgeons, with the officers of the Proportional Representation Society as returning officers and the surgeons themselves counting the votes, we could see that, with proper instruction, the Bill was perfectly workable, and that a competent returning officer would be able to give such instructions to his subordinates as would ensure the machinery of the Bill working efficiently. I am bound to say, with regard to the complicated nature of the Bill, that I think that part of it could be got over; but I did form a strong opinion that there was one objection to the rather complicated explanations that were necessary—namely, that a voter in the first instance certainly could not assure himself that the machinery which was put before him would necessarily carry out the object in view, and that his vote would have the proper value when the votes were counted; but that as soon, however, as he had had an opportunity of carefully examining it and of having the matter fully explained to him, he would, no doubt, give his vote under this machinery with an assurance of confidence.

The next point we thought it necessary to assure ourselves upon was that there was a feeling in the country in favour of adopting some system, different from the present mode of election, which would secure more weight to the minority vote. As the noble Earl has pointed out, in London, where the elections take place every three years and affect the whole of the council, there have been some of the most startling changes that it would be possible to conceive. In Lewisham, for instance, at the 1903 election, the Progressives had thirty-four seats and the Moderates only six; in 1906, on the other hand, the whole of the Progressives were unseated and the Municipal Reformers obtained all the forty-two seats. There have been, under the present system, such violent fluctuations that most people have felt the necessity for some value being given to the minority vote.

Having satisfied ourselves on those two points, we thought it our duty to secure that the Bill should be strictly confined to an experiment. The scheme which we proposed was this, that a council should not have power to try this experiment by a mere majority, but that the resolution in favour of the change should be carried by a majority of three-fifths of the council after due notice had been given. This would enable an experiment to be made of the proposed system for a period of three years, practically one election of the whole council. We also suggested that, if it was wished, after the expiration of the period of three years, to continue the experiment, it should be possible for a council, by a resolution of a majority of its members, to continue the new system of voting for another period of equal duration; but, failing any such resolution, the borough should revert automatically at the next municipal election to the mode of conducting elections in force before the experiment was tried. We also proposed that after the expiration of this second period of three years any further resolution of a council in favour of the continuance of the proportional system should be laid before each House of Parliament for a period of not less than forty days during the session of Parliament, and that, if either House before the expiration of such forty days presented an address to His Majesty against the resolution, no further effect should be given to it.

I would point out that we had no opportunity of comparing this procedure with other means of giving effect to the minority vote. The Committee was a Committee on this Bill, and, as chairman, I had to rule out of order any discussion with regard to other modes of securing the object in view. Therefore we felt that we were not in a position to say either aye or no whether this was the best mode of procedure, but merely to give effect to what was proposed, namely, that the experiment should be tried. There is one other point to which a reference was made by the noble Lord in charge of the Bill. I do not think that Clause 4 as it stands does quite accurately carry out the proposal of the committee, because it says that—

> "The operation of this Act may be discontinued for any borough by a resolution of the council passed in the same manner and on the like notice as the resolution adopting this Act, and thereupon this Act shall cease to be in force in the borough."

and that then—

> "The council of any borough in which the operation of this Act has been discontinued may again adopt this Act in the same manner as if it had never been previously adopted."

Lord Belper.

As I have explained, that is not intended. It is not intended that there should be any necessity for moving a resolution to discontinue the operation of the Act, but that *proprio motu* the council should go back automatically to the old mode of conducting the election unless a resolution in favour of the continuance of the proportional system is passed by a majority of the council. I think, therefore, the noble Lord will see that this clause is not quite in conformity with the scheme outlined by the Committee, and, subject to that, I entirely agree with the explanations he gave.

LORD ASHBOURNE: My Lords, it is most natural that such of your Lordships as take an interest in this subject should approach it and desire to speak of it with the caution that was exhibited by the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council. The question dealt with in the Bill is one of the very highest importance. The evil my noble friend seeks to grapple with is that the present method of checking votes in this country for every purpose works out with the result that in a great many cases there is no true representation of the various opinions held. It is, no doubt, generally felt that that is not satisfactory, and that it would be a great deal better if some method could be discovered which would give fair representation to the minority.

Anyone can see that those are topics entitled to plain consideration from everyone, and they have attracted the support of some of the most powerful minds in this country for a great number of years. I will not allude to those who are still with us, but I would like to mention, for the respect I bear to his name, the late Henry Fawcett. My noble friend Lord Courtney appears to have lived and learned, and to have come to the conclusion that he must approach the question in a tentative and experimental way, for he has left Parliament severely alone. This Bill suffers, I think, not a little by the title that has been given to it; it is awe inspiring to be asked to consider a Bill for proportional municipal representation. It suggests a great many sums behind to be worked out by those whose minds still retain enough of their early education to enable them to perform the feats, but it does not suggest anything of popularity. The schedules, too, do not look attractive reading at first blush.

I heard the discussion last year on this Question, and was a good deal struck by what was said by the noble Marquess the Leader of the House, whom we hope soon to see again in his place. The noble Marquess said he had given consideration to this matter some years before, and one of the practical difficulties that struck him was that the returning officer was given a power that in some cases might be found to be almost too great for fair and satisfactory working. I do not say that it is an objection that I would adopt lightly, but it shows how a fair mind looking at this question will see points that need examination and consideration. The struggle has been, I have no doubt, on the part of my noble friend and those interested in this question, to evolve a system which is not only just, but susceptible of ready understanding. I have no doubt as to the absolute honesty of purpose of my noble friend, but whether he has yet succeeded in reaching the highest point of simplification in a very difficult question I have not the knowledge that would enable me to say.

The measure has gone through the ordeal of a Select Committee, and that Committee guarded themselves against making a rush with anything like enthusiasm on the subject, but rather dealt with it with caution and much hesitation. It may be that should the Bill pass, the boroughs would, to use a common expression, fight shy of it; it may be that the constituents would be timid and would not think they could work it out; and if the representatives of the borough, who had to consider the application of this Bill, had it borne in upon them by public meetings and by articles in the Press that the constituents of their borough did not see their way to adopt it, understanding the present system but not feeling very clear that they could understand the new system, that, of course, would operate as a check; and it might be that, if the Bill passed, it would be adopted in a comparatively small number of boroughs. I dare say that that would satisfy to some extent the views of my noble friend, because it would test the working of the system by public elections.

The suggestion made by the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council is that the wisest, fairest, and most courteous course to adopt, in reference to a measure proposed by one whom we all respect so much as the noble Lord, is to read the Bill a second time; but the noble Earl was careful to guard himself by entirely confining what he said to this Bill, and by preserving entire freedom should it ever be sought to apply the principle in a wider way. The views stated on that subject by the noble Earl commend themselves to my own judgment, and I would be sorry to say anything that would indicate a want of entire respect for the Bill.

*Lord EVERSLEY: My Lords, the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council has pointed out very properly the great distinction between the metropolitan boroughs and the provincial boroughs. In the case of provincial boroughs, a third of the councillors retire annually, with the result that there is an election every year, and I believe that, as a rule, the boroughs are divided into wards returning three members. Now, nobody has pretended to say that there is any grievance there. There was no evidence before the Select Committee last year from a single provincial borough that they were dissatisfied with the present mode of election. One-third of the members are elected annually; there is, therefore, continuity, and the minorities are fairly represented. I am perfectly certain that if this Bill passes into law we shall never see the experiment tried in any one of the provincial boroughs. Indeed, it was stated before the Committee that the provincial boroughs were satisfied with the existing state of things and did not approve of the Bill.

In the London boroughs the position is certainly very different. The plan that has been in operation there since the constitution of the metropolitan borough councils, and, indeed, before in the case of the old vestries, has been that of triennial elections affecting the whole of the members, and it has happened that at one election the whole of the members of a council were replaced by others of a different type. I do not think anybody who has looked into the matter can doubt that some change is necessary and desirable in the case of the metropolitan boroughs. For my part I think the true remedy could be found in the application of the provincial method of election, the boroughs being divided into wards returning three members and a third of the members being elected each year. That seems to me to be the logic of the position; but as my noble friend desires that the experiment of proportional representation should be made, I have no particular objection. It is unlikely, however, that any of the London borough councils will risk the trial.—

To speak frankly, I am not in favour of schemes of minority representation. I have had a connection with the subject almost as long as my noble friend Lord Courtney. I recollect that forty-one years ago, when the Reform Bill of 1867 was before the House of Commons, and a Motion was made for the purpose of introducing the cumulative vote into Parliamentary elections, the motion was supported by Mr. Mill and Mr. Fawcett, and I have no doubt my noble friend Lord Courtney, although not a member of the House at that time, supported it by his pen. Though supported by high authority on one side, it was opposed by equally high, in fact greater, authority on the other—namely, by Mr. Disraeli, Mr. Bright, and Mr. Gladstone; and I remember that, speaking on that occasion, I ventured to predict the failure of the scheme.

I would remind your Lordships that two experiments have already been made in this direction. It was introduced into the Reform Act of 1867 by your Lordships by way of Amendment, and was very reluctantly accepted by the Government of the day and by Mr. Disraeli, who had previously expressed a very confident and strong opinion against its adoption. However, it was adopted and applied to three-cornered constituencies—not many in number. The proposal was that, instead of three votes being given, the electors should only give two. For some little time, I think, the scheme gave satisfaction, but after a while its defects became apparent. One of its defects was that it caused political stagnation in the constituencies; members got returned as minority members, and there was no practical means of getting rid of them. The whole scheme became distasteful to the constituencies where it was adopted, and in the Reform Act of 1884 it was abolished by universal consent, and there was substituted for it the scheme of single-member constituencies.

The other experiment that was tried in the same direction was in the case of school board elections, where the cumulative vote was adopted to enable various religious sects to be represented. That, if I recollect rightly, was adopted by general consent, and for a time it worked well. But after a few years it was found that it enabled representatives of small sections to get into positions where they were mischievous rather than useful, and from which they could not be dislodged. Even supporters of minority representation condemned that particular scheme, and it finally disappeared when the work of the school boards was transferred to county councils. Lord Courtney and his friends think they have at last devised a scheme which is not open to these objections; and, theoretically, I think, there is a great deal to be said for the elaborate scheme described in this Bill. But my own belief is that in practice it will be open to almost similar objections to those felt against the cumulative vote. I think it will turn out, in practice, that it will favour minorities in the same way as that scheme did, and that it will make it extremely difficult for majorities to obtain their due proportion on the councils. It will obstruct majorities, and, on the other hand, small sections and classes of people will find themselves able to return members.

Take, by way of illustration, the scheme as described in the Schedule of this Bill. Take the case of a constituency returning five members with 6,000 votes. According to the proposal of my noble friend, any one candidate getting the quota of 1,000 votes will be entitled to be elected, and, theoretically, that is perfectly accurate, and there is a great deal to be said for it. But, in point of fact, when you come to the practical working of a scheme of this kind, I think it will turn out very differently. Let me suppose, for instance, the case of a constituency which is being fought by two nearly equal parties, and that then a candidate independent of either of them comes forward. I think it can be shown mathematically that in such a case, if the independent candidate obtains, not one-sixth of the votes, but slightly above one-ninth of the votes he will be almost certain of election.

LORD COURTNEY OF PENWITH: No.

*LORD EVERSLEY: It would be necessary for the purpose of working this out to have a blackboard and chalk; but I must ask the House to take it from me that, under the conditions I suggest—namely, that two nearly equal parties are fighting the constituency, and an independent candidate comes forward—the independent candidate, if he obtains one-ninth only of the votes, would be almost certain of being elected.

LORD COURTNEY OF PENWITH: No, no.

*LORD EVERSLEY: Then there is this further difficulty. If, in the case of a constituency returning five members, an independent candidate succeeds in getting the quota, then the two parties who are fighting for the other four seats would almost necessarily be in an equal position—two of each would be returned, unless one party were in the proportion of three to two, which is a very rare case. Thus it turns out that, under a scheme of this kind, the minorities would be unduly favoured, and majorities would find it extremely difficult to exercise their influence. For these reasons I confess that, for my part, I have very great doubt as to the advisability of the whole scheme. I do not know that I have any objection to the Bill passing into law, or even to the experiment being tried in any one of the London boroughs if they choose to adopt it. But I very much doubt if a London borough council will try the scheme, and I have a very strong impression that, if passed, the Bill will become a dead letter.

LORD COLCHESTER: My Lords, as I had the honour of serving on the Select Committee of your Lordships' House by whom this Bill was considered, I wish to say a few words on this subject. Speaking as one who was a member of the late School Board for London, I do not at all accept the view of the noble Lord who has just sat down, that the cumulative vote in school board elections was a bad system. I think the inconvenience of its working, so far as there was inconvenience, was due to the awkward size of the constituencies, and the inconvenience would, I think, have been greatly removed if there had been only three members for each constituency. But the system of cumulative voting gave a fair representation of parties, and there was scarcely one constituency in London in which the elector, whichever side he was, had not at least one of his members in sympathy with him. I think that was a great advantage. If anyone speaks impartially on this matter it is myself, because, on the first occasion that I stood for the London School Board, I was defeated by the operation of that vote; but I still consider the working of it was fair. My own bias was in favour of the cumulative vote, or the restrictive vote, rather than the complicated system of this Bill; but, from what I heard and saw on the Committee, I was led to believe that the working of the system seems to be much easier to those accustomed to it than one would at first sight suppose it to be. It seems to me that a wide extension of minority representation is the inevitable consequence of the wider popular franchise. The effect of the present system is that large parties scattered throughout the country hardly have any representation at all. I welcome this Bill as a step in the right direction, but whether the scheme will ever be adopted on a large scale I do not know.

*LORD AVEBURY: My Lords, as I also had the honour of serving on the Select Committee I trust I may be permitted to say a few words on this subject. Lord Eversley, though he did not oppose the Bill, certainly threw cold water upon it, and prophesied that, if passed, it would never be adopted. I am not going to be so bold as to enter into any prophesy, but, if I were to do so, I should say that if the municipal authorities had power to adopt this system they certainly would do so. At any rate, that has been the case in Switzerland. Lord Eversley went on to discuss the question of cumulative voting in school board elections. I entirely agree with my noble friend who has just sat down that, far from working badly, the cumulative vote gave great satisfaction. It is quite true that many of us thought there was a better system than that of the cumulative vote, and the House of Commons appointed a Committee, on which I had the honour to serve, to consider the question; and the last two Vice-Presidents of the Council as well as the last two heads of the Education Department gave very strong evidence before the Committee that the cumulative system had not only not been a failure, but had conduced greatly to the satisfactory working of school boards. The system was not abandoned, as my noble friend suggested, because it was condemned, but simply because the work of the school boards was handed over to the municipalities and no change was made in the system of election to those municipalities.

Then Lord Eversley gave the House some very extraordinary mathematics, and asked your Lordships to accept them from him. It would be premature to go into that question in any detail, but I would venture to express a hope that the House will not accept that statement from my noble friend. As to the alleged difficulty of the system proposed in the Bill, I think it may be assumed that what the Danish, Swiss, and Belgian electors and the voters in various other parts of the world can do, will be carried out satisfactorily by British electors. I am not prepared to admit that my fellow-countrymen are so stupid that they cannot carry out a scheme which is gradually making its way over the rest of the civilised world. As a Londoner, and an ex-chairman of the London County Council, I may say that, whatever may be the case in the country—and I cannot help thinking that, even in the country, this Bill would work with great advantage—the present system in London is most unsatisfactory. It has been found by experience in two successive municipal elections in the Metropolis that a comparatively small change of opinion among the voters themselves may suffice to throw out the whole of the representatives of one party and replace them by the representatives of another.

Whether we agree, on the whole, with the Progressives or with the Moderates, I think we shall all concur that there are good men on both sides, and that it is important to secure the return of those councillors who have done good service in the past. The result of this Bill will be to secure greater continuity of action, and it will, therefore, prove a great advantage to the Metropolis. I deny that the Bill would give undue advantage to the minority. It will secure what I venture to think the House will agree are the two great objects we should aim at in any system of representation—it will give power to the majority and a hearing to the minority. This Bill will to a considerable extent secure those two great objects, and I am glad that your Lordships are going to give it a Second Reading.

On Question, Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

ASH WEDNESDAY.

THE EARL OF CREWE: My Lords, there is no business on the Paper for to-morrow, and in any case I believe it would be unusual for your Lordships to sit on Ash Wednesday. I, therefore, beg to move that the House do adjourn until Thursday next.

Moved, that the House do adjourn until Thursday—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past Five o'clock, to Thursday next, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 3rd March, 1908.

The House met at quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Madras Railway Company (Annuities) Bill (changed from "Madras Railway Company (Purchase) Bill").—As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

North-East London Railway Bill.—Read a second time, and committed.

Standing Orders.—Resolutions reported from the Select Committee—

"That, in the case of the Lincoln Corporation Bill, Petition for dispensing with Standing Order 128 in the case of the Petition of 'Kirkby-in-Ashfield Urban District Council' against the Bill, the said Standing Order ought to be dispensed with."

"That, in the case of the London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) [Lords], Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill, on the condition that the powers to construct Tramways Nos. 3, 4, and 5 are struck out of the Bill:—That the Committee on the Bill do report how far such Order has been complied with."

"That, in the case of the Thames River Steamboat Service Act, 1904 (Amendment) [Lords], Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

"That, in the case of the Camborne Water, Petition for Bill, the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with:—That the parties be permitted to proceed with their Bill."

Resolutions agreed to.

PETITIONS.

CHILDREN BILL.

Petition from Leith, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation: From Armley; Boston; Clevedon; Crewe; Limehouse; Morpeth; and Willington; to lie upon the Table.

MORAY FIRTH (ILLEGAL TRAWLING).

Petitions for prevention: From Caithness; Lossiemouth (two); and Lybster; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Barcombe; Chailey; Chelsea; Consett and District (nine); Great and Little Wakering (two); Great Yarmouth; Hove; Ilford (four); Ilkeston; North Hagbourne; Southwick; and Steyning; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from Cambridge, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY.

Copy presented, of Return giving the Strength of each Infantry Battalion and each Battery of Artillery on the Home Establishment on 1st February 1908, showing the number of Men in each Unit who have less than one year's service or are under twenty years of age; showing also the number of Recruits at the Depot [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Sixtieth Report from the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for England, with an Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (ECCLESIASTICAL CHARGES).

Return presented, relative thereto, [Address 25th February; Mr. Herbert Roberts]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 81.]

BOYCOTTING (IRELAND).

Return ordered, "of the number of cases of Boycotting and of persons boycotted throughout Ireland on the 31st day of March, 1902, the 31st day of July, 1903, the 30th day of November, 1905, the 31st day of January, 1907, the 31st day of July, 1907, and the 31st day of January, 1908, in the following form:—

Wholly Boycotting.		Partial Boycotting.		Minor Boycotting.		Total Number of all cases of Boycotting.	
Cases.	Persons.	Cases.	Persons.	Cases.	Persons.	Cases.	Persons.

—(*Mr. Lonsdale.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Refreshment House.

MR. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if he is aware that confectioners and purveyors of mineral waters and other shopkeepers are prohibited from selling after 10 p.m. any non-intoxicating liquors to be consumed on the premises without a licence; what is the amount required for that licence; and what object is served by the enforcement of this regulation.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I take it that this Question refers to the fact that, in pursuance of Section 6 of The Refreshment Houses Act, 1860, refreshment houses in which intoxicating liquors are not sold may not remain open after 10 p.m. unless they take out a licence under that Act. This is an Excise licence, and costs 10s. 6d. if the premises are under £30 in annual value and one guinea if they are £30 or over. The principal object of this provision is to enable the police to secure that the refreshment houses which keep open late at night are well conducted and are eventually closed in accordance with the law relating thereto.

Reduction of Estimates.

MR. WALKER (Leicestershire, Melton): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury what reductions have been made in this House upon the Estimates during the last ten years.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The figures asked for by my hon. friend are shown below:—

Year.	Vote.	Amount of Reduction.	Particulars.
1900–1	Army, Vote 2 (Medical)	£5	The Estimate was presented to enable the House to discuss South African military hospitals. The Vote was agreed to in Committee of Supply, but the money not being required the Report stage was not taken.
1903–4	Privy Seal Office -	£1,770	The Estimate presented was for £2,770. £1,000 was voted on account. The balance was not required owing to a subsequent change in the tenure of the office, and was not therefore voted in Committee.
1904–5	Education, Ireland (Supplementary)	£100	Vote reduced in Committee.
1905–6	Irish Land Commission	£100	Vote reduced in Committee.

Compulsory Education in Ireland.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in consequence of the low attendance of children attending school throughout Ireland, he will bring in a Bill to amend the compulsory Education Act by making it compulsory on the county councils to put it in force.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I should find considerable difficulty in adding to the number of Bills affecting Ireland which I hope to introduce during the present session; but I am very sensible of the need there is for the improvement of school attendance in Ireland. Those who have administered the existing law are, I believe, of the opinion that it requires some amendment; and I agree with the hon. Member that there should be a law of general application. I should be glad to consider the question if I had evidence that hon. Members from Ireland desired such legislation.

Rathgar Ex Telegraph Messenger.

MR. J. P. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware that an ex-telegraph messenger, named Michael Kelly, temporarily employed at the Rathgar district office, has been dismissed, apparently for invoking the assistance of his association; if Kelly made application for a vacancy on the auxiliary class in Ballsbridge district, and, receiving no reply, called on the inspector of postmen, who threatened him with dismissal if he gave further trouble; if in the meantime the vacancy was given to an outsider; if Kelly then placed the matter before the Ex-telegraph Messengers' Association, of which he is a member; whether a deputation from that body waited on the Comptroller with reference to his case, and within a week of this interview Kelly was replaced by an ex-Army man and informed that there was no further work for him, although on the day that Kelly was dismissed a vacancy existed in the James' St. District, and another ex-messenger was called in to fill it; and if, under the circumstances, he will cause Kelly to be reinstated.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) Michael Kelly has not been dismissed. His employment as temporary substitute in the ordinary course of events was discontinued when a regular appointment was made to the duty, but he is now again being employed on another duty. His appeal for the help of the association referred to by the hon. Member did not in any way affect the case.

Deaths of Asiatics on British Ships.

MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): To ask the President of the Board of Trade, if any inquiry was held into the death from heart failure of a coal trimmer named Jobanalla Allimalla, on 11th June last, on the steamship "Clan Macneil"; what was the consumption of coal on this vessel for each twenty-four hours; how many men were actually employed on her as firemen and trimmers; and how much coal was each man required to work in the twenty-four hours.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Shipping Master at Bombay, the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine, and the Principal Board of Trade Officer at Glasgow. The man had been ill and off duty for over six weeks, and had received medical treatment in port. The consumption of coal per twenty-four hours was twenty-eight tons. The number of firemen and trimmers was nineteen, and the consumption of coal per man was about 1½ tons.

MR. BRACE (Glamorganshire, S.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if any inquiry was held into the death from heart failure of a fireman named T. Lawson, on the 27th May last, on board the steamship "Evangeline"; what was the consumption of coal on this vessel for each twenty-four hours; how many men were actually employed on her as firemen and trimmers; and how much coal was each man required to work in the twenty-four hours.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Vice-Consul at Civita Vecchia and a certificate signed by a doctor at Dover, where the body was landed, states that death was due to heart failure. The man had been a draughtsman and was unused to the work. He had been less than a day on board and was taken ill in his first watch. The consumption of coal per twenty-four hours was 16·06. The number of firemen and trimmers was seven and the consumption of coal per man was a little over 2¼ tons.

MR. J. WILLIAMS (Glamorganshire, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade, if any inquiry was held into the death from heat apoplexy of a fireman named Moossa Camma, on 10th June last, on the steamship "Peninsular"; what was the coal consumption on this vessel for each twenty-four hours; how many men were actually employed as firemen and trimmers; and how much coal was each man required to work in the twenty-four hours.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Shipping Master at Aden, the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine at Tilbury, and the Principal Board of Trade Officer in London. The man died of heat apoplexy after one day at sea. The consumption of coal per twenty-four hours was about 100 tons. The number of firemen and trimmers was forty-seven, and the consumption of coal per man was about $2\frac{1}{7}$ tons.

MR. REDDY (King's County, Birr): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the number of deaths that are continually occurring amongst Asiatic and other seamen from diseases of the chest and lungs; whether any inquiry was held as to the circumstances attending the death of Allimea Ahmedally, a coal trimmer, on 18th May last, who was serving on the steamship "Okara"; and whether he can state the amount of cubic space per man provided on this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) All deaths of seamen receive the attention of the Board of Trade. The present case was reported by the Shipping Master at Bombay. The man died in hospital at Bombay. The vessel was employed in the coasting trade of India, and she was of course run under the regulations of the Government of India as regards victualling and crew space. Assuming that she carried the number of men certified for (thirty-six) the space per man would be 98·81 cubic feet.

MR. REDDY: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the number of deaths that are continually occurring amongst Asiatic and other seamen from diseases of the chest and lungs; whether any inquiry was held into the circumstances attending the death of Aftar Ulia, a donkeyman, on 26th May last, who was serving on the steamship "Sikh"; and whether he can state the amount of cubic space per man provided on this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Vice-Consul at Norfolk, Virginia. The man had been suffering from tuberculosis throughout the voyage from Singapore, and died in hospital at Norfolk. Assuming that the vessel carried the number of firemen certified for (sixteen) the space per man would be 175·46 cubic feet.

MR. C. DUNCAN (Barrow-in-Furness): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to the supposed suicide of an Asiatic seaman named Khan Hassan Baba on board the steamer "Electra," on 29th May last; if he can say whether this man was working as a stoker; how many men were engaged as stokers on the "Electra"; what was the daily consumption of coal on board; and how many tons of coal each stoker was called upon to handle during the twenty-four hours.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Assistant Resident at Aden, who reported that the man had been ill and was treated by the ship's surgeon for incipient pneumonia. I am informed that the man was not a stoker, but a deck hand, and had been only three days in the ship. I have no information as to the consumption of coal or number of firemen and trimmers employed in this case.

MR. C. DUNCAN: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the number of deaths that are continually occurring amongst Asiatic and other seamen from diseases of the chest and lungs; whether any inquiry was held as to the circumstances attending the death of Takoodhone Assamala, aged eighteen, a coal trimmer, on 18th July last, who was serving on the steamship "Loch Tay"; and whether he can state the amount of cubic space per man provided on this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Acting Consul at Rotterdam and the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine, Barry. The man is reported to have suffered from consumption for several months, and died in hospital at Rotterdam. Assuming that the vessel carried the number of firemen certified for (twenty-two), the space per man would be 105·23 cubic feet.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, N.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the number of deaths that are continually occurring amongst Asiatic and other seamen from diseases of the chest and lungs; whether any inquiry was held into the circumstances attending the death of Sedeyak Abeedalli, a coal trimmer, on 28th June last, who was serving on the steamship "Glenelg"; and whether he can state the amount of cubic space per man provided on that vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine at North Shields. The man died at Antwerp after a fortnight's illness. Assuming that the vessel carried the number of firemen certified for (twenty), the space per man would be 115·25 cubic feet.

MR. HOGAN: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the number of deaths that are continually occurring amongst Asiatic and other seamen from diseases of the chest and lungs; whether any inquiry was held as to the circumstances attending the death of Cajee Rahim Cajee Esmail, a fireman, on 16th May last, who was serving on the steamship "Beira"; and whether he can state the amount of cubic space per man provided on this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Vice-Consul at Hamburg. The man died in hospital at Hamburg after discharge. The owner stated that he was suffering from enteric and diarrhœa. Assuming that the vessel carried the number of firemen certified for (twenty-one), the space per man would be 101·1 cubic feet.

MR. N. J. MURPHY (Kilkenny, S.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the number of deaths that are continually occurring amongst Asiatic and other seamen from diseases of the chest and lungs; whether any inquiry was held as to the circumstances attending the death of Tomnorooz Alli, a coal trimmer, on 9th May last, who was serving on the steamship "Sangola"; and whether he can state the amount of cubic space per man provided on this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the shipping master at Bombay. Man died of pneumonia after a few days' illness. Assuming that the vessel carried the number (thirty) of firemen certified for when last in the United Kingdom, the space per man would be 102·9 cubic feet.

MR. N. J. MURPHY: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the number of deaths that are continually occurring amongst Asiatic and other seamen from diseases of the chest and lungs; whether any inquiry was held as to the circumstances attending the death of Awany Bin Aroon, a seaman, on 25th June last, who was serving on the steamship "Indradedo"; and whether he can state the amount of cubic space per man provided on this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Acting Consul-General at Antwerp. The man died in hospital at Antwerp after discharge from the ship. Assuming that the vessel carried the number of seamen certified for (fourteen), the space per man would be 145·3 cubic feet.

MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if any inquiry was held into the death from supposed heart disease of a coal trimmer named Abdoal Hassein, on 9th June last, on the steamship "Sutherland"; what was the coal consumption on this vessel for each twenty-four hours; how many men were actually employed on her as firemen and trimmers; and how much coal was each man required to work in the twenty-four hours.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the assistant shipping master at Calcutta, the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine, and the Principal Board of Trade Officer at Cardiff. The man is said to have had symptoms of previous trouble. The consumption of coal per twenty-four hours was 24 tons. The number of firemen and trimmers was sixteen, and the consumption of coal per man was 1½ tons.

Mr. O'GRADY: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if any inquiry was held into the alleged suicide of an Asiatic fireman, named Mahomed Salter Deen, on 20th April last, on board of the British steamer "Industry"; if he can say what was the consumption of coal on this vessel for each twenty-four hours; how many men were actually employed on her as trimmers and firemen; how much coal was each man required to work in the twenty-four hours; and whether any suicides of firemen had previously occurred on board this ship.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Acting Vice-Consul at Bahia Blanca, the Superintendent of the Mercantile Marine at Barry, and the Principal Board of Trade Officer at Cardiff. The cause of the man's disappearance was not discovered. The consumption of coal per twenty-four hours was 34 tons. The number of firemen and trimmers was eighteen, and the consumption of coal per man was $1\frac{8}{9}$ tons.

Mr. MACPHERSON (Preston): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that medical opinion holds that beri-beri is a disease due to the want of proper and sufficient food; whether his attention has been called to the death of an Asiatic fireman who was serving on the British steamer "Teesta," and who died from beri-beri on 2nd June, 1907; whether he is in a position to say if any inquiry was held in this case; and if it was shown that the food provided for the crew of the "Teesta" was adequate.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The cause of beri-beri does not appear to have been very definitely ascertained, but probably bad and insufficient food predisposes to the disease. The Board of Trade are in communication with the Royal College of Physicians on the subject. The fireman referred to in the Question is probably Mozaffer Alley, fireman of the "Teesta," who died whilst a passenger on board the "Gwalior." A Return was received from the Negapatam Port Officer containing a certificate of death from beri-beri, signed by the medical officer. The "Teesta" is employed in the coasting trade of India under local management, and is run under the regulations of the Government of India as regards victualling and crew space. I have no reason to believe that those regulations have not been complied with.

Mr. MACPHERSON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether he is aware that medical opinion holds that beri-beri is a disease due to the want of proper and sufficient food; whether his attention has been called to the death of an Asiatic fireman, named Chin Cha La, who was serving on the steamship "Winnebago," and who died from beri-beri on 26th June last; whether any inquiry was held into this case; and if it was shown that the food provided for the crew of the "Winnebago" was adequate.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was made into the death of the fireman Chin Cha La on board the "Winnebago" by the Acting Consul General at San Francisco, who reported that the death was owing to beri-beri, apparently of long standing. No complaints have been received with regard to the food, and I have no reason to believe it was inadequate.

Mr. JOWETT (Bradford, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if any inquiry was held into the death from heat apoplexy of an Asiatic fireman named Min Hie, on 2nd May last, on board the steamship "Radnorshire"; what was the consumption of coal on this vessel for each twenty-four hours; how many men were actually employed on her as firemen and trimmers; and how much coal was each man required to work in the twenty-four hours.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Deputy Master Attendant at Singapore. The number of firemen and trimmers was twelve, but, as the vessel was sold to foreigners, and did not return to this country, the particulars as to coal consumption cannot be supplied.

MR. JOWETT: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, if any inquiry was held into the suicide of an Asiatic coal trimmer named Ismile Mahd, on 7th May last, on board the steamship "Flamingo"; what was the consumption of coal on this vessel for each twenty-four hours; how many men were actually employed on her as firemen and trimmers; how much coal was each man required to work in the twenty-four hours; and whether any suicides of firemen had previously occurred on this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Assistant Shipping Master at Calcutta, but the cause of suicide was not discovered. As the ship is trading abroad particulars of the consumption of coal cannot be given, but the number of firemen and trimmers was eighteen. Two other cases of disappearance from this vessel have been reported since July, 1901.

MR. ALBERT STANLEY (Staffordshire, N.W.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if any inquiry was held into the supposed suicide of an Asiatic coal trimmer named Sk Alley Abdorman, on 4th August last, who was serving on the steamship "Marva"; what was the coal consumption for each twenty-four hours; how many men were employed as firemen and trimmers; and whether any previous cases of suicide or supposed suicide had occurred on this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Consul-General at Antwerp, the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine at Hull, and the Principal Board of Trade Officer at Hull. The consumption of coal per twenty-four hours was 38 tons. The number of firemen and trimmers was twenty-five. Two other cases of supposed suicide from this vessel have been reported, and are the subjects of Questions by the hon. Members for West Belfast and the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if any inquiry was held into the suicide of an Asiatic coal trimmer named Joona Osman, on 26th July last, who was serving on the steamship "Marva"; what was the coal consumption for each twenty-four hours; how many men were employed as firemen and trimmers; and whether any previous cases of suicide or supposed suicide had occurred on this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Consul-General at Antwerp, the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine, and the Principal Board of Trade Officer at Hull. The consumption of coal per twenty-four hours was 38 tons. The number of firemen and trimmers was twenty-five. Two other cases of disappearance from this vessel have been reported and are the subjects of questions by the hon. Members for North West Staffordshire and the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow.

MR. W. E. HARVEY (Derbyshire, N.E.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the deaths of Asiatic and other seamen that are continually occurring on British ships from chest and lung complaints; whether any inquiry was held into the circumstances attending the death of Sha Mahomed Bawall, on 29th August last, whilst serving on the steamship "Egypt"; and what was the cubic space allowed for each man.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Deputy Shipping Master at Bombay and the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine at Tilbury. The man was a greaser and was returning invalided to Bombay by the "Egypt." He was in an advanced state of tuberculosis when taken on board. Assuming that the vessel had on board the number of firemen certified for (ninety) the space per man would be 92·70 cubic feet, but the owners state that she had only eighty-one men, which would give 100 cubic feet per man.

MR. E. EDWARDS (Hanley): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if any inquiry was held into the circumstances respecting the disappearance at sea of an Asiatic named Wong Fook, on 24th August last, whilst serving as fireman on the steamship "Agamemnon"; what was the coal consumption for each twenty-four hours; how many firemen and trimmers were employed; and whether any previous cases of suicide, supposed suicide, or disappearances had occurred on this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Pro-Consul at Shanghai and the Principal Board of Trade Officer at Liverpool. The man had only been at sea in the ship one day, and trimming was not hard as bunkers were full. The consumption of coal per twenty-four hours was 57 tons. The number of firemen and trimmers was twenty-five. No other cases of suicide or disappearance have been reported.

MR. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if any inquiry was held into the circumstances respecting the supposed suicide of Ensorf K. Cassum K., an Asiatic fireman, on 16th July last, whilst serving on the steamship "Maroa"; what was the coal consumption for each twenty-four hours; how many firemen and trimmers were employed; and whether any previous cases of suicide, or supposed suicide had occurred on this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Consul General at Antwerp, the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine, and the Principal Board of Trade Officer at Hull. The consumption of coal per twenty-four hours was 38 tons. The number of firemen and trimmers were twenty-five. Two other cases of supposed suicide from this vessel have been reported, and are subjects of Questions by the hon. Members for North West Staffordshire and West Belfast.

MR. SEDDON (Lancashire, Newton): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if any inquiry was held into the supposed suicide of Alley Mohammed an Asiatic coal trimmer, on 21st August last, whilst serving on the steamship "Bohemia"; what was the coal consumption for each twenty-four hours; how many men were employed as firemen and trimmers; and whether any previous cases of suicide or supposed suicide had occurred on this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Assistant Resident at Perim, the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine, and the Principal Board of Trade Officer at Glasgow. The consumption of coal per twenty-four hours was 28 tons. The number of firemen and trimmers was eighteen. No other cases of suicide or disappearance have been reported.

MR. SEDDON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, if any inquiry was held into the circumstances attending the disappearance at sea of Khoosidallee Munshuff, an Asiatic coal trimmer, on 20th August last, whilst serving on the steamship "Pundit"; what was the coal consumption for each twenty-four hours; how many men were employed as firemen and trimmers; and whether any previous cases of suicide, or supposed suicide, or disappearance, had occurred on this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine at Rangoon, but the cause of the man's disappearance was not discovered. The consumption of coal per twenty-four hours was twenty-eight tons. The number of firemen and trimmers was twenty-four. No other cases of suicide or disappearance have been reported.

MR. T. F. RICHARDS (Wolverhampton, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that medical opinion holds that beri-beri is a disease due to the want of proper and sufficient food; whether his attention has been called to the death of an Asiatic fireman, named Tang Wa, on 20th July last, whilst serving on the steamship "Montrose"; and whether he has reason to suppose the food supplied on this vessel was adequate.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-Goerge.*) Inquiry was made into the death of the fireman Tang Wa on board the "Montrose" by the Vice-Consul at New York, who reported that the man died from beri-beri after a month's illness, during which he received every attention. No other case of beri-beri occurred during the voyage. No complaint has been received with regard to the food, and I have no reason to believe it was inadequate. The owners state that the provisions cost 1s. 6d. per head per day.

MR. T. F. RICHARDS: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that medical opinion holds that beri-beri is a disease due to the want of proper and sufficient food; whether his attention has been called to the death of an Asiatic trimmer named Mozafar, on 7th August last, who was serving on the steamship "Inkum"; and whether he has reason to suppose the food supplied on this vessel was adequate.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was made into the death of the trimmer Mozafar of the "Inkum," which occurred in hospital at Rotterdam, and the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine at Cardiff, who reported that it was owing to beri-beri. No complaint has been made with regard to the food, and I have no reason to believe it was in adequate.

MR. WALSH (Lancashire, Ince): To ask the President of the Board of Trade, if any inquiry was held into the suicide of Abdool Muttlah, an Asiatic coal trimmer, on 1st August last, whilst serving on the steamship "Clan Lindsay"; what was the coal consumption for each twenty-four hours; how many men were employed as firemen and trimmers; and whether any previous cases of suicide or supposed suicide had occurred on this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Port Natal Deputy Shipping Master, the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine at Glasgow, and the Principal Board of Trade Officer in London, but the cause of suicide was not discovered. The consumption of coal per twenty-four hours was 37 tons. The number of firemen and trimmers was eighteen. No other cases of suicide or disappearance have been reported.

MR. WALSH: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, if any inquiry was held into the circumstances attending the death from heart failure of Leong Sow, an Asiatic fireman, on 11th September last, whilst serving on the steamship "Cowrie"; what was the coal consumption for each twenty-four hours; and how many men were employed as firemen and trimmers.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Acting Vice-Consul at Constantinople, the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine, and the Principal Board of Trade Officer at Cardiff. The consumption of coal per twenty-four hours was 34 tons. The number of firemen and trimmers was thirteen.

MR. THOMAS RICHARDS (Monmouthshire, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade, if any inquiry was held into the circumstances attending the disappearance at sea of an Asiatic fireman named Ynen Kay, on 15th June last, from the steamship "Boscombe," what was the coal consumption on this vessel for each twenty-four hours; how many men were actually employed on her as firemen and trimmers; how much coal was each man required to work in the twenty-four hours; and whether any disappearances or suicides of firemen had previously occurred on this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Shipping Master at Bombay, the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine, and the Principal Board of Trade Officer at Liverpool. The consumption of coal per twenty-four hours was 28 tons (Indian.) The number of firemen and trimmers was nine, assisted by three deck hands. No other cases of suicide or disappearance have been reported, except that of a trimmer, respecting whom the hon. Member has asked a Question.

MR. THOMAS RICHARDS: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, if any inquiry was held into the disappearance ot sea of a Chinese coal trimmer named Lee Eng, on 25th May last, on board the steamship "Boscombe"; if he can say what was the consumption of coal on this vessel for each twenty-four hours; how many men were actually employed on her as trimmers and firemen; how much coal was each man required to work in the twenty-four hours; and whether any disappearances or sucides of firemen had previously occurred on board this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Shipping Master at Calcutta, the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine, and the Principal Board of Trade Officer at Liverpool. The consumption of coal per twenty-four hours was 24 tons (Japanese.) The number of firemen and trimmers was nine. No other case of suicide or disappearance has been reported except that of a fireman respecting whom the hon. Member has asked a Question.

MR. COOPER (Southwark, Bermondsey): To ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether he is aware that medical opinion holds that beri-beri is a disease due to the want of proper and sufficient food; whether his attention has been called to the death of an Asiatic fireman named Tang Wa, on 20th July last, whilst serving on the steamship "Montrose"; and whether he has reason to suppose the food supplied on this vessel was adequate.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was made into the death of the fireman Tang Wa on board the "Montrose" by the Vice-Consul at New York, who reported that the man died from beri-beri after a month's illness, during which he received every attention. No other case of beri-beri occurred during the voyage. No complaint has been received with regard to the food, and I have no reason to believe it was inadequate. The owners state that the provisions cost 1s. 6d. per head per day.

MR. COOPER: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether he is aware that medical opinion holds that beri-beri is a disease due to the want of proper and sufficient food, whether his attention has been called to the death of an Asiatic trimmer, named Mozafar, on 7th August last, who was serving on the steamship "Inkum;" and whether he has reason to suppose the food supplied on this vessel was adequate.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was made into the death of the trimmer Mozafar of the "Inkum," which occurred in hospital at Rotterdam, by the Acting Consul at Rotterdam and the Superintendent of Mercantile Marine at Cardiff, who reported that it was owing to beri-beri. No complaint has been made with regard to the food, and I have no reason to believe it was inadequate.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if any inquiry was held into the supposed suicide of an Asiatic fireman named Wong Ah Sam, on 19th April last, who was serving on the steamship "Riverdale"; what was the coal consumption for each twenty-four hours; how many men were employed as firemen and trimmers; and whether any previous cases of suicide or supposed suicide had occurred on this vessel.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) Inquiry was held by the Vice-Consul at Sourabaya, but the cause of the man's disappearance was not discovered. The consumption of coal per twenty-four hours was about 24½ tons. The number of firemen and trimmers was eleven. No other cases of suicide or disappearance have been reported.

Politics in the Post Office.

MR. A. ALLEN (Christchurch): To ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that there are in the Post Office branches of the Tariff Reform League and the Free

Trade Union; whether those organisations are regarded as being of a non-party character; and, if so, whether Post Office employees are entitled to take part publicly in the work of these organisations without contravening the regulations as to non-interference in party politics.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) In interpreting the regulations which state that Post Office servants as Civil Servants ought to exercise a certain reserve in political matters, I have adopted a uniform principle in dealing with the various societies to which my attention has been directed. There is no objection to the formation of societies, political and other, among Post Office servants, provided Post Office servants do not take a prominent or active part in political contests; but, in order that there may be no doubt as to the observance of this rule, it is not expedient that such societies should be specific branches of societies which take an active part in politics. In regard to the two organisations mentioned in the Question, I find on inquiry that the Free Trade Union, constituted by officers of the Post Office, is independent of, and is not a branch of the Free Trade Union. As regards the Tariff Reform League, constituted by officers of the Post Office, I understand that, though it is under separate management financially and otherwise, it is a branch of the Tariff Reform League. The attention of the secretary has been drawn to the matter, and I am awaiting a communication from him.

Sedition Trial at Calcutta.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the judgment of Mr. Kingsford, chief presidency magistrate of Calcutta, in respect of the trial for sedition of the printer and publisher of the Yugantar newspaper, for urging the Sikh soldiery to mutiny; whether Mr. Kingsford placed it on record that the history of the Yugantar in the last few months exhibited the impotence of the Government to deal under the existing law with that class of publication, which in the interests of good government and good order ought long ago to have been suppressed; and whether the Government has under consideration the advisability of taking greater powers in the direction indicated.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I have seen a report of the judgment, including the expression of opinion quoted. The adequacy of the existing law has received, and will no doubt continue to receive, the consideration of Government.

Foreign Beef Trusts.

MR. CHAPLIN (Surrey, Wimbledon): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the Board will cause inquiry to be made as to the extent and character of the operations carried on in this country by foreign beef trusts.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) We have had the matter to which the right hon. Member refers under observation for some time past. It must be doubtful whether any formal inquiry respecting it would be feasible, but the suggestion will be kept in view.

Chinese Seamen on S.S. "Queen Eleanor."

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his Department has received any report with regard to the mutiny of a crew of Chinese seamen on board the British steamship "Queen Eleanor" recently at the port of New York; if he can give any information as to why this Chinese crew refused to proceed to the River Plate; if he has received any report as to a previous mutiny of this crew whilst the "Queen Eleanor" was lying at Philadelphia, when it is alleged that the Chinamen attacked the officers of the ship; whether he has any official information showing that when the "Queen Eleanor" arrived in New York several of the Chinamen were in the ship's hold under guard; whether the Board of Trade intend to take any steps to inquire into the whole circumstances in connection with the trouble on board the "Queen Eleanor" in consequence of the employment of Chinamen; and whether the result of such inquiry will be laid upon the Table of the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The Board of Trade have not received a Report regarding the matter referred to. Information is being obtained as to the circumstances of the case, and the question of taking action will be considered.

Convictions of Anti-Vaccinationists.

Mr. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he will state the number of persons proceeded against under the Vaccination Acts, the number of convictions, and the number of orders to vaccinate, for the year 1906; and if he will give the same information for the year 1907.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I beg to answer this Question on behalf of my right hon. friend. The figures for the year 1906 are to be found in the volume of Criminal Statistics just published, Tables XI. and XIV. They are as follows: (*a*) Number of persons proceeded against, 922; (*b*) number of persons convicted, 667; (*c*) number of orders to vaccinate, 1,116. The 1907 figures cannot be given, as the returns for that year are not yet complete.

Care of Feeble-Minded Children.

Mr. H. R. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the Local Government Board are proposing to legislate with regard to feeble-minded and imbecile children; whether they are aware of the difficulty which boards of guardians are experiencing in dealing with such children; and whether a board of guardians would receive the sanction and support of the Local Government Board if it were to appoint a committee to deal with such children, not merely those of paupers, but those of parents of higher grade who are unable to deal with them.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) I have received representations from certain boards of guardians with regard to this matter. The subject of the imbecile and feeble-minded has been referred to a Royal Commission, who, I understand, have for some time been engaged on their Report. Pending the issue of that Report I could not encourage the guardians to take action of the kind suggested in the Question, nor could I undertake to propose legislation on the subject.

Army and Civil Service Pensions.

Sir HENRY KIMBER (Wandsworth): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that, although men who have served twenty-one years in the Army and are in possession of pension for Army service rendered, and then entering the Civil Service are permitted to serve towards a second pension in the Civil Service, men who have served seven, or even twelve, years in the Army or Navy, and then entering the Civil Service, are not allowed to count those years towards pension; and whether the Government intend to take the case of the latter into consideration.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I do not see anything anomalous in the present arrangement. The military and the Civil Service are in each case kept distinct, and the ex-soldier is in precisely the same position as regards his previous military service as if he were in civilian employment outside the public service. The suggestion made in the latter part of the Question has been carefully considered both by the late and by the present Government, with the result that, regard being had to the dissimilarity of the conditions affecting appointment, promotion pay, and pension in the Army and Navy on the one hand and in the Civil Service on the other, it has been decided that there is not sufficient ground for asking Parliament to modify the present practice.

Limavady Urban District Council Contracts.

Mr. J. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any complaints have reached the Local Government Board with regard to alleged abuses in connection with contracts placed by the Limavady Urban District Council; if so, whether the matters complained of come into the accounts for the year ending 31st March, 1908; whether they are covered in the last audit; and whether the Local Government Board propose to leave the complaints unattended to for another year or, alternatively, to hold a sworn inquiry.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The answer to the first part of this Question is in the affirmative. The Local Government Board have no power to prohibit the urban district council from entering into the contract referred to; but in reply to the complaints the Board stated that it was open to any ratepayer to attend and object at the audit of the council's accounts, and the auditor can surcharge if any loss to the ratepayers has been incurred. The auditor has been investigating the payments on account of the contract made during the year ending 31st March, 1907; but the Board are not in a position to say whether any such payments will be included in the accounts for the year ending 31st March next.

Galway Hospital.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the present yearly assessment in the Loughrea Union for the upkeep and management of the Galway Hospital is £239 11s.; whether the Loughrea Board, in common with the other boards of guardians within the county, waived their opposition to the passage of the Galway Hospital Act on the assurance that the charge, if any, on the rates would be merely nominal; whether any representations have reached the Government, from the boards of guardians within the county, in reference to the matter; and do the Government propose to take any steps to have the Act of 1892 repealed.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The assessment on Loughrea Union for the current year is as stated in the Question. The Local Government Board cannot trace any resolution of the boards of guardians in the county in the terms indicated in the second part of the Question. The Board have received various representations from the boards of guardians in the county upon the question of repealing the Act, but these boards are not unanimous on the point. The reply to the concluding part of the Question is in the negative.

Athenry Evicted Tenant.

MR. DUFFY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have considered the claim sent in by Hugh Hanly, Court Lane, Athenry, for restoration to the holding out of which his father was evicted some years ago on the Faucett estate, in the Roscommon Union; and what action do they propose to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have not yet considered the application in question. It was received subsequent to 1st May, 1907, and will be considered with due regard to the priority of applications received before that date,

Clounty Outrage.

MR. DUFFY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, on the night of Sunday, 9th February, a number of young men on their way to attend a dance in the townland of Clounty, Scariff, county Clare, were set upon and assaulted by some men in the employ of Mr. Bugler; whether, on the night in question, one of the men, on leaving the dance-house on his way home, was struck with a stone; whether the police were in ambush twenty yards away; and can he explain why they failed or refused to arrest his assailant.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The police have no knowledge that the fact is as stated in the first part of the Question, and no complaint to that effect has been made to them. An allegation, however, was made to the police that a stone was thrown into the yard of a house where dancing was taking place and that a man was struck by the stone, but no evidence to that effect is forthcoming. The police were 130 yards away at the time and saw nothing of the matter. No charge was preferred against any person, and consequently the police did not refuse to arrest anyone. It is open to any person who may be aggrieved to take proceedings by summons.

Proclaimed Irish Counties.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in view of the fact that a number of counties were subject to proclamations under the provisions of Sections 2, 3, and 4 of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, from April, 1902, to July, 1903, that the proclamations under Section 2 were all withdrawn by the latter date, and that the proclamations under Sections 3 and 4 continued in force until the end of 1905, whether he will grant the Return, notice for which stands on to-day's Paper.†

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I offer no objection to the granting of the Return in question.

Indian Mutiny Veterans.

MR. HAWORTH (Manchester, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War how many Crimean and Indian Mutiny veterans there are in this country; how many of these are in receipt of pensions, and what is the maximum and minimum and average amount of such pensions; and how many of these veterans are in receipt of Poor Law relief.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) There is no information available to show how many Crimean and Mutiny veterans are now living in the United Kingdom. Further, it would not be possible to state how many are in receipt of pension without examining the papers of every man, as soldiers in receipt of ordinary pensions are not classed separately according to campaigns. There are, roughly, about 4,000 men in receipt of special campaign pensions granted in consideration of their war service and the fact that they are in necessitous circumstances. The maximum rate of such special pension is 2s. 6d. and the minimum 1s., except in a very few cases where the rate is 9d. for pensioners who have not reached the age of seventy. The average rate is 1s. 4d. As regards those in receipt of Poor Law relief there is no information in the War Office.

Officers of Disbanded Units.

MR. C. H. CORBETT (Sussex, East Grinstead): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether officers of a disbanded unit, who elect to join the Territorial Army, will be transferred to another unit of their arm in the county to await absorption as vacancies arise in their respective ranks.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) All officers of a disbanded unit of Volunteers can, if they so wish, be placed on an unattached list, from which they can be transferred to other units as vacancies occur.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The Coastguard.

MR. GEORGE FABER (York): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether any further reductions are proposed to be made in the coastguard; and whether, considering the assistance accustomed to be rendered by the coastguard to the National Lifeboat Institution, he can state whether any action will be taken by His Majesty's Government to prevent the efficiency of the lifeboat service being impaired by the reductions in the coastguard.

*THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. LAMBERT, Devonshire, South Molton): As I stated yesterday, my right hon. friend will deal with this question to-day.

Naval Programme of 1904.

SIR BERKELEY SHEFFIELD (Lincolnshire, Brigg): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, how many battleships and armoured cruisers were included in the programme of 1904, and how many have been passed into commission.

*MR. GEORGE LAMBERT: The reply to the first Question is two battleships, four armoured cruisers, one of which was afterwards abandoned. None of these vessels were commenced until 1905 and none are yet in commission. Both the battleships and two of the cruisers are due for completion very shortly.

---

† See page 490.

Slave Traffic in the Persian Gulf.

SIR BERKELEY SHEFFIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, whether, owing to the small speed attained by the gunboats stationed in the Persian Gulf, dhows are continually escaping arrest which are employed in slave and gun-running operations; and whether the Government will employ vessels of a greater speed to suppress this traffic.

*MR. GEORGE LAMBERT: There are no grounds for supposing that His Majesty's ships in the Persian Gulf have failed to arrest dhows owing to a want of sufficient speed. It is not intended at present to employ vessels of a greater speed on the service indicated. The general question of the control of the arms traffic is now receiving consideration.

British Naval Attachés Abroad.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, whether he is aware that of the six naval attachés accredited to the Courts of the maritime Powers none have qualified as interpreter in any foreign language; and whether it is a common practice to send officers to Berlin and other foreign capitals, with the exception of Washington, who are not fully qualified to speak and write the language of the country.

*MR. GEORGE LAMBERT: The answer to the first Question is in the affirmative. In the selection of officers for this service, their linguistic abilities are taken into consideration with their other qualifications.

Naval Pensions.

CAPTAIN J. CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the number of naval pensioners in receipt of pensions under 2s. a day who, as regards conduct and other qualifications, are duly eligible for but are denied the Greenwich Hospital age pension.

*MR. GEORGE LAMBERT: The precise number could not be ascertained without the expenditure of much labour and time.

CAPTAIN J. CRAIG: Are there thousands of such cases?

*MR. GEORGE LAMBERT: I cannot give the information with any degree of accuracy.

CAPTAIN J. CRAIG: Cannot the hon. Gentleman give an approximate number?

*MR. GEORGE LAMBERT: No; I am afraid it would be pure guesswork.

Warwickshire County Association.

MR. GEORGE ROBERTS (Norwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been directed to the fact that the Warwickshire County Association, formed under the Territorial Forces Act, has issued a circular to employers asking them when engaging men to give preference to those who are willing to join the Territorial Force; and whether, with a view to preventing any restriction upon the freedom of workmen, he will discountenance the issue of circulars by County Associations in any way likely to affect the relationship of employer and employed.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): The responsibility for raising the Territorial Force rests entirely with the County Associations, and it is exceedingly difficult for the Army Council to interfere with the way in which they fulfil their responsibilities, provided only that the method they adopt does not infringe the Statute. The Army Council is not in favour of any kind of undue pressure being brought to bear to make men join the Territorial Force.

EARL WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham): Does the right hon. Gentleman agree that the issue of this circular was a restriction on the freedom of the workmen?

MR. HALDANE: That is not what I said.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): I take it the right hon. Gentleman, by his answer, did not intend to imply that the Warwickshire County Association exercised undue pressure.

MR. HALDANE replied that he did not think it was desirable to bring any undue pressure, and care should be taken to avoid that in sending out circulars. He did not believe that this circular was meant to bring undue pressure, but it was very important to avoid doing anything which could be misinterpreted.

MR. GEORGE ROBERTS asked whether in view of the large amount of unemployment in the country the issue of a circular of this character was not very likely to influence men to do that which otherwise they would not do.

[No Answer was returned.]

Indian Opium Revenue.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the revenue derived from the consumption of opium in India rose from £662,222 in 1895–6 to £910,295 in 1905–6; whether he can state what was the amount of such revenue in 1906–7, and what is the estimated amount for the current year; and whether, in view of the instructions issued that the area licensed for poppy cultivation should be diminished, he is in a position to state that there will be a material reduction in the revenue derived from the opium trade in India in the immediate future, and that any further necessary steps will be taken to check the spread of the opium habit amongst the people of India.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): The revenue from opium consumed in British India has been £676,185 in 1895–6; £911,402 in 1905–6; £931,054 in 1906–7; £1,031,450 estimated in 1907–8. These increases are not wholly due to increased consumption, but to a considerable extent are the effect of higher duties and greater success in combating contraband trade. If Burma, where illicit consumption has notoriously prevailed in the past, and Berar, which was not included in British India in 1895, be excluded, the figures for 1895–6 and 1905–6 respectively would be £554,860 and £595,147, the increase being only £40,287. With regard to the latter part of the Question, I shall continue to insist upon the adoption of all practicable measures for preventing the spread of the opium habit among the peoples of India, but it does not follow that these will necessarily result in a material reduction of revenue. There is much evidence that in parts of the country illicit consumption is by no means extinct.

Indian Penal Code—Sedition Charges.

MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, under Section 124a of the Indian Penal Code, bogus defendants are put forward by the authorities on charges of publishing seditious articles in order to forward the measures now under consideration for dealing with charges of seditious writing in the Press; whether there is any intention in such measures that editors of newspapers shall sign a declaration before a magistrate and find substantial securities that they will not publish seditious articles; and whether the police are to be empowered to attach and confiscate presses from which seditious matter in the meaning of the section is circulated.

MR. MORLEY: I am not aware to what measures my hon. friend refers: but the answer to his first and third Questions, so far as I understand them, is in the negative. As to his second Question, provision is already made, in Section 108 of the Criminal Procedure Code, for taking security from editors where necessary.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): May I ask if the Chief Presidency Magistrate at Calcutta is not reported in a recent sedition case to have said that the Government are powerless under the existing law to deal with such cases? Will further powers be taken on that behalf?

MR. MORLEY asked for notice of the Question.

Eastern Bengal Disturbances.

Mr. O'GRADY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that the belief is held by the Mahomedans in Eastern Bengal that magistrates will give an order, if requested, to loot and assault Hindus; and, having regard to the danger of such belief, whether he will advise or instruct the Lieutenant-Governor to make inquiries and, if necessary, to take steps to make the position of the law and the Government clear in this matter.

Mr. MORLEY: I am not aware of any such belief, and I see no sufficient reason to take action as suggested.

Kushk-Chaman Railway.

Mr. REES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has any information which can be given to the House regarding the construction of a railway joining the Russian line at Kushk with the British line at Chaman.

Mr. MORLEY: I have seen in a newspaper a reference to such a scheme, but I have no other knowledge of it.

Indian Native Judges.

*Mr. REES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the fact that by far the larger number of cases, civil and magisterial, in India are disposed of by natives judges, he will advise the Government of India to take steps to make this known in order to the proper contradiction of statements made by ex-officials and others to the effect that the administration is harsh and that justice is not done between man and man in India.

Mr. MORLEY: The fact must, I think, be sufficiently well known, and in any case I should be disposed to doubt whether such action as my hon. friend suggests would prevent mis-statements of the kind he describes.

*Mr. REES: Has the right hon. Gentleman seen a statement made in a public speech by the hon. Member for East Nottingham to the effect of the last few words of the Question?

[No Answer was returned.]

Conduct of Indian Officials.

*Mr. REES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that Sir Gurudas Bannerji, a Bengali gentleman, and late judge of the High Court of Calcutta, in his evidence before the Decentralisation Committee, said that Indian officials were as aloof as Europeans and more uncivil to Indian subordinates, and to those of even equal social rank with themselves; and, if so, whether he will cause inquiries to be made into these allegations regarding the conduct of Indian officials who form the immense majority of the Government servants in India.

Mr. MORLEY: I have seen in a newspaper a report of the evidence referred to, not altogether agreeing with the version quoted by the hon. Member. I do not think that there is any ground for an inquiry.

The Swadeshi Movement.

Mr. O'GRADY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that Sir Lancelot Hare is permitting the circulation of an official circular in Dacca and Mymensingh giving power to the village headmen to prosecute in cases where an attempt is made to induce the people only to purchase Swadeshi goods; and, if so, whether having regard to the need for developing Indian industries, as well as in the interests of tranquillity, steps will be taken to abrogate the power given to the headmen by a withdrawal of the official circular.

Mr. MORLEY: I have no knowledge of any circular of the nature described. I have seen a report that village headmen have been instructed to bring to the notice of local officers cases of interference with the sale or use of any class of goods, and, as I stated in reply to a Question on 13th February, I am making inquiries on the subject.

Womens' Night Work.

Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether several dominions or British Colonies have signified their wish to give their adhesion to the Berne Convention as to the nightwork of women; and, if so, whether he can name them to the House.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): His Majesty's Minister at Berne has been instructed to notify the accession to the Convention of New Zealand, Ceylon, Fiji, Gibraltar, Gold Coast, Leeward Islands, Northern Nigeria, Trinidad, Uganda Protectorate.

Uganda Railway.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what were the traffic returns and profits of the Uganda Railway during the last completed year.

MR. CHURCHILL: The total receipts of the Uganda Railway for the year ending 31st March, 1907, were £241,212 and the profits £76,763.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): Can the right hon. Gentleman give us any idea when the British taxpayer is likely to receive any interest on his investment?

MR. CHURCHILL: No, sir; I think the hon. Gentleman is aware that the fact that the Uganda Railway is now making a considerable profit is far in advance of any hopes entertained at the time the railway was constructed.

MR. COURTHOPE: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what has been the length of permanent way laid down, and the sum expended, upon the Uganda Railway during each year since its commencement.

MR. CHURCHILL: With regard to the first part of the Question I would refer the hon. Member to the Final Report of the Uganda Railway Committee (Cd. 2164), especially pages 28 to 30, and with regard to the second part to the annual returns of expenditure under the Uganda Railway Acts of which the latest was ordered to be printed on the 12th March last.

Game Preservation in Uganda.

MR. COURTHOPE: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any steps are being taken to protect the big game in the districts traversed by the Uganda Railway from extermination by travellers.

MR. CHURCHILL: There already exists in the neighbourhood of the Uganda Railway a large game reserve which is considered to be amply sufficient for the protection of the big game in that district. Indeed, Sir, the purport of the complaints which are generally made by settlers in East Africa and Uganda is that the Government show too much rather than too little care for the preservation of the larger fauna.

Dinizulu's Trial.

MR. ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether, having regard to the fact that the telegram from Mr. Colenso to Dinizulu, urging him to surrender and assuring him of fair trial and assistance in his defence, was transmitted through the Colonial Office, any specific steps have been taken by that Department to secure these ends; and, if so, what is their nature.

MR. CHURCHILL: My right hon. friend is quite right in stating that the telegram from Mr. Colenso to Dinuzulu to which he refers was sent through the Colonial Office, at Mr. Colenso's request; but as a matter of fact it did not reach Dinuzulu until after his surrender on 8th December. The concern of His Majesty's Government, however, in Dinuzulu's fate and in the procedure of his trial does not rest upon the foundation of the telegram in question. Imperial responsibility in the conditions of Dinuzulu's return to and treatment in South Africa was directly asserted by the right hon. Member for West Birmingham at the time when he held the office of Secretary of State for the Colonies. It has been deliberately re-affirmed by my noble friend Lord Elgin in various despatches, and I have also accepted it in statements made to this House. The Secretary of State has been in communication with the Governor as regards both the trial and procedure, and Lord Elgin sees no reason to doubt that the Judges of the Supreme Court in Natal will ensure Dinuzulu a fair trial when the case comes before them, and that if there are any faults or flaws in the preliminary proceedings they will be fully exposed when the trial comes on. As my right hon. friend is aware, Dinuzulu is represented by two lawyers who are watching his interests, and I assume that in ordinary course they will advise their client and his friends if and when further legal aid, including, I presume, the services of a leader, is required. It will evidently be some time before the case comes on, and the Governor, being aware of the great importance which the Secretary of State attaches to the matter, will keep Lord Elgin fully informed.

Modern University for Egypt.

DR. RUTHERFORD (Middlesex, Brentford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the fact that Egypt is still without a modern University, he will urge upon the Government of His Highness the Khedive the imperative need of establishing such a University without further delay.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): I would refer the hon. Member to Paragraph 98 in Lord Cromer's last Report, from which he will see that the Egyptian Government is quite well disposed towards such a scheme, but I cannot say more at present.

Lord Cromer and the Egyptian General Assembly.

DR. RUTHERFORD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he has received a document, signed by several members of the Egyptian Legislative Council and of the General Assembly, protesting against Lord Cromer's attitude towards certain resulutions passed by the General Assembly, and whether he will advise the Government of Egypt favourably to consider the most important of these resolutions, and more especially those relating to education.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I have received the document referred to. Lord Cromer stated in his Report that some of the points to which resolutions of the General Assembly direct attention are certainly well worthy of consideration. I see nothing in this statement to cause dissatisfaction, but I cannot say more till the Annual Report from Sir Eldon Gorst is received.

Soudan Campaign—Prisoners at Damietta.

DR. RUTHERFORD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he will inform the House how many prisoners taken in the Soudan campaign are now confined at Damietta or elsewhere; how many have died since their captivity and of what diseases; whether the climatic conditions under which these prisoners are confined are materially different from those of the Soudan and detrimental to their health; what are the restrictions imposed on them and their families; whether they are allowed to see their families and converse with them in private and to communicate with others; whether their children are being properly educated, clothed, and otherwise cared for; and what objection there would be to their being transferred to a locality more suitable to their health and there placed on parole or allowed some qualified condition of liberty.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I must refer the hon. Member to the Answer given on the 6th February to the hon. Member for Bath, which covers some of the points raised in the Question. Nearly all the Emirs with their families have now been released. Those left have recently expressed to the Commandant their satisfaction with the treatment they receive. I am not aware that the climatic conditions are unfavourable to them, but I will inquire whether there is any reason to suppose so.

Russo-Japanese War—British Shipping Claims.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when papers will be laid accounting for the delay in securing compensation for British ships sunk or damaged during the Russo-Japanese War.

Sir EDWARD GREY: I cannot undertake to say when the negotiations with the Russian Government with regard to these cases will end, and while they are still pending it would not be usual to lay papers.

Chinese Railway Extensions.

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if this Government has any official knowledge that Japan is contesting the right of China to extend northwards her railway system west of the Liao River; if it supports the Japanese position which is a practical extinction of Chinese sovereignty in the region affected; and whether this would be in keeping with the terms of the Anglo-Japanese alliance.

Sir EDWARD GREY: As far as His Majesty's Government are aware, Japan is not contesting the right in principle of China to extend her railway system west of the Liao River. Japan is opposing the application for the construction of a particular line on the ground that an agreement was arrived at in 1905 between China and Japan by which the former country engaged not to construct any main line of railway in the neighbourhood of, and parallel to, the South Manchurian Railway, or any branch line which might be prejudicial to that railway. The existence of this agreement is not disputed by the Chinese Government. It is open to the contractors to prove, if they can do so, to the satisfaction of Japan that the proposed railway would not prejudice the South Manchurian line and so would not violate the agreement.

Russian Tea Duties.

Mr. REES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, since the imposition of the increased duties by Russia on tea imported by the Black Sea route from India, there has been an increase in the imports of Indian tea into Russia by the Siberian Railway.

Mr. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden; for Sir Edward Grey): The imports of tea *via* the Black Sea have decreased, and the imports *via* Siberia have increased, owing, it is stated, to the more favourable tariff on the land frontier. But the Russian statistics do not make any distinction between Indian and other teas, so that it is not possible to give the specific information desired.

Mr. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): Is it not the fact that the imports of the Indian tea into Russia have practically trebled during the past four years?

Mr. J. A. PEASE: I have said that the Russian Government do not particularise the origin of the tea; therefore I cannot give the information asked for.

*Mr. REES: Apparently it is not, as is often represented, a case of Russian retaliation?

[No Answer was returned.]

Income-Tax.

Dr. HAZEL (West Bromwich): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he will consider the advisability of allowing the payment of income-tax to be made in two equal half-yearly instalments where the income-tax payer desires it.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, E.): My hon. friend's suggestion would mean a partial reversion to the system prevailing prior to 1869, when income-tax was payable quarterly, but was actually collected every six months. This system was found costly and complicated, and was accordingly abandoned, and I do not think its re-introduction, even in a modified form, would be desirable.

Duties on Solicitors.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that an annual exaction of £6 6s. is imposed by the Government on solicitors in Scotland, while advocates at the Scottish bar have the privilege of compounding by a single payment; and whether he will allow the advantage of a single payment to solicitors, or have the annual fee abrogated or substantially reduced.

MR. ASQUITH: There is no analogy between the two duties referred to. The Solicitor's Certificate Duty is imposed upon the certificate which a solicitor is required by law to take out for each year that he continues to practice. The duty paid by advocates is not a composition for an annual payment but is a tax upon the admission of a person as an advocate at the Bar. The duty charged on a Solicitor's Certificate is the same in Scotland as in the other parts of the United Kingdom, viz., £9 for a person practising in the capital, and £6 in other cases. These charges do not appear to me to be excessive.

Brereton Colliery Disaster.

MR. ALBERT STANLEY (Staffordshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the disaster that has occurred at the Coppice Pit of the Brereton Collieries by an inundation; whether he is aware that there are three persons still entombed there, and can he inform the House what steps are being taken for their recovery; and will he direct an inquiry to be made into the circumstances of the case.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): Yes, Sir. I have received reports as to this disaster, from which it appears that the workings are full of water, and that nothing can be done until additional pumping machinery capable of dealing with the flow of water is available. This has been ordered and is expected to arrive this week. As I have already informed my hon. friend, I am advised that a special inquiry into the cause of the accident would have no result at present, the place where it occurred being still inaccessible, but if no inquest can be held I think a special inquiry will ultimately be desirable.

Examinations for Inspectors of Factories.

MR. JOWETT (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is aware that the list of subjects upon which candidates for appointment as inspectors of factories and workshops (women) are selected does not include factory law and sanitary science; and whether he will consider the desirability of substituting a knowledge of these subjects for English literature from Shakespeare to Wordsworth, French, German, or Italian, having regard to the fact that such inspectors have supervisory powers over some of the work of local sanitary authorities, whose fully qualified inspectors have, in certain cases, only the power to report complaints to the factory inspector.

MR. GLADSTONE: All inspectors, men and women, with one or two special exceptions, are required to pass an examination in factory law and sanitary science before being finally appointed on the staff. The examination is taken at the end of the first two years of service during which period an inspector is on probation. I may add, with reference to the last part of the Question, that all inspectors on probation act under the direction of senior inspectors.

Factory Inspectors' Returns.

MR. HEDGES (Kent, Tonbridge): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the inspectors make returns of their new work under the Factory and Workshops Act, 1907, direct to the Home Office or to the local authorities; and whether it is possible to obtain official lists of the new places on their lists for inspection.

MR. GLADSTONE: The reports of the inspectors on their work under whatever Act are made to the Factory Department, not to the local authorities; and a general report is made annually by the chief inspector on the work of the Department during the preceding year and presented to Parliament. Lists of places under inspection are not published. I may remind my hon. friend that the Act he mentions has only just come into operation.

Out-of-Work Benefits in New York.

MR. R. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can inform the House of the general practice of the trade unions and trade societies of New York in regard to allowances for out-of-work benefit.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): I shall be glad if the hon. Member will postpone this Question.

MR. JOHN WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): Will the right hon. Gentleman communicate with the President of the American Federation of Labour so that direct information may be obtained on the spot?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I will consider that.

MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): Will the right hon. Gentleman get the number of unemployed there at the same time?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I gave the House that information the other day.

Deaths of Asiatics on British Ships

MR. SUMMERBELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if any inquiry was held into the death from heart failure of a coal trimmer named Jobanalla Allimalla, on 11th June last, on the steamship "Clan Macneil"; what was the consumption of coal on this vessel for each twenty-four hours; how many men were actually employed on her as firemen and trimmers; and how much coal was each man required to work in the twenty-four hours.

[There were thirty-one other Questions of a like character on the Paper in the names of various hon. Members.]

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I propose to circulate with the Votes such information as the Board of Trade possesses. I do not think it will interest the House to hear each Question answered separately.

*MR. REES: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether, when he had the Merchant Shipping Bill in hand, he did not receive a petition from Asiatic seamen, expressing their dislike of cubic contents, and some suspicion of solicitude of this kind?

[No Answer was returned.]

St. John Ambulance Association—Seamen's Classes.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if the local committee of the St. John Ambulance Association in Dundee will continue to be entitled to hold seamen's classes in first-aid in that city.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The Board of Trade have not taken any steps to prevent the St. John Ambulance Association continuing to hold classes in first-aid in Dundee, but I understand that an arrangement has been arrived at between the St. John and the St. Andrew Associations under which the former Association will cease to hold classes in first-aid in Dundee.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether, under the provisions of the St. John Ambulance Association, a certificate for first-aid can be obtained by English candidates by attending a course of four out of five lectures under the ship's surgeon or a private physician, at any time or place; and whether he will undertake that Scottish candidates shall be given equally favourable facilities.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The arrangements of the St. John Association are it is understood practically as stated in the first part of the Question. The St. Andrew Association have agreed to accept instruction in first aid given on board ship, and there is no reason to believe that Scottish candidates will not have adequate facilities for instruction and examination.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: Is it not the fact that the Scottish candidates have to attend eight out of twelve instead of five out of six lectures, and if so why is a system involving more time, trouble, and expense enforced in Scotland, whereas an easier system is deemed sufficient for English candidates?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I must ask further notice. I am not aware that that is the fact.

Loans for Relief Works.

MR. SUMMERBELL: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can state the number of authorities in England during the past year that have received permission to raise loans for the purpose of carrying out schemes for providing work for the unemployed; whether, in a number of such cases, it has been stipulated that the money so raised shall be paid back in twenty years; that in such cases an extension of time has been asked for; and, if so, can he state whether it is the intention of the Government to extend the time for the repayment of such loans.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): The number of local authorities who during 1907 received sanction to raise loans for carrying out schemes undertaken on account of the want of employment in their districts was forty-two. The period sanctioned for the repayment of the loan depended on the nature of the work. In eighteen cases it was twenty years, and in only one of these cases was an extension of this period asked for. In that case, the loan was sanctioned for laying out a public pleasure ground, and the term of twenty years is that usually allowed for the repayment of loans for works of the kind, whether undertaken on account of the want of employment or not. There does not appear to me to be any sufficient reason for extending it.

Religious Instruction in Schools.

MR. PARTINGTON (Derbyshire, High Peak): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, if he can state the number of children of Church of England parents who have been withdrawn from religious instruction in provided schools since 1902.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouth, N.): I regret that the Board of Education have no information on this subject.

London County Council Schools—Syllabus of Religious Instruction.

MR. PARTINGTON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he can state the names and religious denomination of the committee who framed the syllabus of religious instruction adopted by the London County Council; and if the late Archbishop of Canterbury and the present Archbishop have expressed approval of it.

MR. MCKENNA: I have no authoritative information as to the first part of the Question. With regard to the second, the present Archbishop of Canterbury has expressed his approval of the religious instruction given in London under the London syllabus, but I have no information as to the views of his predecessor.

Feeding Hungry School Children.

MR. O'GRADY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, in view of so many local authorities failing to put the Education (Provision of Meals) Act into operation, despite the pressing need, it is the intention of the Government to introduce an amending Act making the clauses of the Act of 1906 obligatory.

MR. MCKENNA: The extent of the Government programme this session precludes the possibility of considering the hon. Member's suggestion.

MR. O'GRADY: Is the right hon. Gentleman in favour of such an amending Act?

MR. MCKENNA: It is not necessary for me to give any expression of opinion on the matter having regard to the fact that it is impossible for me to introduce legislation this session on the subject.

School Attendance Officers.

MR. GEORGE ROBERTS (Norwich): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, having regard to the increased and responsible duties now devolving upon school attendance officers as the result of recent legislation, such as the Education (Provision of Meals) Act, which where put into operation has invariably resulted in school attendance officers being called upon to make inquiries and certify as to the necessity or otherwise of feeding children, he will consider the advisability of controlling these officers by his Board, as Poor Law officers are controlled by the Local Government Board, by giving them freedom of action and security of tenure of office.

MR. McKENNA: The extent of the Government programme for this session precludes the consideration of the hon. Member's suggestion, which could only be effected by legislation.

Religious Instruction in Non-Provided Schools.

MR. CARLILE (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): On behalf of the noble Lord the Member for Marylebone, East, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he will state what number of children have been withdrawn from the religious instruction in non-provided schools since the passing of the Act of 1902.

MR. McKENNA: I regret that the Board of Education have no information on the subject, except as to one county.

MR. CARLILE: Will the right hon. Gentleman kindly get the information?

MR. McKENNA: No, Sir; I cannot undertake to obtain it. I can give it for one county which I have—a Welsh county.

MR. CARLILE: In the absence of any other information I shall be glad to have it.

The Apostles' Creed.

MR. CARLILE: On behalf of the noble Lord the Member for East Marylebone I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether the teaching of the Apostles' Creed would be religious instruction in accordance with the London County Council syllabus within the meaning of the Third Schedule to the Education Bill.

MR. McKENNA: I must refer the hon. Member to the syllabus in question, which is in great detail. As I stated yesterday in reply to my friend the hon. Member for North Lambeth, I think it is inadvisable to attempt interpretations of the Education Bill which can only be conveniently dealt with in debate.

MR. CARLILE: Is the Apostles' Creed included in that syllabus?

MR. McKENNA said the hon. Gentleman had as good an opportunity of ascertaining that as he had.

MR. CARLILE: Is not the right hon. Gentleman prepared to give information asked for by hon. Members?

MR. McKENNA: I am perfectly willing to give any information which hon. Members have not already at their disposal, but in this case the hon. Member can get it as freely as I can.

MR. CARLILE: Will the right hon. Gentleman issue a copy of this so-called syllabus?

MR. McKENNA: It is already issued.

MR. CARLILE rose again.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member had better put any further Question on the Paper.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I will show you the way to the library.

Gloucestershire (Henbury) Education Order.

MR. RENDALL (Gloucestershire, Thornbury): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education why the Board declined to insert a clause in the Gloucestershire, Henbury (Sandford and Gray) Order, No. 543 W., 2nd January, 1908, allocating the sum of £50 per annum in relief of the rates of the parishes of Henbury and Redwick and Northwick, notwithstanding that such allocation was agreed upon by the Gloucestershire County Council, the parish councils interested in the matter, and the trustees of the charity, and notwithstanding that it was understood at the inquiry held at Bristol that such a clause should be inserted in the Order; and will the Board of Education now modify the Order in the sense indicated.

MR. McKENNA: The scheme of 2nd January, 1908, allocates a yearly sum of £80 to the support and maintenance of the Northwick Endowed School and the Henbury Girls' and Infants' Church of England School so long as they are public elementary schools. As the Board explained to all the parties interested, this yearly sum of £80 is income part of which is payable to the local education authority under Section 13 of the Education Act of 1902, but as to which there are no provisions in the trust for determining the amount payable. The Board did not consider it desirable that the scheme should give specific directions as to the application of the sum of £80 or any part of it, both because the amount payable to the local authority is under Section 13 (1) a matter for agreement in the first instance between the parties, and because it is for the local authority and not for the Board to decide under Section 13 (2) what parish or parishes are entitled to the benefit of the payment by reason of the fact that they are served by the school. The Board understood that it had been agreed between the parties that £50 out of the £80 should be regarded as representing the amount payable to the local education authority under Section 13; the scheme does not in any way interfere with that agreement, and it does not appear that any modification of the scheme is necessary.

Politics in the Post Office.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS (Sheffield, Ecclesall): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General what political organisations now exist with his sanction in connection with the Post Office service; and whether any, and what, directions are issued to them for their guidance.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): No sanction from me is necessary for the formation of societies among Post Office servants, political or otherwise. The existence of such societies is not necessarily brought to my knowledge, unless they infringe the Regulations laid down for the conduct of Post Office servants as civil servants. There are no separate Post Office Regulations dealing with political organisations as such. But the action of the members of such societies is governed by the Regulations dealing with the conduct of Post Office servants as civil servants. I have already informed the hon. member of the nature of these Regulations. In interpreting the Regulations which state that Post Office servants as civil servants ought to exercise a certain reserve in political matters, I have adopted a uniform principle in dealing with the various societies to which my attention has been directed. There is no objection to the formation of societies, political and other, among Post Office servants, provided Post Office servants do not take a prominent or active part in political contests; but, in order that there may be no doubt as to the observance of this Rule, it is not expedient that such societies should be specific branches of societies which take an active part in politics.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS inquired what political organisations at present existed in the Post Office.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Those to which my attention has been drawn by Questions in the House and otherwise are three—the Civil Service Socialist League, the Tariff Reform League, and the Free Trade Union. I had intended to give that information in Answer to a Question by my hon. friend the Member for Christchurch which was to have been put to-day.

MR. SAMUEL ROBERTS: Is not the proper course for the right hon. Gentleman to take either to exclude all political organisations——

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to suggest a policy under the form of a Question.

EARL WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham): Did the right hon. Gentleman say his attention had only been called to this matter by Questions in the House?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said he expressly stated that his attention had been drawn by Question and otherwise. He had endeavoured in this matter to deal with the subject totally apart from any opinions of his own in regard to political questions. He had endeavoured—and he thought he had succeeded—to apply exactly the same administrative rule to every organisation which had come under his notice.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): I recognise that the Postmaster-General is endeavouring to deal fairly with this matter. My special reason for intervening——[Cries of "Order, order."]

*Mr. SPEAKER: I really must ask the right hon. Gentleman to put what he has to say in the form of a Question. If the right hon. Gentleman sets an example of breaking the rules it will be impossible to enforce them on others.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I am very sorry I have transgressed the rule. I was endeavouring to make a personal explanation. I will go at once to the question. Does the right hon. Gentleman think that, in view of the existence of a Socialistic organisation, a Tariff Reform League organisation, and a Free Trade Union organisation in the Post Office, it is possible any longer to maintain his refusal to admit the Primrose League?

Mr. O'GRADY: Is it in order for the right hon. Gentleman to ask for an expression of opinion in view of the fact that if we do so in a Question, it is ruled out of order at the Table?

*Mr. SPEAKER: Any Question may be put as to a matter of policy or administration for which the Minister is responsible.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said the regulation was that Post Office servants should exercise a certain restraint in political matters, and, therefore, it did not seem expedient to form in the Post Office a league which was only a branch of an association outside which took an active part in politics. That was the rule which he had laid down for himself in dealing with these matters. He had no objection to the formation of associations in the Post Office so long as they were Post Office associations and not branches of outside organisations. That was a rule which he had applied in every case.

Sir F. BANBURY (City of London): Is not the Free Trade Union a branch of a political organisation?

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have answered that Question.

Mr. CURRAN (Jarrow) inquired whether it was true that the Civil Service Socialist League had decided that it would take no part in current politics.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: That is so.

Mr. R. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan): Will the right hon. Gentleman deal with all four associations on the same lines?

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: Certainly.

Mr. COURTHOPE: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, whether he is aware that the Free Trade Union has recently formed a branch in the Post Office; that the Free Trade Union in the election at South Leeds urged the electors to vote for the Liberal candidate although there was another free trade candidate in the field; and whether, in these circumstances, he will still permit the Post Office branch of this organisation to remain.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I find on inquiry that the Free Trade Union, constituted by officers of the Post Office, is independent of, and is not a branch of, the Free Trade Union, and has, therefore, no responsibility for the acts of the latter.

Mr. COURTHOPE asked whether none of the organisations which the right hon. Gentleman had mentioned were party organisations.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have stated that the regulation laid down by the Post Office, and stated in th House by Mr. Gladstone when First Lord of the Treasury, was that Civil servants should not take a prominent and active part in political contests. Therefore, it seems to me that, while there can be no objection to the formation of these associations for educative purposes within the Post Office, it does make a difference if they are actually a branch of an association taking an active part in political contests. That is the measure by which I have judged this matter, and I have applied exactly the same rule to each of these associations.

SIR F. BANBURY: Is the right hon. Gentleman afraid of the Primrose League, but not of the other organisations?

EARL WINTERTON: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that the Post Office branch of the Free Trade Union has no sort of connection with the Free Trade Union outside?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I said so.

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would now give all political organisations equal rights in the Post Office.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have explained to the House the view that I hold, and I intend to mete out precisely the same measure to every association.

Glanders in London.

COLONEL WALKER (Lancashire, Widnes): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether his attention has been drawn to the report of an inquest held in Southwark on a horse dealer, who died from glanders; and whether he will, in view of the number of cases reported of horses attacked by that disease in London and the danger that exists of infection to human beings, ask the Board of Agriculture, with a view to the rapid extinction of glanders and farcy, to issue an order for the compulsory application of the Mallein test by all qualified veterinary surgeons, as well as by the three inspectors at present appointed under the Act.

*MR. J. A. PEASE (for Sir E. STRACHEY): My noble friend has seen the report to which the hon and gallant Member refers. The Glanders or Farcy Order of 1907 authorises the veterinary inspectors of local authorities to apply the Mallein test with the consent of the owner to horses which are suspected of glanders or which have been in contact with others affected with that disease, and which have in consequence been placed under detention, but the Board do not think it would be desirable to extend this power to all qualified veterinary surgeons as suggested.

COLONEL WALKER: Cannot the number of inspectors for London be increased?

*MR. J. A. PEASE: I will represent the hon. Member's view to my noble friend.

Foot-and-Mouth Disease in 1885.

MR. COURTHOPE: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he will state to what cause the foot-and-mouth outbreak of 1885 was attributed.

*MR. J. A. PEASE: No satisfactory evidence was obtained as to the origin of the disease in any of the outbreaks of foot-and-mouth disease which occurred in 1885.

Foot-and-Mouth Disease—Prohibition of Fodder Imports.

MR. COURTHOPE: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the order prohibiting the import of hay and straw from countries where foot-and-mouth disease is prevalent has yet been issued; and whether such order deals in any way with hay and straw used for packing.

*MR. J. A. PEASE: The Board hope to be in a position to issue the order to which the hon. Member refers in the course of a day or two, and so soon as the necessary arrangements have been made with the Board of Customs. It will not apply to hay or straw which is used for packing merchandise.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): Why has not the order been extended to hay and straw used for merchandise?

*MR. J. A. PEASE: The advisers of the Board are of opinion that that is not necessary for the protection of the herds of the country.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Is this hay and straw inspected before it is sent to this country?

*MR. J. A. PEASE: I am not aware that it is.

MR. COURTHOPE: Why has there been such a long delay?

*MR. J. A. PEASE: Communications have been made to the Board of Customs, and any apparent delay is due to the communications which must necessarily pass between the two Boards. It is hoped that in forty-eight hours the regulations will be issued.

MR. CHAPLIN (Surrey, Wimbledon): Are the Board satisfied that none of the outbreaks which have occurred before are attributable to infection from packing straw brought from other countries?

*MR. J. A. PEASE: The right hon. Gentleman is probably thinking of the outbreak of 1885. The Board of Agriculture are in communication with the Central Chamber of Agriculture on the subject. But so far, they have no reason to attribute the outbreak to packing straw, as suggested by one particular authority.

*MR. CHAPLIN: The matter is one of such grave importance that I must press the point. What I desire to arrive at it this: Has the Board any evidence to satisfy them that there is no danger of this disease being imported from abroad owing to the use of packing straw?

*MR. J. A. PEASE: I cannot say that the experts of the Board of Agriculture are satisfied that it is impossible for the disease to be introduced in that way; but they are of opinion that the risk in connection with the use of materials employed in packing is so small in comparison with the great injury that would be done to trade by restrictive regulations that, pending investigations, they are not inclined to extend their regulations to packing straw.

MR. COURTHOPE: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether hay and straw imported as packing with manufactured articles is sold as litter for urban cow sheds and stables; and whether he proposes to take any steps to prevent infection being carried in this way.

MR. J. A. PEASE: The Board have no information to show how far the practice to which the hon. Member refers obtains. The suggestion made in the latter part of the Question has been frequently considered by my noble friend and his predecessors in office during the past twenty-five years. The view taken has always been that it would not be possible effectively to control the movement in this country of hay or straw used for packing imported merchandise. The Board are, however, in communication with the Customs on the subject in order to obtain more detailed information as to the effect of such a measure upon all concerned.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Will the Board of Agriculture see that hay and straw thus brought in is burned?

MR. J. A. PEASE: I do not think the Board of Agriculture are prepared to adopt any measure of that kind without further information. They are communicating with the customs on the subject with a view to considering what changes would be required if the order were extended to packing materials.

*MR. CHAPLIN: When do the Board of Agriculture expect to have this information? May I point out that every hour's delay in this matter may be serious?

MR. J. A. PEASE: There will be no unnecessary delay in obtaining the information in regard to the trades affected by this matter.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Will the Board find out if this hay and straw after being used for packing purposes is used for litter, and will steps be taken to prevent its being sold for that purpose?

MR. J. A. PEASE: That subject is under consideration, but the Board have no evidence at the present time that it is used for litter.

Irish Local Government Audits.

MR. J. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is yet in a position to state the result of his inquiries into the question of the fees payable for the audit of the accounts of local authorities in Ireland; whether steps will be taken to bring the charges down to the level prevailing in England; whether he is aware that in Scotland the Secretary for Scotland invariably appoints professional accountants as auditors, and that these auditors are paid on a moderate scale and have no right to pensions; and whether a searching investigation into the whole question has been or will be made?

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): I find that a searching investigation of the Irish Audit System was made in the years 1903 and 1904 by a Departmental Committee appointed by the Treasury. The facts relating to the local audits and the fees charged are not in dispute, and no further inquiry appears to be necessary. As already stated in reply to the Hon. Member's Question of 12th February, the audit of the accounts of local authorities in Ireland costs the State £6,000 a year, and it is not, therefore, in contemplation to reduce the fees charged to the local authorities, and thereby add to the very heavy expense which the State has already to bear. I believe the Scottish Local Government Board appoint local auditors in private practice to audit the accounts of local authorities, and that no pension is paid to them. This system, however, is less suited to Ireland than the English system, and Parliament has on repeated occasions affirmed the principle of independent audit for Ireland by officials responsible to the Government.

MR. J. MACVEAGH: Seeing that the charges in Ireland for these audits are about three times more than in England, will the right hon. Gentleman consider if economy cannot be effected by reducing them without imposing any extra burden on the State?

MR. BIRRELL: I will consider if they cannot be reduced.

Irish School Teachers.

MR. J. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the statement of grievances prepared by the transition teachers under the National Board who were in training colleges in 1898 and 1899; whether he is aware that the arrears of salary due to them for the last seven years now amount to over £8,000, and that the amount of their incomes is at present nearly £2,000 a year less than it would be if they were allowed the classification and salary promised them in the rules under which they entered training; and whether their claims for redress will be at once considered.

MR. BIRRELL: I can only repeat the answer which has been repeatedly given to similar Questions by my predecessor and myself. The Commissioners of National Education assert that the class of teachers referred to in the Question has already received full consideration and that each particular case has been dealt with on its merits. The Commissioners possess plenary powers, which have been liberally exercised, to raise on appeal the grant of consolidated income in cases in which the operation of the rule is deemed inequitable. They are still prepared to consider any particular case brought under their notice which has not been already fully investigated. They cannot admit that any arrears of salary are due to the teachers in question, or that their incomes are nearly £2,000 a year less than they would have been under the old rules.

Irish Resident Magistracy.

MR. MULDOON (Wicklow, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether there is any explanation of the fact that of the total resident magistrates in Ireland twenty-nine only have been certified as having sufficient legal knowledge under The Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887; how it has happened that of those twenty-nine eleven only have had any legal training, the others having been mostly constabulary officers, while nine practising barristers and two solicitors on the list have never received any such certificate; and how it is that the constabulary officers, in the granting of legal certificates, have been preferred to the trained lawyers.

Mr. BIRRELL: His Majesty's present Government have issued no certificates to resident magistrates under the Crimes Act. I am informed that the last occasion on which such certificates were issued was some six years ago when certain counties were being proclaimed under the Act. I understand that it was the practice, when the Act was in operation, to certify only those magistrates who were resident or acting in the proclaimed districts, and that the Lord-Lieutenant satisfied himself in every case of the legal competency of the resident magistrate so certified. No necessity arose for issuing certificates to resident magistrates in other than proclaimed districts.

Ballyboy Outrage, Galway.

Captain J. CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to an outrage which took place on the 20th February last, when the houses of two men named John MacNamara and John Monaghan, both living at a place called Ballyboy, on the Gough estate, county Galway, were fired into; can the police assign any reason for this outrage; have any arrests been made; and can he say what steps, if any, have been taken to bring the perpetrators to justice?

Mr. BIRRELL: The houses of the two men named in the Question were fired into on the early morning of 19th February. It would be irregular and contrary to practice to state the opinions of the police as to the motive for offences. No arrests have been made. The police are still pursuing their investigation of the matter, and are using all possible efforts to discover the offenders.

Mr. DUFFY (Galway, S.): Is it not the fact that these two men are closely connected with the Nationalist organisation in the district, and is there not a strong suspicion in the neighbourhood that the shots were fired at the instigation of a local gentleman?

Mr. BIRRELL: Inquiries are being made.

Cattle-Driving in Mayo.

Captain J. CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a cattle-drive was carried out recently at Grangemore, on the grazing farm of Mr. R. Vesey Stoney, of Rosturk, county Mayo; can he inform the House if anyone has been arrested in connection with the outrage; and can he say what steps, if any, have been taken to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Mr. BIRRELL: The police authorities inform me that on 19th February at 5 p.m. a police patrol visited Mr. Stoney's farm at Grangemore, County Roscommon, at which time there were thirty-six head of cattle on the farm. Two hours later the police found fifteen of the cattle wandering on the road and gave them up to the herd. No persons were observed in the vicinity. The police closely inquired into the matter but could find no evidence against anyone.

Longford League's Threat to Graziers.

Captain J. CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the police has been directed to the action of the Longford branch of the United Irish League in calling upon graziers in that county not to renew their lettings in March, unless they desire to be visited by a blackthorn brigade; if he can state if any, and what, steps are being taken to prevent such case of intimidation; and will the Irish Executive inform the United Irish League that it will not be a party to the sub-division of grass lands where terrorism has been employed to dispossess the present occupier.

Mr. BIRRELL: I am informed that resolutions to the effect mentioned, purporting to have been passed at indoor meetings of the United Irish League, have appeared in the newspapers, but the police have no evidence that such resolutions were actually passed. An extra force of twenty-one policemen have been maintained in County Longford for the past six months, with the object of preventing interference with the holders of grazing lands in the exercise of their legal rights. I have more than once stated in this House, on the authority of the Estates Commissioners, that if they should purchase untenanted lands in regard to which intimidation has taken place they would refuse to allot any portion of the land to persons who had taken part in any such intimidation.

CAPTAIN J. CRAIG asked the right hon. Gentleman whether the Government would correspond with the United Irish League to that effect.

MR. BIRRELL: No, Sir, I do not propose to correspond with any one to that effect.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.) asked whether permission to newspapers to circulate in the district with these intimidatory notices in them was not an incentive to intimidation, and whether the right hon. Gentleman would proceed to stop such publications.

MR. BIRRELL was understood to say that the question of the wisdom of interfering with newspapers was one which the hon. and learned Gentleman must leave to him.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that, if a year ago he had ordered the Estates Commissioners to do what he had now ordered them to do, there would have been none of this trouble.

*MR. SPEAKER said that Question did not arise out of the Question on the Paper.

Tyrone Vice-Lieutenacy.

MR. MULDOON: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether His Majesty's Lieutenant for Tyrone County has been acting in the office for some time past; if not, whether a vice-lieutenant was appointed by him, and, if so, the date of such appointment; and whether, in view of the provisions of the Act of Parliament enabling a vice-lieutenant to be appointed during illness, he proposes to take any steps to secure a more satisfactory provision for that county.

MR. BIRRELL: In February, 1906, Captain Lowry was appointed Vice-Lieutenant of County Tyrone, and he has performed the duties of Lieutenant since that date. The appointment was made under the Act to which the hon. Member refers. No inconvenience is known to have arisen owing to the performance of the duties of the Lieutenancy by a Vice-Lieutenant.

Cooksborough Estate, Meath.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state at what date negotiations between the owner and the Estates Commissioners in regard to the purchase of the Cooksborough (county Westmeath) estate of the Hon. E. M. Pakenham took place and the present position of these negotiations; and whether, having regard to the fact that this estate consists almost entirely of untenanted land, he will request the Commissioners to bring the matter to as speedy a termination as possible.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners approached the owner in this case in 1906 with a view to purchasing certain untenanted land, and in 1907 they had a preliminary inspection made with the owner's consent. The Commissioners are now about to inform him of the price which they would be prepared to advance for the land. If the owner should accept this offer and institute proceedings for sale, the Commissioners will deal with the estate as soon as possible.

Ardglass Estate, Westmeath.

MR. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that negotiations for the purchase of the

Ardglass, county Westmeath, estate of Mrs. McEndoo and Mrs. Reid, having almost reached a satisfactory conclusion, were suddenly broken off by the owners; that proceedings have been taken against certain tenants for recovery of rent and judgment entered against three; and that upon 20th February a force of police was drafted into Rathowen and a seizure made upon the cattle of Mr. Bernard McLoughlin, one of those tenants; whether it is the intention of the Government to repeat the operation in regard to each of the other tenants against whom decrees have been secured; and what is the meaning of resorting to such a costly arrangement as is involved in dividing the work in this manner.

Mr. BIRRELL: No proceedings for the sale of the estate mentioned have been instituted before the Estates Commissioners, and I have no information as to any negotiations for purchase which may have taken place between the tenants and the owner. It is the fact that decrees for rent due have been obtained against three of the tenants, and on 20th February the police afforded protection to the sheriff in the execution of one of these decrees, namely, that in the case of Bernard McLoughlin. It is the duty of the police to furnish all necessary protection to the sheriff in the execution of such decrees. I have no information as to whether the remaining decrees are to be executed. The question is not one for the Government to decide.

Mr. MOORE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that Mr. B. McLoughlin and other gentlemen who object to having their cattle seized by the sheriff for a just debt have themselves been concerned in cattle-driving operations in the last few weeks?

[No Answer was returned.]

Irish Stipendiary Magistrates.

Mr. J. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if there is any regulation or custom to the effect that a large proportion of appointments to stipendiary magistracy in Ireland must be made from the police force; whether his attention has been called to the fact that of the sixty-six stipendiary magistrates in Ireland only twenty-five have had even the semblance of a legal training; and whether arrangements can now be made to ensure that future appointments shall be confined to practising barristers and solicitors.

Mr. BIRRELL: By long established practice one-third of the appointments to the Resident Magistracy is given to officers of the Royal Irish Constabulary. The present number of resident magistrates is sixty-six, of whom twenty-five were barristers or solicitors, and twenty-four were officers of the constabulary. As regards legal training, I may mention that constabulary officers who are appointed resident magistrates have necessarily acquired an intimate knowledge of the law and procedure in Courts of Summary Jurisdiction. While not prepared to limit future appointments in the manner suggested in the Question, the Government are fully alive to the desirability of appointing gentlemen who have had sufficient legal training.

Mr. J. MACVEAGH: Has the right hon. Gentleman's attention been called to a resolution passed by the Incorporated Law Society of Ireland urging that gentlemen appointed to these positions should have some knowledge of the law? Is it the practice in England that one-third of them should be policemen?

Mr. BIRRELL: The circumstances of the two countries are quite dissimilar.

Mr. MOORE asked the right hon. Gentleman whether, in any inquiry which he made on this subject, he would include an inquiry into the qualifications of the County Court Judge for Clare, who was appointed from the *Freeman's Journal* office.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND expressed the hope that the right hon. Gentleman, if called upon to inquire into the position of the County Court Judge for Clare, would not allow himself to be influenced by the jealousy displayed by those who had not been made County Court Judges themselves.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Stanley Baldwin, esquire, for the County of Worcester (Western or Bewdley Division).

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had added the following Member to Standing Committee A.: Mr. Baldwin.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had added the following Member to Standing Committee C.: Mr. Freeman Thomas.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had added to Standing Committee A. the following Fifteen Members (in respect of the Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) and of the Police (Superannuation) Bills:—Mr. Guinness, Mr. Leverton Harris, Mr. Edward Barry, Mr. Whitehead, Sir Randall Cremer, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. Horniman, Mr. Brodie, Mr. Bethell, Mr. Stopford Brooke, Mr. Samuel Roberts, Sir Francis Lowe, Mr. Glover, and Mr. Staveley-Hill.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee B.: Mr. Walsh.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had added to the Standing Committee on Scottish Bills the following Fifteen Members (in respect of the Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill): Sir Frederick Banbury, Mr. Bonar Law, Colonel Sandys, Sir Benjamin Stone, Mr. Middlemore, Sir Edward Sassoon, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Macpherson, Mr. Ward, Mr. Richardson, Mr. John Rutherford, Mr. Gibbs, Mr. Thornton, Sir Walter Nugent, and Sir Berkeley Sheffield.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

SUPPLY (NAVY ESTIMATES).

Order for Committee read.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The statement giving a full explanation of the Estimates for the coming year, which has been presented to the House and the statement which I made in the course of last night's debate, make my task less onerous now. I should have formally moved Mr. Speaker out of the Chair had there not been one or two statements on minor details which I wish to make, and which did not belong to last night's debate.

The first of these relates to the coastguard, a subject which has excited a very large amount of interest. It is a matter of common knowledge that a strong Departmental Committee has been considering the future of the coastguards, and it has made a Report which will be of great value in deciding upon the question of retaining the coastguard in its present condition in the Royal Navy. The Admiralty have not been able to act upon the recommendation of this Committee, and it has been therefore decided that the subject shall be considered *de novo*. I hope that as a result of our deliberations an alternative scheme may be formulated that will meet the objections which have been raised to the Committee's proposals. Of course I cannot say more on the subject now. But the Estimates for the coming financial year have been framed on the assumption that no vital change is to take place this year. It must be understood that certain deductions which would have been necessary in any case, which have no bearing upon the Committee's Report, and which have only been postponed in consequence of the pledge I gave last year to my hon. and gallant friend, must be effected now. There is a recognised redundancy both of men and stations. The natural waste next year will amount to about 300 men, and certain stations no longer required for any purpose associated with the coastguard will be reduced. But no action will be taken which will affect the principle upon which the coastguard is organised. The reduced number of the coastguards will enable corresponding additions to be made to the ordinary active service list of the Navy. In any case the Admiralty do not propose to reduce the life-saving work which has hitherto been carried on by the Board of Trade and by the National Lifeboat Institution. The signalling stations will be maintained as heretofore.

The other matter is a long-standing grievance on the part of the engineering branch of the officers of the Royal Navy. They have long complained that certain expectations of increased emoluments that have been based on certain official documents have not been realised. I am glad to be able to hold out hopes of certain improvements being made shortly in the emoluments of the engineering branch. There are points in regard to those emoluments in respect of which the Admiralty have recognised the existence of a certain sense of grievance, and this they are anxious to remove. Various questions have been carefully considered, and they have reached an advanced stage of settlement, but, as the details have not been yet finally determined, I am debarred from making any more definite statement.

MR. BRAMSDON (Portsmouth): Are they dealing with the question of *status*?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: No; it has only been a question of emoluments. I think I ought to add a word to what I said yesterday about the shipbuilding programme. The usual custom of this House has been to delay the discussion of the shipbuilding Vote until the month of July, and, on the other hand, the Admiralty have always undertaken that no executive effect shall be given to that programme until the House has had an opportunity of considering it later in the year. I think that is the established custom. But this year one vessel will have to be laid down long before the discussion takes place. The "Boadicea II.," which is to be built at Pembroke, will be laid down at a comparatively early date. With that exception, nothing will be done with the new programme until the House has had an opportunity of considering it as a whole and in detail, with such amendments, extensions, and improvements as may be advisable. The only other thing I wish to mention has reference to the shipbuilding programme, about which I desire to make an addition to what I said yesterday. The hon. Member for Fareham pointed out that while the new programme was to cost from first to last £7,500,000, we are only spending some £750,000 this year.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): I did not refer to that point.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. I was under the impression that he made a remark about the small amount of money taken from a programme of that size.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover) was understood to say that he had made an observation of that character.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I accept what the right hon. Gentleman says. But I find that the amount we have taken is larger than the usual perçentage, except in the year 1905–1906, which was a year of unusual exception in building the "Dreadnought." With that exception, the proportion has been rather lower than the sum we have put down this year. I have taken the trouble to find out what provision would have been made in this present year if the Cawdor programme had been carried into effect. It is all put down in black and white. I find that the new construction under the Cawdor programme amounted to £2,000,000 more than the provision made under our smaller programme, yet we are taking more for shipbuilding this year than would have been taken under the Cawdor programme. With another comparatively small programme we propose to spend £20,000 more in 1908–9 than would have been spent under the Cawdor programme. There is one other matter to which I wish to allude. Complaint has been made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover based upon a statement made by the hon. Member for King's Lynn, that Germany had more destroyers in the month of December, 1906, in home waters, than we had.

The facts are as follow. According to information in the possession of the Admiralty in the month of July last, Germany as a rule maintained in full commission during the winter months 17 destroyers, 6 divisional torpedo boats, 7 first-class and 12 second-class torpedo boats and 1 submarine. The numbers mintained by Great Britain in home waters both in summer and winter were: 45 destroyers, 32 first-class torpedo boats, and 20 submarines. But in the first part of December, the period selected by the hon. Member for King's Lynn, the German contingent was increased for the purpose of tactical exercises, by 9 destroyers, and one divisional torpedo boat, which was temporarily commissioned. In this exceptional fortnight there were in full commission: destroyers (British), 45; German destroyers and divisional boats, 33; torpedo boats, first-class: British, 32; German, 7; second-class: British, 0; German, 9; submarines: British, 29; German, 1. The total figures are: British, 106; German, 50; but boat for boat, the British destroyers are greatly superior to the German in size and armament. I beg to move that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson.*)

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: I think we must regard it as a remarkable innovation that the right hon. Gentleman should inform us that he had made his speech introductory of these Estimates in another debate yesterday, and that, therefore, it is not necessary for him to go into details to-day. This course may have its advantages, but it has also its disadvantages, and I can hardly think that the right hon. Gentleman has given any sort of adequate explanation of these Estimates, particularly in view of the very exceptional circumstances in which we find ourselves in the present year. I hope the House will excuse me if I find it impossible to confine myself to the narrow compass of the right hon. Gentleman's observations. I sympathise with the right hon. Gentleman in defending these Estimates, because he has undertaken the task of defending the indefensible. The Estimates as we now know them are an abridged edition of the Estimates which were settled upon before the hon. Member for Falkirk moved his Amendment to the Address. They are shadows of their former selves, and my principal charge against the Government is that they are either not prepared to face the necessary expenditure to keep up the two-Power standard which is generally regarded as being essential to our national security, or that out of consideration for purely Party exigencies they are postponing the necessary expenditure, and piling up the Estimates for next year to a point where they must swamp any schemes of social reform to which they are committing themselves, or else they are contemplating political suicide before the next Budget is introduced, and so expect to dump the burden which they are shirking on to the shoulders of their successors. With regard to the shipbuilding programme, I wish, of course, to postpone any detailed remarks with regard to technical points until the discussion on Vote 8, later in the Session. But I think the right hon. Gentleman went too far when he asked us to endorse his suggestion that it was a good thing that that Vote should be put off until late in the session, and prided himself upon the fact that the Admiralty could take no steps whatever to commence the shipbuilding programme until that Vote had been passed. Having regard to the exceptional circumstances, I think that Vote should be put down earlier than usual in the session in order that the Admiralty might make a beginning with their programme sooner, especially in view of its exceedingly modest character. I see in the First Lord's statement that the programme of new construction consists of one battleship of the "Dreadnought" class, one large armoured cruiser, which I presume will be of the "Invincible" class, although we have no information on that subject: six fast unarmoured cruisers of the "Boadicea" class, and sixteen torpedo boat destroyers. That, in the words of Lord Tweedmouth, is an exceedingly modest programme. But my complaint against the Admiralty is that even this modest programme is not being seriously taken in hand,

and that whilst the programme is proclaimed the money is not provided. I think we must go a little more closely into the financial provisions of this year as regards the new programme. If we examine them we find that, of all the ships proposed, only one small cruiser of the "Boadicea" type will be laid down in the year 1908. The right hon. Gentleman does not tell us why it is necessary to lay down even that one, but we know perfectly well it is because of the need for work at Pembroke dockyard. As to the remaining five small cruisers of the same class, to cost £400,000 apiece, only £6,700 are allowed for each, which shows that the Government are not going to begin them until the very end of the current financial year, which for all practical purposes means 1909–10. The case with regard to the sixteen destroyers is even worse. If ever there was a case of urgency, where craft of this type should be laid down at the earliest moment, it exists in this instance. The right hon. Gentleman announced that the Government proposes to lay down sixteen destroyers, but what is the provision in the Estimates? £4,000 apiece, for destroyers which if they are to be of the latest class will cost £120,000 apiece. We can only assume that the extraordinarily low provision for those two classes of ships which are so urgently needed is the result of the putting down on the Paper of the Resolution of the hon. Member for Falkirk Burghs. There has evidently been a reduction, but it is a *reductio ad absurdum*. The programme is in fact practically postponed until 1909–10, and it is quite clear that the Government does not mean business. The right hon. Gentleman told us just now that the total provision for this year is above the average, but, even if it is, I may remind him that there are very special circumstances connected with the present year. What becomes of the professions of the right hon. Gentleman that he made in outlining the shipbuilding programme of last year when he told us that—

> "The amount to be taken for new vessels to be laid down in 1907–8 is to be limited to a small sum, and they will not be commenced until a late period of the year. This emphasises to the Hague Conference the good faith of the British Government as desiring to bring about a reduction of armaments."

I ventured to suggest to the right hon. Gentleman on Vote 8 last year that as the Hague Conference had failed, at any rate as regarded reduction of armaments, if the Government wanted to show good faith not only to foreign countries but to the people of this country they ought to anticipate rather than postpone the shipbuilding programme they proposed. But what they have done is not to anticipate but to postpone it still further—to postpone it almost out of the financial year altogether. The right hon. Gentleman will find it hard to justify the language which he used last year unless he anticipates the programme of shipbuilding in the coming year. But I go further and say that, even if the exceedingly modest programme which has been announced is seriously pushed, it is in no sense adequate to maintain the two-Power standard. I do not intend to go into any comparison of the total numbers of battleships such as is included in the Dilke Return and which is so dear to writers in the Press, because it is really useless. It does not take into account the relative fighting values of ships and takes no account whatever of the new state of affairs that has been occasioned by the introduction of what is known as the "Dreadnought" type. In this connection I notice that the right hon. Gentleman yesterday referred to the "Lord Nelson" and the "Agamemnon" as if they ought to be included in the list of "Dreadnoughts." I feel inclined to enter a *caveat* in that connection, and whilst I do not wish to go into details of construction which must necessarily be kept confidential, it is self-evident that a ship which has three knots less speed and which has only four 12-inch guns as compared with ten, can hardly be considered to be of the same class as the "Dreadnought." But, if it is any satisfaction to the right hon. Gentleman, I will admit that as regards the ships of what he called yesterday the pre-"Dreadnought" era, we have a sufficient superiority to guarantee to us a two-Power standard. That fact is due to the exertions of past Governments, not only Conservative but Liberal, and notably to Lord Spencer. But I am not sure that it will apply to the smaller types of ships, to the smaller cruisers and destroyers. As regards the new capital type of ship, the "Dreadnought" type, while our superiority over any two Powers may exist at the present moment it is being imminently threatened, and the Government are apparently taking no adequate steps to meet the challenge. The right hon. Gentleman, yesterday, in the course of his remarks gave us some very interesting figures, particularly interesting to me because they absolutely disprove the figures given by the hon. Member for Falkirk and his friends in a communication to the Press on the subject of the relative standing of ourselves and foreign Powers in 1910. The right hon. Gentleman told us that at the end of 1910 we should have seven "Dreadnoughts" and three "Invincibles," and that Germany would have seven "Dreadnoughts" and three "Invincibles." I may add that Germany is increasing her "Dreadnoughts" and "Invincibles" at the rate of four per annum. France will have two "Dreadnoughts" and the United States six, and in addition six ships of the "Connecticut" type, which are quite equal in armament and in most other respects to the "Lord Nelson." That shows that even on the Admiralty figures we shall fall greatly below the two-Power standard in 1910 and, indeed, that we shall be only just equal to one Power, that Power being Germany. Let us go a little further, because in these matters of shipbuilding one is obliged to look far ahead. It is no good telling us what is sufficient for the present year. We have to look further ahead than that. For the purposes of comparison I will take the year 1918 in which the present German Navy Bill reaches maturity. In that year we find that if the present programme is carried out Germany will have twenty-three "Dreadnoughts" and thirteen "Invincibles"—a total of thirty-six. Against that we have at present seven "Dreadnoughts" and three "Invincibles." That is ten. Therefore in the period from 1908 to 1916, for a battleship takes two years to build, we shall have to lay down twenty-six "Dreadnoughts" in order to equal Germany when her Navy Bill matures, and surely we cannot be content with that. We must have at least a one and a-half times superiority if we are going to maintain anything approaching a two-Power standard, which will necessitate our having by 1918 fifty-four ships of this class. We have ten already, so that we shall have to commence at least forty-four ships of the "Dreadnought" or "Invincible" class between now and the year 1916, which gives an average of at least five a year, and yet the only provision the Government is making in this first year is two. I think these considerations give us some cause for thought. As far as one can see it is absolutely essential that if the Government are going to translate their somewhat hesitating professions of yesterday into action they must lay down at least five "Dreadnoughts" next year. But anyone who has any knowledge of the shipbuilding trade must object to such sudden fluctuations as are necessitated by your proposal to lay down two this year and five next year. This must disorganise not only dockyards but all the shipbuilding industry. If you are going to do this kind of work economically and efficiently you must provide for some sort of continuous and steady programme such as is provided, for instance, in the Cawdor Memorandum. If the principle laid down in the Cawdor Memorandum of laying down four armoured ships each year had been carried out this fluctuation need never have occurred. The Admiralty is not only going to disorganise the shipbuilding industry but the armour plate industry, the armament industry which provides ordnance and mountings and so forth, a course which I think in the interests of all ought to be avoided if possible. As regards armoured cruisers of the pre-"Invincible" type I believe we have ample provision, but we are short of small cruisers and of torpedo boat destroyers. The Government recognise this by proposing six small cruisers and sixteen torpedo boat destroyers; but here again they provide the programme, but they do not provide the money. The question of destroyers particularly is exceedingly serious. The destroyer has a very short life. It is laid down in Germany as twelve years and we lay it down as eleven or less, because I find in the Navy Estimates, in the table of depreciation, that we write off 9 per cent. for eleven years of the value of destroyers. The right hon. Gentleman gives us certain figures about the number of German detroyers that are in commission as compared with British destroyers, but no figures as regards the number of German destroyers that are in existence as compared with British destroyers. If my figures are right the Germans have eighty-four destroyers of eleven years or under built and twelve building, compared with our sixty-six built, thirteen building, and sixteen projected. The Germans thus have ninety-six to our ninety-five. That is not maintaining the two-Power standard in that exceedingly important class of ship. The Germans have in fact a numerical superiority of efficient vessels, and are increasing their flotilla regularly at the rate of twelve per annum. The right hon. Gentleman gave us to understand that the German boats are inferior to ours. No doubt some of the earlier types are inferior to our later types, but the later German types, of which twenty-five are already in existence, have unusually high speed and sea-going qualities and are armed more heavily than the great bulk of our destroyers, with the twenty-three-pounder gun as compared with our twelve-pounder. We are undoubtedly paying the penalty of being pioneers in this matter of torpedo boat destroyers. We first introduced them, and half our boats, unfortunately, that were laid down a long time ago, are obsolete or worn out, and that fact is clearly pointed out by Lord Tweedmouth in his explanatory statement. He tells us that a number of these boats are in such a condition that it is a great question whether it is worth repairing them. We know indeed they are not worth repairing. The enormous expenditure caused by the breakdown of destroyers in the recent manœuvres is not due to bad seamanship, but to the fact that the boats are worn out and are not fit to go on with their work. The mistake we made was not replacing them in time. The question of replacement has been left too long. As a result there is a gap, and now the Government are forced to make frantic efforts to recover the ground lost. They have put down sixteen boats this year, but again they have not provided the money. What is the good of announcing a programme if they do not provide the money necessary to carry it out? This question of replacing our destroyers is vital and urgent, and it must be pushed on with. I believe the Government will find themselves forced into a position where they will have to introduce a Supplementary Estimate to deal with this matter before the end of the present session. Now I come to the question of docks and works to which the right hon. Gentleman has referred. This is of the utmost importance, because it is here that we find one of the gravest defects in the Government's naval policy. What is the situation? We are building this huge fleet of "Dreadnoughts" which, by the year 1918, must consist of fifty or more of these monster battleships, and the Government are taking no steps to provide the necessary docks to keep these ships in fighting condition. It should be remembered that a dock takes three times as long to build as a battleship, and the Government are only now proposing, after shilly-shallying for years over this question, to construct only one new dock at Rosyth and they are going about even that in a leisurely and half-hearted manner. It is a matter of immediate urgency. The very minimum the Government ought to do is to build not one but two docks at Rosyth and add two more docks at Chatham or somewhere in that vicinity to deal with the needs of the Fleet operating in the North Sea. At present the nearest available docks for these big ships is Devonport. At Portsmouth there is one dock capable of accommodating a "Dreadnought," but it is almost impracticable to use it at present or until the new dock is finished seven years hence. In the meantime the Germans are building eight docks of this class in the North Sea, but all those docks and works and the widening of the Kiel Canal are not charged to the Navy Estimates but to the Ministry of the Interior. The Secretary to the Admiralty has been taking great credit to the Government for abolishing the loan system, although they have not really abolished it because they are going on building works under loan. I am not defending the loan system, but even if it was a bad system at any rate we got the work done and we got the docks and harbours, whilst under the present system adopted by the Government we get nothing at all. I think I have said enough to show that the position is serious, and that the need for these docks is very urgent. With regard to the stores it is very difficult for us to believe that the effect of the redistribution of the Fleet and the scrapping of certain ships produced a surplus of stores to the extent of £3,500,000. I am not prepared to accept the statement that the true surplus was so large, and I hope the right hon. Gentleman will give us a definite assurance that the standard of reserve of stores has not been reduced under the present Administration. I find that during the last three years of the late Government the average annual outlay upon new stores was £3,700,000 and the annual issue of stores to the Fleet, £3,600,000. During the three sets of Navy Estimates for which the present Government is responsible the average expenditure for new naval stores is £2,620,000 and the annual issue £2,600,000 which shows a drop of £1,000,000 per annum in the issue of stores to ships. And yet we are told that the ships are more at sea, and that there is more gunnery practice. If that is so, how are we to explain the reduced annual expenditure of over a million sterling on stores. Do the ships now carry less stores? Then with regard to guns, ammunition and torpedoes I find there has been an enormous reduction not only last year but for the coming year, amounting as compared with the last year of the late Government to 37¾ per cent. in expenditure on guns, 40 per cent. in ammunition, and 47 per cent. in torpedoes. The right hon. Gentleman told us that the torpedo was a horrible instrument and he regarded even its appearance with horror. But whilst his humanitarian and aesthetic objections to the torpedo may do credit to his heart, they hardly justify him in reducing the Vote for torpedoes by 47 per cent. What can it possibly mean? The Admiralty is boasting that the number of ships in commission is larger and the men are getting more gun practice, and yet the amount of ammunition required is less. This can only mean one thing, that our reserve of warlike stores must have been depleted. If that is so, for without an adequate reserve it is almost impossible to bring a war to a successful conclusion, the action of the Government is not only disastrous but almost criminal. With regard to the Home Fleet I have taken considerable trouble lately personally to investigate the truth of the statements made about it, and allow me here to express my thanks to the First Lord of the Admiralty for having given me facilities for doing so. As a result I have come to the conclusion that the Admiralty has only itself to blame for most of the hostile criticism which has been directed against the Home Fleet. If the Admiralty had been content to call this Fleet the First Reserve, which it is, instead of the First Line instantly ready for war, which it is not, then the controversy I have alluded to need never have arisen. No one denies that the Home Fleet is an immense improvement over the old Reserve, but it is not a Fleet of full fighting efficiency, it is not instantly ready for war, and it is no use pretending that it is. In regard to the *matériel* of the Fleet, what is the situation? The Home Fleet, exclusive of the Nore Division, consists largely of ships sent home from the sea-going Fleets because they are in need of overhauling, and whilst undergoing that process they are shown as constituting a portion of the Home Fleet. As soon as they resume their fighting efficiency these ships are drafted back to the sea-going Fleets, and their places are taken by other lame ducks. As regards *personnel*, no ships with nucleus crews can pretend to be fully efficient, and any Fleet which is always changing its compositions and its commanders must necessarily be unfitted for instant service. A good deal has been made of the recent "test mobilisations," but they only show that there is a sufficient number of men kept in barracks to fill up these nucleus crews to the full complement. This is satisfactory to know, but it does not constitute instant readiness for war. The Nore Division is invariably described as being complete in all respects and instantly ready for war. It has, in fact, been described as being the *squadron d'elite* of the Fleet. It consists of six first-class battleships, six first-class armoured cruisers, five smaller cruisers, and forty-eight destroyers, and they are represented as all being ready for immediate service. The flagship of this this Fleet is the "Dreadnought," and it has been the flagship since March, 1907, but it only appeared at the Nore for the first time about three weeks ago. Admiral Sir Francis Bridgeman was appointed Commander-in-Chief on 5th March, 1907, of this Fleet with the "Dreadnought" as his flagship, but in the intervening period he has had to hoist his flag on eight different ships, of all classes down to and including a destroyer. Often no less than three battleships at a time have been in the dockyard and during that time those ships have not been replaced. I was down at the Nore last Thursday, and I found that out of the six battleships three were in dockyard hands at Chatham. Special efforts have been made for some time to bring the Nore Division up to a state of good repair in order to take part in the cruise which is to commence on 9th March. That cruise, no doubt, will commence on that date. But of the six battleships three—the "Dreadnought," the "Bulwark" and the "Majestic"—will alone be ready to start, and a fourth —the "Cæsar,"—is to be brought round from Devonport, to raise the strength to four. The other three battleships of the Nore Division will be left behind in Chatham Dockyard. I think these facts may be explainable on the basis of the Home Fleet's being a reserve fleet, but they are not explainable on the ground that the Nore Fleet is a "spear point" and the quintessence of readiness for war. It would be better if the Admiralty were to withdraw some of their flamboyant pretensions with regard to the Nore Fleet. They would then disclose the true state of affairs, which would be not discreditable to the Admiralty, and would be in every way creditable to the officers and men concerned. I do not propose to enter into any more details. As to whether the total provision in the coming year's Estimates is enough to preserve the two-Power standard, and consequently the safety of this country, I know that the right hon. Gentleman last night read a document which he had been authorised by the Admiralty to read, and which stated that the proposed shipbuilding programme would maintain that standard. Possibly it may, so far as the coming year is concerned, because the great efforts which foreign Powers are making cannot produce fleets in commission before two years hence. But there is no indication in the Estimates that the Government is looking ahead, or that the two-Power standard will be maintained in ships of the new type when the foreign programmes reach what I may call their first stage of maturity at the end of 1910. Then we shall only just equal Germany — a serious and alarming admission—and our alarm is not allayed by the extraordinary performance of the Government last night. The Chancellor of the Exchequer gave some sort of verbal assurance that the two-Power standard would be maintained, but he flatly refused to have that assurance recorded on the journals of the House. The right hon. Gentleman is willing to do business on the nod-and-wink principle, but he has a lawyer-like horror of committing himself to writing. The only solid fact we have to go upon is that the Liberal Party flatly and vehemently refused to give a formal endorsement to the half hearted professions of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and in so doing repudiated the two-Power standard. That fact, coupled with these disastrous cheese-parings made at the last moment in response to political pressure——

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Oh!

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: Does the right hon. Gentleman deny that?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Where are the cheeseparings?

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: I put a direct question to the right hon. Gentleman. Does he deny that the Navy Estimates have been cut down since the hon. Member for Falkirk put his Amendment to the Address on the Paper? [Mr. Edmund Robertson made no response]. He does not deny it because he knows that he cannot deny it. That fact alone sufficiently proves that the present Government, whatever their merits or demerits in other directions, are not trustworthy guardians of the national defences.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) thought that a few remarks ought to be addressed to the House on this occasion as to the naval programme by those who had given some attention to the subject and who had no party feeling of one kind or the other with reference to it. He would confine his remarks to topics which were germane to this debate—topics which they were not likely to deal with so efficiently when they were in Committee of Supply. There was an obvious difficulty in the way of those who had always supported the Board of Admiralty in the large naval programme which was thought necessary for the safety of the country, and who at the same time believed that a great economy should be made on the other fighting service of the State. It was impossible on the Navy Estimates to be in order in discussing these economies. They could only be raised on the Army Estimates to which they were germane. Neither had he the smallest reason to be afraid of the present naval condition of the country. It was as satisfactory now as when they declared it to be fully satisfactory last year. Sir George Sydenham Clarke, the Secretary of the Defence Committee of the Cabinet, although he showed in his latest writings that he differed wholly from the present Board of Admiralty on many points—with respect to the "all-big" policy; to the "Invincible" cruiser class, and although he was not in favour of the general cruiser programme, yet on the main point—the safety of the country and the present sufficiency of the Fleet—nothing could exceed the absolutely satisfactory character of the declaration which he had made. It was dated last July and published in September after he left the Secretaryship of the Committee of Defence to assume the Governorship of Bombay. The statement referred to the position of the Fleet in the summer of last year. Sir George Sydenham Clarke also evidently thought the small shipbuilding programme of the present year sufficient. It had already been stated that not more than two big ships would be laid down. The hon. Member for King's Lynn had, he thought, quoted Sir George on the other side, but he was convinced that what he wrote in July represented the view which he held when he left the Committee.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis) said he quoted Sir George Sydenham Clarke on some other questions altogether, namely, the distribution of the Fleet and the new training scheme.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said the efficiency scheme was a wholly different matter, in which he was inclined to agree with his hon. and gallant friend. In regard to the distribution of the Fleet his hon. friend suggested that Sir George Sydenham Clarke thought that there was increased danger of the invasion of the country. That, he thought, Sir George Sydenham Clarke would be prepared to deny. He himself had not the slightest fear of our present naval position—no increased fear as compared with last year. The German programme had been increased and certain other programmes had been retarded, and it was too early to begin to talk of safety or danger in connection with our shipbuilding programme. The Government committed themselves last year to the two-to-one standard against Germany, and they committed themselves last night to the two-Power standard. The two-Power standard was probably not so high as the two-to-one standard against Germany. The American Fleet was supposed to be superior to the German, but they were not building according to their programme of last year. Our programme in the long run, as his hon. friend opposite had said, must involve gigantic expenditure if executed. He did not in the least blame the Government for going slow. He thought there were good international reasons for going slow—as slow as was consistent with safety. But they must look ahead as to their financial obligations, because next year was sure to heavier in any case, and it might be very heavy indeed. There was a strong argument in favour of the continuity of orders, but the case in that matter was not quite so strong as had been put to the House for the reason that there were at present being built in this country for a foreign nation the two biggest ships in the world. The question of the financial responsibility of next year, and the year after, affected very closely the programme for dock accommodation. The shipbuilding programme they could afford to discuss on the shipbuilding Vote, so far as it was necessary to discuss it, but the docks problem ought to be raised on this occasion. There was certainly no ground for party recrimination with regard to docks. The necessity for a large establishment in a safer place than the Channel had been raised for many years, and that was fully recognised when Rosyth was brought before them. And the late Government had promised to spend money at Rosyth. Both parties had shirked the expenditure which both declared "necessary." It had to be recognised that the Channel would not be safe for big ships in a great war. He ventured last year to suggest that they should look forward to the time when a war might occur—he was no believer in war; he did not think it was in the least probable—and the use of mines in the Channel might be made to such an extent that the Channel would become too dangerous for any admiral to take his fleet into it if he could help it. The decision of the late Hague Conference had greatly increased the natural alarm on that head. Before the last Hague Conference the use of these mines was looked upon as abominable. It fell under the general provisions of the first Hague Convention in two places, that all was not allowable in war. The first Hague Conference had most distinctly discountenanced the employment of these awful engines of war, but no agreement had been arrived at. It was last year stated by the Admiralty that they hoped that an agreement would be arrived at forbidding the use of mines. That agreement was proposed and was fully discussed. We had not yet the protocols, but we knew what was the result. The result was, after full discussion by the civilised Powers of Europe, that France and Germany joined in declaring that nothing would induce them to limit the use of mines in war; and that other Powers, Japan leading, consented to forbid them, although many of them did not count. Japan, after the matter had been discussed and decided, said: "As you do not forbid them, we will use them for all they are worth." France and Germany had since greatly increased their mining and technical departments for the preparation and laying down of mines. After full discussion by the principal Powers which could under any circumstances engage in a European naval war, it had been decided that it was perfectly legal, as they put it, to use floating mines to any conceivable extent. There was a little prohibition in regard to mines which had drifted from their moorings in territorial waters; but prohibition of the use of floating mines on the high seas was absolutely vetoed. France and Germany had protested against any limitation of their use whatever. Could any one believe that it would be safe to trust a fleet in the Channel to make for Plymouth, Portsmouth, Dover or even Chatham on all of which so much money had been spent? One small unarmed steamer could carry and start 30,000 floating mines. No one who knew the tides, say, between Bembridge and the Needles, would assert that with twenty or thirty thousand mines floating up and down with the tide it would be possible to use such ports. It was admitted that we should have an important naval base in the future somewhere in the north to take their place. That would involve a very serious—an enormous expense. The present Estimates contemplated the creation of one dock only, which, in the long run, was hardly likely to be sufficient. He was not blaming the policy of the late and the present Governments in the least. It was an inevitable policy, and the money to carry it out had to be spent. The Government on the previous night stated that they had finally decided to go on with Rosyth. So did the late Government at one time, but they afterwards dropped proceeding with it. But the national sense of what was necessary would insist on going on with the works at Rosyth, and it would cost a great deal of money. For that they must prepare in advance. His hon. friends behind him looked upon him with great suspicion in regard to this matter; but he contended that if the Navy Estimates were greatly diminished, such was the belief of the country that our safety lay first in the Navy, that they would certainly have to put these Estimates up again by a great deal more than they were able to knock off now. The right hon. Member for Dover had said the previous night, that the late Unionist Government had made provision for the accommodation of our large new ships, but that the works at Rosyth were now almost derelict. His point was that they had been left derelict by everybody. Everybody knew that national provision for these large new ships must be made, but unfortunately it was a case of terrible national expense. It was a rather technical argument, but in all recent discussions immense importance had been attached to the element of dock accommodation in connection with speed. It was universally admitted that the "all-big" policy giving great speed to battleships was an advantage to Powers if they had accessible docks for their big ships; they were white elephants if there was no base for them. That led necessarily to the creation of those great docks and basins. The late Government started a policy of increased docks for big ships at Portsmouth. But he contended that that was not a safe policy. It would be impossible to remove large supplies from the Stores Department at Devonport and Portsmouth. Such ports were useful bases for the Fleet in peace but there must be a secure war base. These were matters of universal admission. He did not think that anyone would contest the statement he had made about the present condition of the question regarding floating mines as affecting this whole programme. He was not an alarmist about war. He had told the House year after year that our present naval position was one of perfect safety, of great, of overwhelming strength. His right hon. friend would admit that he had been a very steady supporter of the policy of the Admiralty, even if he did not always approve of their methods. By their own confession and admissions, honestly and straightforwardly, they were forcing the country to consider in advance an enormous provision of money in a few years' time. Whether shipbuilding would be necessary next year could not be said, because that depended on other programmes which might or might not be executed. However, the expenditure next year must in any case be great, and that on Rosyth would be heavy when it did come; it was declared to be a work of necessity and could hardly be put off without a word being said about it on this occasion.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): I am bound to associate myself with the right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken. I think that what the right hon. Gentleman has said cannot be too strongly impressed on the House and on the country. I accept the statement of the Secretary to the Admiralty that we are maintaining the two-Power standard, which is recognised as the standard that, for our naval and national safety, we must maintain. But the serious aspect of the case is not the position in which we stand to-day, but the position in which we shall stand within a few years unless we make large new efforts to overtake or to equalise the building policy of other Powers. The Admiralty by their programme of this year, have, I think, made practical admission that there is a great deal of force in some of the criticisms addressed to them last year, when it was attempted to impress on them the need for a small cruiser programme. The right hon. Baronet, whose knowledge of this question I recognise, says that on that point he is a heretic. At least a heretic in the sense that he does not believe in that necessity; but I think he is a heretic in the sense that a great body of expert naval opinion is against him.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: A great body of public opinion.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I think that naval opinion, and the opinion of the Admiralty itself, is against him—that a programme of small cruisers is not merely necessary at the present time, but is overdue and ought to have been begun before this. If that be true, whatever be, in practice, the amount of money you take for ships laid down, where ships are overdue you ought to take the most money that you can spend. Except in the case of a single ship which the Admiralty are going to construct at Plymouth, the only steps taken towards the construction of the five overdue small cruisers has been the placing of orders, but no work will be done upon them this year. And let me say that once this necessity for these small cruisers is granted, it is not met by the present programme. If you have a very heavy shipbuilding programme in hand and you see an opportunity of lessening the programme in the future, then delays may be excusable and justifiable; but when everything points to a heavier programme in the future, I say it is wrong to delay the progress, as the present Estimates bear witness, of vessels which the Admiralty consider to be a first necessity. What I have said of cruisers applies equally to destroyers. We have, as has been already pointed out by my hon. friend, on the admission of the Admiralty a great number of old and obsolete destroyers, very costly in repair and not economical to maintain, and I am quite certain that the Secretary to the Admiralty would not contradict me if I said that if we had occasion to mobilise the whole of these old destroyers and send them to sea, we could only get them there with the expenditure of a very considerable amount of money on repairs, and we could not keep them there by any amount of expenditure whatever. They are so old that, as my hon. friend said, they are practically worn out, and a week or so cruising at sea would send them back unfit to go to sea again without the most extensive refit, and perhaps not possible of repair at all. Again, I say in the case of the destroyers, the sixteen which are put on order this year and for which we have again only a token sum to be provided do not exhaust the programme. It is not as if they completed it and we could then hold our hands as to destroyers, because you will have to build a similar number next year to take the place of other aged or ageing boats, and next year and the year after and the year after that you will have to have again an item for new cruisers and destroyers to be laid down in order, not to increase the strength of our fleet, but to replace vessels which are passing into disuse. There can be no likelihood in the next two years of the Admiralty doing their duty in regard to the Vote for new construction in this respect. But what about the Vote for new construction on the first line or capital ships. On the statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty itself, if a certain acceleration which is possible and which is not only possible but certain, takes place in foreign building we stand at the end of 1910, according to his calculations, exactly equal to France and Germany. I take the right hon. Gentleman's own calculations, but let me say to prevent misconception that I do not accept his calculations, for the reason that he included in them the "Lord Nelson" and others which are not vessels of the same type. The Civil Lord may think so, but he will not find any naval officer who will say that they are.

*THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. LAMBERT, Devonshire, South Molton): I do not say that they are of the same type, but many experienced naval officers value these ships very highly.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Does the First Sea Lord advise him in that respect? Well, I may take it that he does not, and he is good enough authority for me. I, therefore, do not accept the calculation which the Secretary for the Admiralty made as being accurate, but I take his calculation which showed us that in 1910 we should only have a bare equality, including the "Lord Nelson" type among those ships of the capital type with France and Germany. But a bare equality is not the two-Power standard, and France and Germany have not the two greatest navies, and on the right hon. Gentleman's own showing, by the end of the year 1910 we shall have failed to have maintained the two-Power standard, and if we go a step further to 1911, we shall be very much worse off. It is therefore very clear that in addition to a fresh programme of cruisers and destroyers you must have next year a very large programme of capital ships—four or five of these capital ships. I do not say that it is necessary to lay these ships down now for the sake of maintaining a two-Power standard any more than the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, but what I do say is that you are piling up all these liabilities for future years, you are throwing forward to the future a burden which will place an intolerable strain upon your finances or upon the finances of those who then occupy that Bench. And what is the moment at which you are doing this? I could understand your taking full advantage of every chance of postponement if your present Vote for new construction was at a very high level, but we have the First Lord of the Admiralty boasting in this Paper that the Vote for new construction this year is the lowest that has been taken for any of the past ten years; that is to say, that at the time when we are within close touch of a call for extraordinary exertions you reduce the new construction Vote to the lowest point that has ever been known. That is reckless finance of the worst kind. It is an evasion of your obligations, and it is placing upon the taxpayers of next year, and above all of the year after, burdens which you are attempting to conceal from them at the present time, but which it is inevitable that you or your successors will have to demand. Before I leave the construction, let me say that I have attempted to make some calculation as to what this burden might amount to. I admit fully the extreme difficulty of anyone without official information to help him forming any sort of calculation which is worthy to put before the House on this subject, but according to the best calculation which I can make the present programme would involve for next year a new construction Vote of, say, £8,000,000 without the addition of a single shilling for a single fresh ship being laid down, whereas the total construction voted this year is only £7,500,000. I think that is a sufficiently serious prospect. But now look at other things. There is Rosyth. I do not, if I may be permitted to make this protest, accept for the Government of which I was a Member, and for myself and my colleagues the censure that the right hon. Baronet in his desire to adopt a perfectly impartial attitude passed upon us.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I did not censure you.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: We meant to go on with Rosyth. We meant to provide there a dockyard laid out and planned and capable of extension just as the present Government intend to do, and to avoid the waste in which we have been involved in the case of old establishments by their being laid out upon a small system, and at a time when development could not be foreseen, and we took the steps and the only steps that were in our power at that time to do so. We bought the land; we no sooner got the land than we sent an engineer down to make his plans and we put a Vote in the Estimates for Rosyth, which the present Government cut out when they came into power, and which they now tardily restore.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: The Cawdor Memorandum and other documents showed that the pressure came from the Board of Admiralty not to go forward to Rosyth.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The right hon. Baronet is mistaken. I speak as having been the Chancellor of the Exchequer at the time, and unless my memory entirely misleads me we had sanctioned a scheme, not a full scheme, but a portion of the original scheme at that time, which was not to go under a loan, but on the Votes, and was to be pressed forward as rapidly as possible. Since that time two years have passed, and we are now looking forward to another year. After three years it is not possible to admit that if the Admiralty want to to make the utmost progress possible with this work they cannot spend more than £30,000 on account of £3,250,000 in the present year. That is all that is provided in these Estimates on account of Rosyth. When once you begin works of this kind it is the very worst economy to dawdle about them. That may enable you to save on the Estimates of a particular year, but it involves your carrying on your capital expenditure for an indefinite time. Once you have got the land and your plans the only economical plan is to press the work on as quickly as possible so that you may derive the advantage of the work at the earliest possible time. Here I come to a question. It is said in the First Lord's statement that the Rosyth works will take ten years to finish. I am well aware that to put the coping-stone and finishing touches on these works is a very lengthy matter, but what I want to know is when will these works, the dock and the basin, reach a point at which they can be used if we have occasion to use them? I take as an illustration of my meaning Portland Harbour. Portland Harbour was available for defence against torpedo attack for which it was intended long before the work was actually completed. I can understand that work will be going on in connection with Rosyth long after the dock and basin and so on have reached a point at which they can be used if we want to use them. In the meantime against this huge liability of £3,250,000 only £30,000 is provided in the present Estimate. How much shall we want next year? £330,000 at the very least and very likely £500,000. I call this present figure an illusory one. Then I notice another big work mentioned, the new lock at Portsmouth connected with the dock. £65,000 is taken on account of a cost of little under £1,000,000. What shall we require next year—I suppose £200,000. These are the increased liabilities with which the House is now face to face for next year's Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman told us yesterday that the automatic increases amounted to £745,000; that there was a transfer from loan account to Votes this year of £390,000; and that there would be a sum of £870,000 to be so provided out of the Votes this year. Rosyth will require £300,000 more; Portsmouth lock, £200,000 and new constructions must mean another £650,000 altogether. If I am in any way near right, you have already got a sum of £2,400,000 additional expenditure which will appear in the Estimates next year, and which will be more than repeated in the Estimates of the year after. Yet this is the year which you have chosen to reduce the Vote for new construction to the lowest figure at which it has stood for ten years, and at the same time you reduce the provision for new works on Vote 10 by nearly £500,000. Is that prudent and sound finance? The liabilities which you will have to incur in order to carry out your responsibilities next year and the year after are so great that I am driven to think that the Government either do not mean to carry them out when the time comes, or they hope to evade them somehow, or else they intend to be somewhere else when the bill is presented. This is a system of deferred payments; I am not sure whether it is not a system of living on post-obits. I think we have a right to protest against these enormous works being knowingly thrown on future years, and presently to be whittled or scraped away in order to serve the passing financial needs of the Government, and enable them to present this year a more favourable Budget than they have any real right to lay before the country. The Estimates which we have before us this year in no sense represent the average burden which the Naval Estimates will inflict upon the country during the next two or three years. That is a burden which must in any case very largely increase within the next two years, and the present is a singularly inopportune moment for cutting down your Vote. The right hon. Gentleman made a statement yesterday which took me by surprise. He said that the late Government had reduced the standard of reserve of stores at home. Perhaps he will tell us in what respect. I have consulted with my hon. friend who was at the Admiralty and he agrees with me that there must be some mistake, and I should like to know exactly to what the right hon. Gentleman refers. I want him, if he will, to turn his attention to the value of the stock of naval stores given on page 245 of the Estimates. We are told in the First Lord's statement that owing to the concentration of the Fleets, and to the closing of certain naval stations abroad, the Admiralty have had a great stock of surplus stores on which they have been living during the past few years. And the extent to which they have been using the stores is given in the First Lord's statement. Why does that not appear on page 245 of the Naval Estimates? I see that the value for 1st April, 1907, was £4,755,000 in round figures; and the value of the stock on 31st March, 1908, was £4,305,000 a reduction of £450,000. But the First Lord tells us that the Government had lived upon stores to the extent of £1,250,000 in that year. Why does not this statement show £1,250,000; why does it show only a reduction of £450,000? The estimated value of the stock on 31st March, 1909, as given in this statement, only shows a reduction of £160,000. The First Lord's statement shows that the Admiralty are going to withdraw stores to the extent of £500,000. What is the explanation of this discrepancy? There must be some. The only explanation which occurs now is the statement given on page 245 of the Naval Estimates, but when you come to inquire into the actual stocks in hand in some way it is totally misleading, and does not show what it purports to show. They are presented in perfect good faith, but when we come to a case of this kind, I am glad to have an opportunity of drawing the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to it, and of asking him for an explanation.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover): I think we should have some fuller statement from the Government than has been offered to the House, either in the speech made by the Secretary to the Admiralty yesterday, or in what he calls his subsidiary remarks this afternoon. I have to thank him for his courtesy in giving some information in reply to a question which I put before him yesterday. But I did more than put a question. My right hon. friend who has just sat down returned to the same point and put it very forcibly before the House. We are not satisfied with the provision of smaller craft made by the Government, and we are not satisfied with their determination not to proceed immediately with the construction of smaller craft. It is altogether inadequate to the present situation that the right hon. Gentleman should say that we are spending about a tenth of the total cost of construction this year, and that this is the usual figure. We are debating these Estimates under unusual circumstances. We are debating Estimates which have attracted a good deal of attention in many foreign countries. After all, we cannot ignore certain facts which preceded the introduction of these Estimates. There was the diplomatic failure of the Government at the Hague last year. I do not know whether there is any connection between cause and effect, but that failure has brought about what a foreign newspaper describes as a bold attempt on the part of our competitors to wrest from us the supremacy of the seas. It has been a failure because of the struggle behind the Ministerial scenes, between those who think that we may make reductions and those who hold other opinions. These Estimates are hailed as a moral triumph by the party described as "the anti-armament party," an dthis afternoon the representative of the Government had to admit by his silence that the Estimates had been modified. That being so, we are entitled to have some fuller statement on this question of smaller craft than we had yesterday afternoon. This is no party attack we are making. I really appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to disabuse his mind altogether of the idea that when we ask for information on matters of public curiosity, we are covertly assisting or attempting an attack upon the Board of which he is so loyal a member. We are doing nothing of the kind. We look to him and only to him, not merely as a Member of the Admiralty Board, but as the proper and responsible Minister whose duty it is, through this House, to give information in respect of questions that we ask. It is our duty to ask those questions and press for information upon points which excite curiosity in the public, because curiosity soon changes into suspicion and suspicion into alarm. There is this curiosity which has changed to suspicion, verging upon alarm, in connection with the making of an adequate and timely provision of smaller craft. Our argument with respect to that has really been on all fours with the argument addressed to the House by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean upon the other question of the provision of docks. He said that the "all-big" policy leads to the necessity for the provision of docks in good time. We say that the "all-big" policy leads to the necessity of providing a greater number of smaller craft in time. By the "all-big" policy is meant of course having vessels of a large type like the "Dreadnought," but to such vessels the smaller craft are what the cavalry are to the Army, and act as scouts. As we are committed to that policy of building great vessels, and as other countries are competing with us in that policy, it is clear that we must make adequate provision of smaller craft up to the new standard rendered necessary by the "all-big" policy. I am not, in saying that, making any attack on the Board of Admiralty. The right hon. Gentleman, dealing with this very point last year, accepted, and we all accept, absolute responsibility for the great change made in 1904–1905, as regards the "all-big" policy. But my right hon. friend pointed out that a great change of that character carries with it collateral necessities, and the great point is whether the collateral necessities are being met as they arise and as they are seen. We now know that a larger number of smaller craft must be provided if ships of the "Dreadnought" type are to discharge their functions in safety. Are they being built in adequate numbers? I think not. Take first the cruisers. That falls under two heads, one of minor importance and one of greater importance. The one of minor importance is that we should be able to show our flag abroad. Are these six cruisers of the "Boadicea" type to show our flag abroad, or are they being built to be an advance guard of the fleets in which we have such large and costly vessels? Or, again, are they being built for both purposes? If they are being built for both, is not the number totally inadequate? Upon that point I think we are entitled to some fuller information. I do not pretend to exclusive information of any kind or character. In common with those for whom we speak, those members of the public whose curiosity and suspicion have been aroused, we can only look to some official or standard books. If we take information of the kind which is contained in the Dilke Return, or the Navy List, there would seem to be thirteen cruisers with the Fleet, and twenty-four in the Reserve. Is that enough when you have adopted the "all-big" policy, and when you are committed next year to a programme of "Dreadnoughts" in comparison with which your present programme sinks into insignificance? If you have not the cruisers necessary for the present programme already, you have not cruisers necessary for the future programme. If the future programme is going to entail great augmentation, increasing from year to year, is it not sound finance now to proceed with the part of the work which is necessary and complementary to the whole of the work in order to distribute the financial burden more evenly over the period of years? I pass from the cruiser part of the subject to the more particular point upon which the right hon. Gentleman gave me some information this afternoon. Last year he was pressed by the Leader of the Opposition to give the relative distribution of destroyers in home waters appertaining to the German fleet and to our own. This afternoon—and I thank him for it—he gave us some information upon that point. I am not for a moment suggesting that the information which he gave was derived from a particular date which suited one view or another of this matter. It is far too important a question to be bandied about as a subject of political controversy. I want to have as much information as the right hon. Gentleman thinks can be given without injury to the public service, and to all that information we are entitled. I understand from the right hon. Gentleman that if we compare our torpedo destroyers with the German torpedo destroyers and divisional torpedo boats at the time when the German torpedo squadron was reinforced, we had in home waters 45 torpedo destroyers, and Germany had 33 of such boats or their equivalent. On the face of these figures I cannot admit that that proportion is an adequate or a satisfactory one. I do not want to go in detail into this matter, and in all that I say I beg the House to believe that I am not selecting any Power as one with whom we may in any probability come into conflict. We have to think of the defence of this country irrespective of these questions of world politics, but we have to recognise that the traditional policy of this country has changed. There has been Orientation, and we have now to look East. We have to recognise that the North Sea is a far wider sea than the British Channel. We have to recognise that the North Sea has not one, but two egresses from which such an attack might be delivered. We have to recognise in naval questions, as I think upon Army questions, that you want a real preponderance if you are to prevent absolutely an attack being launched from an egress. The watching of defiles, whether at sea or on shore, is the same, and no man in his senses, if he had the natural defences of the country to which he belonged in his care and keeping, would attempt to watch two egresses with a proportion of only 45 to 33. The fact that the North Sea is a good deal wider than the British Channel leads for another reason to the necessity for a greater provision of these boats on which the safety of your big battleships depends. It is farther to get there and back. We are sometimes assured that we shall be able to relieve torpedo destroyers by other vessels, and that they will not have to return to port. But who is going to risk the British Empire on the chance of an oil tank to supply fuel or a collier to supply coal to these vessels in time of war? When the country understands this it will demand that there shall be a sufficient number of boats to give the necessary relief if these defiles are to be adequately watched. The case I am laying before the House is that your "all-big" policy demands a large extension of the torpedo destroyer policy. In answer to that we are told that the Government are laying down sixteen torpedo destroyers and that they do not intend to spend a penny upon any one of them until the shipbuilding Vote has been taken in July.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The usual practice has been for many years to do that.

MR. WYNDHAM: Allow me to make my point clear. I am, I hope, temperately, protesting against the usual practice being followed under unusual circumstances. That is the whole of our case. This year is far more exceptional than the year which the right hon. Gentleman cited. You ought to proceed with the construction of these eyes of the fleet now if it is to be safe from the point of view of defence and if your finance is to be sound, because you will have to spend a great deal of money in future years. The figures which the right hon. Gentleman gave me by no means tally with some other figures drawn only from publications, and not based upon any secret intelligence, but which I cannot altogether dismiss from my mind as having some bearing upon this point.

*MR. BELLAIRS: May I ask whether the figures the right hon. Gentleman has been furnished with by the Admiralty, as I understand they refer to a question raised by me, include nine instructional destroyers, absolutely unfit for blockade, and the destroyers which were under repair? In that case he will find that I was right in saying that we had fewer destroyers ready in full commission in home waters at that date than the Germans.

MR. WYNDHAM: Perhaps the hon. Member will make that point in his own way. What I wish to lay before the House is not the result of any private documents, but conclusions deduced from the English "Navy List," Lord Brassey's well-known book, Janes's "Fighting Ships" and books of a similar type in Germany. They may be inaccurate, but the fact that the information is of an alarming character justifies us in pressing for fuller information on the point. Using only those sources of information which are open to anybody who chooses to study them, and if I am wrong nobody would be more happy to stand corrected than I shall be, I would take first merely the distribution of such boats in home waters. Without going into the question of the modernity of the boats, but taking British and German destroyers and divisional torpedo boats, the information goes to show that we might claim forty-eight with full crews and seventy with nucleus crews, or 118 altogether. Similarly turning to the German publication, I believe about three years ago, Germany had between ninety and 100 such boats in three flotillas, two always at sea and one on shore, but in the last three years they have brought that number up to 112 such boats in five flotillas. I am not touching the question of which are the most modern boats yet, but if there is anything in the arguments I have laid before the House, such a proportion as 118 to 112 is alarming and even dangerous and calls for immediate action. The circumstances are unusual and preclude the Government from following the usual practice of putting down 10 per cent. of the total cost and deferring any action until the late summer. We cannot only look to the number;

we must also take into account the type of such boats. Again basing myself only upon publications of the character I have described, I believe I am right in saying that we have of the most modern type thirty-four complete and thirteen building, or forty-seven in all; and Germany has eighteen completed and thirty building, or forty-eight in all. That is equality; whereas you want a superiority of at least two to one. If we go to boats of an older type we have still a great preponderance I readily agree, but that wanes rapidly as the years go by. Of ten-year old boats we have sixty-eight against their twenty-six, of old boats we have forty against three, and of obsolete boats we have none and they have forty—155 British against eighty-one German. But if in the most modern boats they have an equality we must push on with new construction. I would not again have addressed the House after what I said yesterday unless I knew there was curiosity, suspicion, and alarm upon this point, and it is the duty of the Government to give the House the fullest information. In asking for it we are not criticising the Government or the Board of Admiralty, but doing our duty and asking them to discharge theirs.

*MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) thought the House had some reason to be dissatisfied with the opening statement of the Secretary to the Admiralty. The administration of the Navy was one of the largest questions which the House of Commons could discuss, and it must to an outsider seem a curious thing that the Minister responsible for the Navy should consider that he had discharged his duty in the discussions of this matter by referring to two small matters only. He had dealt lightly with the doing away with coastguard stations and had also made some slight addition to his remarks of the previous day on the shipbuilding programme. No doubt many Members were glad to hear that the coastguard service was not going to be done away with, but probably the preponderance of feeling in the House was to the effect that there was a considerable redundancy in coastguard stations and that modern conditions had rendered a considerable number of them no longer useful. The telephone, for instance, made intercommunication much more easy than was formerly the case. The fact, too, that smuggling had practically disappeared and that there was very little probability of its ever becoming general again had undoubtedly rendered unnecessary a certain number of coastguard stations. On the other hand were life-saving appliances which were better worked by coastguards than civilians, and there was also the lifeboat service of which the coastguards so often formed so important a part. The work of coastguards in regard to life-saving operations, lifeboats, etc., made it desirable that there should still be a large number of stations left, but, on the other hand, he thought there were a certain number of them which were redundant. With reference to shipbuilding, all the Secretary to the Admiralty had said was that he would give an undertaking that nothing would be done until June or July. So far as Unionist Members were concerned, they would have been much better pleased if he had given an undertaking in exactly the opposite direction. Instead of waiting until July they would like to see the extremely small programme in the year's Estimates begun at once. Their complaint was that the Government, instead of hurrying on and providing that a fair share of the cost of the programme now before the House should be borne this year, were as much as possible deferring such provision to future years, when in consequence the Estimates would be inflated to an extent which nobody liked to contemplate. As to the general question, since they discussed naval matters a year ago a great deal had happened, and two things in particular, which made discussion easier. The Hague Conference had come and gone, and the Resolution of the hon. Member for Falkirk had also come and gone. Last year hon. Members were much handicapped by reason of the fact that the Government constantly reminded them that they were in negotiation with other countries on the subject of disarmament; and that it would be wrong to suggest an increase in our armaments in view of the fact that one of the principal objects of the Hague Conference which was then about to assemble was to do away with armaments as far as possible. The Opposition anticipated all along that very little would come out of the Hague Conference; their anticipations had unfortunately been realised, and we were in exactly the same position as before the Conference. The discussion of the hon. Member for Falkirk's Motion on the previous day had not been in any sense satisfactory; it was ambiguous, and there was not a clear issue before the House at any time. The result could not therefore be said to have been at all definite. But, at the same time, both the House and the country would have come to the conclusion that this Parliament was as determined as other Parliaments had been in the past that the armaments of the country, especially the naval armaments, should be kept at such a point that we should have a preponderance over every possible combination of enemies; in other words, that the two-Power standard should be maintained. That being so, he and his friends had expected that evidence of this determination would appear on the Estimates, but when they looked at that document very grave misgivings arose in their minds as to the manner in which the Government intended to maintain that superiority. At the present time we were in an undoubtedly secure position and had an aggregate of more than the two-Power standard. That was admitted but he and his friends did not admit that the Government were taking proper steps to ensure that that superiority would be kept up in the next few years. He was convinced that so soon as the country realised that we were getting behindhand in the matter the people would make it plain to their representatives in Parliament that they would stand no tampering with our naval position. The shipbuilding programme of Germany rendered it necessary that certain ships should be added to our Navy; and it seemed to him bad finance and bad business that as we had within the next few years to provide four or five big battleships per annum they were not going to begin building at once. They knew the type of ship they would have to build, because it was not probable that there would be any change of importance in the models of those big ships which would compensate them for waiting another year. Any modification that experience might show to be necessary would probably be in the matter of guns or internal arrangement and not in the hulls which ought therefore to be hurried on at once. It was a great waste of time and energy to defer building, for dockyards would be taxed when the crush came. As to the distribution and constitution of the three or four great fleets of which the Navy was made up, he had no serious criticisms to make except in regard to the Home Fleet and in the matter of cruisers. The Home Fleet should be the one always ready at a moment's notice to face a sudden outbreak of war, but in reality it was the least prepared for such a crisis. The Home Fleet this year consisted of six battleships stationed at the Nore. Perhaps the House was not aware that it was made up of three divisions—one at the Nore, one at Portsmouth, and the other at Plymouth. It seemed to him that that could not be considered a sound grouping of ships. He had always understood that the Home Fleet was the Fleet of all Fleets intended to be ready at a moment's notice to meet the first warlike action of the enemy. He could conceive that the Channel Fleet might be able to do so, but he could not conceive that the Home Fleet as at present constituted and commanded would be able to meet a sudden descent upon this country from German ports. The six ships in the Home Fleet were totally inadequate to meet a resolute attack from Germany, which he said without hesitation was the country against which those ships were directed. Before the Home Fleet could be in a position to do anything of the sort it had to collect its outlying divisions at Portsmouth and Plymouth, where the ships had only nucleus crews on board. He thought that when it was put to the test, the ships with the nucleus crews would not be ready for sea in a few hours, but would probably take a matter of several days. Under those circumstances, he did not see how the Admiralty could possibly expect them to place confidence in a Fleet consisting of from eighteen to twenty battleships when only six of them were actually at sea and in fighting trim. The mere fact that the Fleet was divided into three groups was a great obstacle to the officer commanding that Fleet. It was impossible for any Commander-in-Chief to do justice to the ships under his command when he commanded them perhaps only once or twice during the year, and then only for a very short period. His hon. friend the Member for Farehem had pointed out that the whole centre of gravity had shifted from the south of England to the North Sea, and it seemed to him an extraordinary thing that our weakest Fleet should be placed in the position where we were most likely to be attacked. The one Fleet which had to face the enemy at all times was the Fleet which for some reason or another was kept at a smaller point than any of the others. He ventured to say also that it was in a very much less efficient condition. He understood the hon. Member for the Fareham Division to say that the Commander-in-Chief of the Home Fleet had raised his flag on seven or eight different ships, but he had been under the impression that the Commander-in-Chief of that Fleet had no flagship, but that he had an official residence on shore. He thought the whole of the Home Fleet should be concentrated in or about the Nore, that it should be in full commission and that the Admiral in command should live at sea and not on shore. With reference to cruisers, many naval men complained that the number of these vessels attached to the battle fleets was much too small. They pointed out that the cruiser squadrons might be in other parts of the world on the outbreak of war, and that in fact they formed separate and distinct fleets. Under these circumstances they held that the cruisers attached to the four great fleets (and these cruisers must be distinguished from the cruiser squadrons) under the present groupings were totally inadequate for the purposes for which they existed—namely, scouting, locating the enemy, and keeping the Fleet free from the attacks of the enemy's torpedo boats and destroyers at night. To do that work properly it was evident that a large number of cruisers had to be employed. He trusted that the Secretary to the Admiralty in his reply would be able to hold out some hope that further energy and expedition would be shown in the matter of the provision of docks. It was a most anomalous state of affairs that they should be building enormous ships like the "Dreadnought" and the "Invincible" and have no place to put them when they wanted repair. The amount proposed to be spent on Rosyth this year was ridiculous. He supposed the explanation of this was that the Admiralty desired to meet the views of those who supported the Motion moved yesterday, and had put off absolutely necessary works which would have to be executed within the next few years. In the interest of sound finance, he submitted that it would be very much better, and it would be treating the country more honestly, to put down a fair share of the cost of all the new ships and works to this year's Estimates instead of spreading it over and postponing the evil day to later years.

COLONEL SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) said he understood from the statement of the Secretary to the Admiralty in regard to the coastguard that the Admiralty had definitely decided not to entertain the proposal made from some quarters to abolish the coastguard altogether and hand over their duties to another body, such as the Board of Customs. If that was the statement which the right hon. Gentleman made, he could only say that all who were interested in the merchant service owed him a debt of gratitude for making it. The right hon. Gentleman had said that it would enable the Admiralty to consider and discuss the whole matter *de novo*. He would state the reasons which had prompted him and others on that side of the House in urgently pressing the Government not to interfere with the present arrangement by which the coastguard performed their duties. The Navy had been singularly successful in recruiting, and those who had studied the subject believed that the fact that there was a coastguard service to which they could go had a great bearing on the efficiency of the recruiting. The duties of the coastguard in peace and war could not be performed so efficiently by any other body of men as by those of the Royal Navy. The hon. Member for South Antrim had stated that some of their work could be done by telephone. He had yet to learn that the telephone could deal with such matters as floating mines in narrow waters, and the position of ships on dark nights. Nor could the telephone perform any of the duties of the coastguard in connection with life saving. The coastguard had to look after the property which was cast ashore in case of shipwreck. That was a very important duty, and no body of men who were not strictly disciplined could perform it efficiently. He had occasion once to address a meeting at a coast place when a ship ran ashore. He went to the shore, and it was discovered that the ship contained rum, and anyone who was there could see that it required a highly disciplined body of men to cope with the difficulties which arose. The points which interested him most of all were two other duties that fell to the coastguard service at present. They had to watch our coasts in peace time for possible wrecks, and in the event of ships going ashore they had to assist the lifeboat services in working the rocket apparatus. As to the watching of the coasts, it was only a body of men like the coastguard who could be entrusted with that duty. He had been present at inquiries where it was stated that the coastguard had failed to see a wreck. If the coastguard sometimes failed, how much more would a body of men who had not the splendid traditions of those men of the Royal Navy? The coastguard had proved that they were essential to the lifeboat service. They worked the rocket apparatus, and that was a most difficult piece of work. Hon. Members would agree that that most important and difficult work should be entrusted to men who were most highly disciplined, and that class of man was to be found in the Royal Navy. Not only did they save life by the rocket apparatus, but their record in saving life themselves was most extraordinary. He had been furnished with some figures in regard to this matter by the Lifeboat Institution. In 1905 there were 423 occasions when lifeboats were launched, and of these launches 166 took place on notification being given by the coastguard, and most probably if the coastguard had not been there the lifeboats would not have been launched; 397 lives were consequently saved. In 1906 there were 421 launches, of which 132 were notified by the coastguard, and 696 lives were saved. In 1907 there were 409 launches, of which 165 were notified by the coastguard, and 932 lives were saved. It would be going too far to say that had it not been for the coastguard all these lives would have been lost; but it was safe to say that had there not been a coastguard some of the 932 lives would, in point of fact, not have been saved. In regard to life-saving and showing an example of courage, he would give another set of figures which was indeed extraordinary. Eighty-eight years ago, the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, with the consent of the Government, decided to issue silver and gold medals for acts of gallantry in saving life. Of the 1,247 silver medals no fewer than 239 had been received by the coastguard, and of the 100 gold medals which were awarded on rare occasions of exceptional daring, thirty-one or more than a third had been received by the magnificent coastguard. A record so fine as that must prove that in this difficult matter of saving life at sea, where so much often depended on the initiative of one man, the coastguards had fully discharged their duty. Therefore, in conclusion, he urged the Secretary to the Admiralty to make it plain to the House, as it had not been made quite plain from other statements current, that the Government did not intend to take the duty of saving life at sea from the gallant men of the coastguard and hand it over to the Board of Customs or any other department.

*MR. LAMBERT: I will deal shortly with the more general questions which have been raised by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite; but I think I can assure my friend the hon. and gallant Member for Abercromby Division that in the matter of life-saving proceedings the Admiralty are fully aware of the strong feeling that exists, and will do nothing to interfere with the efficient discharge of the life-saving duties at present undertaken by the coastguard. My right hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty has always endeavoured studiously to keep the Naval Votes free from politics, but I think that the hon. Member for Fareham verged dangerously near party politics in his introductory remarks. Personally, I have never attacked the policy of my predecessors, but it does seem to me that, when we are told that great alarm exists in the country and that the Admiralty are guilty of disastrous cheese-paring, and when other epithets of a like character are employed, they savour more of the platform than of serious debate in the House of Commons. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer was more modest, but I think he dealt principally with the question not of this year's, but of next year's Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman said, What terrible liabilities will be thrown on next year's Estimates; next year's Estimates will have to bear the cost of a new lock at Portsmouth and a new dock at Rosyth and other matters. And the right hon. Gentleman totalled them up to a very considerable sum. I should think that if our liabilities are to be so great next year the wise and prudent course to take is that we should be as economical as we safely can be this year–[AN HON. MEMBER: "Only now?"]—and every year. I wish to deal with the central portion of the indictment brought by the Front Opposition Bench. We are told that we are not preparing or have not a sufficient ship-building programme, and especially of big battleships. I cannot understand how any man can bring a charge like that against the present Board of Admiralty with the facts that must be in the possession of the public mind. Take the question of the big ships—the "Dreadnoughts." And here I must say that it is an extraordinary doctrine if we are to rule out such splendid ships as the "Lord Nelson" and "Agamemnon." These ships were laid down in 1905 and they will be ready for sea in April. Surely we should not leave such splendid ships out of account.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: The Secretary to the Admiralty deliberately instituted a comparison in terms of "Dreadnoughts." Does the hon. Gentleman say that the "Lord Nelson" and "Agamemnon" embody the "Dreadnought" type, or embody any of the particular features of that type?

*MR. LAMBERT: It is very difficult to go into the details of the types; that must be left to the experts. But I would remind the hon. Gentleman that many naval experts value very highly indeed the "Lord Nelson" type. Let me deal with actual facts, and not with programmes on paper ranging up to 1916. Sufficient unto the day is the building programme thereof. We have one "Dreadnought" in the water already commissioned at the Nore. We have three "Dreadnoughts" constructing and three big cruisers. That is to say, we have seven big ships—one in the water, three launched, and three cruisers which will be ready soon. Not a single foreign Power has a single big ship in the water; and yet after all, we are told that we are a cheese-paring Government. Let me take the big batttleships that are building. For my part I do not wish to make invidious comparisons with any foreign country, but as they have been made a basis of comparison I must do so too. The hon. Gentleman said that up to the end of 1910 we should have only an equality in these big battleships with Germany. On the German stocks at the present moment, *i.e.*, building—not one is launched—they have four big battleships and two cruisers. We have ten big battle hips in the water or building plus the programme of this year. Then again there are the two ships, the "Lord Nelson" and the "Agamemnon." I think it must satisfy any reasonable mind that we have at the present moment a sufficient building programme to meet all reasonable contingencies.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: Does the hon. Gentleman deny the accuracy of the figures given by his colleague the Secretary to the Admiralty, which stated that the number of "Dreadnoughts" at the end of 1910 would be the same in this country as in Germany?

*MR. LAMBERT: I am giving the hon. Gentleman the figures of the ships that are on the stocks now. I do not take up the number that will be reached in 1916.

I regard that year with great complacency. Moreover, I say that this country with its great ship-building facilities can cope with any emergency that may arise in the future, and that we are in a position of overwhelming strength now. Nobody can deny that. The figures show that since the building of big battleships commenced the Admiralty have provided amply for a sufficient margin in case of contingencies. I may now deal with the hon. Member for Fareham's description of the Home Fleet. The hon. Gentleman, so far as I understand, found the Home Fleet on inspection more satisfactory than he expected. A good many complaints were made last year about the Home Fleet, but the hon. Gentleman has examined it for himself—an example which might be followed by hon. Members who have found fault with the Admiralty. The hon. Gentleman said, however, that the Home Fleet was under-manned. Of course, there are three divisions of the Home Fleet manned by nucleus crews, but there are at present at the Nore five battleships, eight cruisers and twenty-four torpedo boat destroyers manned for any instant emergency.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE: Is that since last Thursday?

*MR. LAMBERT: My hon. friend must know that I do not carry all these details in my mind. The figures I have given were supplied to me within the last few minutes. It is said that there are a great many ships laid up, but a ship may be in a dockyard and yet be ready instantly for fighting purposes. The admiral's bath may be out of order and the ship will be brought in to put it right, but the admiral's bath being out of order does not diminish the fighting efficiency of the ship. As to destroyers, the expert advisers of the Admiralty tell us that the sixteen to be laid down will be of an improved type and sufficient in number to meet our coming wants. I can emphatically assure the House that there is no shortage in this type of vessels. Surely that ought to be satisfactory to the right hon. Gentleman and to any person who values the expert advice which is at the disposal of the Board of Admiralty. Then we were asked by the right hon. Gentleman some questions about the savings on stores. That is a policy we inherited from our predecessors. The late Board of Admiralty appointed an Establishments Committee to regulate the amount of stores to be kept. The Committee made certain recommendations, which were all practically adopted by the Board over which Lord Cawdor presided. We have simply carried out in this matter the policy of our predecessors, and maintained the standard required by the Committee.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I referred to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman on Monday as to the standard of reserve at the home stations. I understand that there may be some reduction in the standard in small articles easily purchasable at any time, but that there has been no reduction in the reserve of guns and ammunition. That is, of course, important.

*MR. LAMBERT: A letter appeared in the public papers yesterday charging the Government with some niggardliness in this matter. I know the right hon. Gentleman did not allude to it, as, of course, he would not take his information from the Press, but I can assure him that the reserve of guns and ammunition is maintained at present fully up to the standard fixed in 1900. The allowance of practice ammunition has been increased of late years, and neither are reserves being depleted nor is less ammunition being used for practices than in past years. I hope that statement will dispel some illusions—[MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Hear, hear]—which might be, if uncontradicted, created in the public mind. Complaints have been made about Rosyth's not being proceeded with, but in expending large sums of money great care has to be taken that they are spent to the best advantage. The same observation applies to the Portsmouth lock. We have invited a most eminent firm of outside engineers to see whether they can find any better plans than the official advisers of the Army. I think in a matter of spending such large sums of money we should take precautions that the public money is not wasted.

It is essential that the Board of Admiralty should exercise deliberation and care to secure an economical use of public money.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: May I ask for an answer to my question as to when the works at Rosyth will be available for use as distinct from being finished.

*MR. LAMBERT: That is very difficult to say, but as far as can be seen they will be available in from five to seven years. I am giving that statement with great reserve, because engineering difficulties may be encountered and other unexpected difficulties may arise. I do not think that there is any point of importance that I have not dealt with, but I hope I have dispelled the alarm which was alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, and which he thinks exists in the public mind. May I say that if there was any alarm about the Navy those Benches would have been more crowded than they are to-night. I remember very far back when we had a full dress debate as to the Navy the House of Commons presented a very different aspect from what it does now. I can assure hon. Members, and I give the assurance on behalf of the Board of Admiralty, that we are determined to maintain the Navy in a position of adequate strength and I hope matchless efficiency.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): The points with which the hon. Gentleman has been concerned in the speech we have just heard are points that must be raised again. I do not think he fully appreciated either the force of the arguments or the character of the questions that have been addressed to him. The contention about the Home Fleet urged by my hon. friend near me was in the main this, that in the Home Fleet were counted ships which were no permanent part of that Fleet, and which were in dock accidentally. My hon. friend stated that he had reason to believe that ships that were counted in the Home Fleet were in reality under repair, that they had come from a foreign station to the ports where they were repaired, that during the process of repair they were counted as ships in the Home Fleet, and that directly they were repaired they went back to the foreign station. My hon. friend said truly that you may call those ships part of the Reserve, but that you have no right to call them part of the Home Fleet ready for instant service. That is a point on which we shall ask questions again, and on which the hon. Gentleman has given us no information.

*MR. LAMBERT: The Home Fleet is organised in three divisions, two, with nucleus crews, at Portsmouth and Devonport, the remaining one at the Nore, chiefly consisting of fully-manned ships.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Does the hon. Gentleman call that an answer to the question? I thought I put the matter clearly, but I have evidently not reached the intelligence of the hon. Gentleman. Are any of the ships counted in the Home Fleet ships that came here from a foreign station because they were in need of repair, and when repaired went back to the foreign station? I do not mean that there is any discredit in having such ships; but the Admiralty appear to talk as if these ships were part of the Fleet, instantaneously ready to deal with any emergency, whereas they are not. I hope on the proper Vote the Government will endeavour to show us that the torpedo destroyers and fast cruisers which we have at present are not merely equal or superior in number to those of any fleet likely to be brought against us, but so superior in number and in quality that they can deal with the defensive position or with the special strategic position which we shall have to occupy in the North Sea, under which it appears to us that we may require not merely numerical equality, but great numerical superiority. That argument has nothing to do with the two-Power standard. I am speaking of a single-handed struggle with some great naval Power, and I say that probably the conditions of that struggle would involve our possessing a much greater force of torpedo-boats to deal with all the questions of watching, observing, and carrying out the scouting duties of a fleet than our opponents possess, if we are to be in a position of safety. The hon. Gentleman has given what in my opinion is a perfectly satisfactory answer on the subject of stores. I give full credence to his statement as to the standard of 1900 being fully maintained, but I hope he will explain what has puzzled us—that there appears to be a reduction of 40 per cent. in the amount of ammunition provided and a reduction of 47 per cent. with regard to torpedoes. The last question on which we must press the Government further is the relation between these Estimates and future Estimates. I do not know what the hon. Gentleman below the gangway (Mr. John Ward) is going to deal with — whether with the general expense to the community of maintaining the Navy, or a minor issue. If he is going to deal with the big issue, I beg him to note that the Estimates we have before us this year are illusory Estimates from the point of view that they are not specimens of what we must have in succeeding years, if the avowed policy of the Government is to be maintained. They fail, and they fail completely for two quite separate and important reasons. There will have to be spent over £2,000,000 on automatic increases—the increased expenditure on Rosyth, on ships now laid down, and other matters. In addition to that, if we are to maintain our position in regard to other great Powers now engaged in building formidable vessels, you will have to lay down a large number of "Dreadnoughts" and armoured cruisers. It is impossible but that your Naval Estimates will rise, and rise immensely, and what I complain of, and what I am bound to complain of at the present moment, is that the Government are really endeavouring, and did endeavour last night, to show a diminution in the Naval Estimates, taking this year as their standard. The Chancellor of the Exchequer said that our Naval Estimates were down, I think, by £1,500,000 as compared with the Estimates for which the late Government were responsible. That comparison is absolutely illusory and misleading, and if the Government are really going to carry on the traditions which they profess, then do not let any one, whether he be chiefly interested in the maintenance of our naval superiority, or whether he attach more value to the reduction of armaments and the consequent reduction of expenditure—whatever point of view he takes, do not let him base any hope or argument on the Naval Estimates of this year; but let him look to next year, or the year after, or the year after that, and contemplate the building and other programmes, not by the policy of the late Government, but by the policy which the late Government and the present Government have in common. The hon. Gentleman who has just sat down tried to satisfy us with an assurance that at the present moment we have adequate naval strength. So far as this year is concerned nobody denies that proposition. We accept it. But what we say is that the year 1908 consists of twelve months like any other year. It will soon be over, and when 1909 begins you will find that the expenditure, which, I admit, is not inadequate for the immediate necessities of the 365 days of this year——

An HON. MEMBER: 366.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, you will find that you are bound to look, not merely at the adequacy of a particular sum for a particular year but at our naval policy as a whole; and if you look at it as a whole, then you will see that this year is an absolutely illusory year, and everybody, whatever their views, whether they go with the minority who voted last night or with the majority, all may be sure of this, that if the safety of this country is to be kept up, naval expenditure will increase, and economists can only hope for some diminution in their burdens so far as the Navy is concerned if the Government fall short of those professions in regard to the two-Power standard and other collateral issues, of which they have hitherto given us satisfactory assurances, but on which, I frankly admit, the somewhat hesitating language they used last night has filled me, at all events, with the deepest misgivings.

Mr. JOHN WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) said there were one or two considerations to which he desired to call attention, especially in view of the speech delivered by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean. He thought it was pretty plain that all the hopes of the Labour Party in regard to a reduction of expenditure were doomed to failure in the years to come. He thought it was pretty evident from the decision of the Lords of the Admiralty that Rosyth was now to be constructed and the work proceeded with. In addition to that, other docks at different naval bases were to be made adequate for the accommodation of vessels of the larger class now under construction and already completed. He thought that that in itself showed that their hopes were to be dashed to the ground so far as naval expenditure was concerned. Let them take Rosyth as an illustration. It was estimated that that one dock for the accommodation of vessels of the "Dreadnought" class would cost £3,000,000, and it was further estimated that it would be completed in five or seven years. They would be extremely lucky if they got it completed in that time; but even if they did, it meant that they would have to begin next year and count it as one of the years. That meant an addition to the Estimates next year of considerably over half a million under that one head alone. It was quite clear, therefore, that their hopes of a reduced expenditure on the part of the Admiralty and of the War Office were entirely illusory. In addition, he understood that it was contemplated to proceed at once to the letting of the contract for the new lock at Portsmouth, which was to cost nearly a million of money. He did not know how long that was to be in course of construction, or whether they were to assume that it would be about five years, but judging from the geological formation, and seeing that the site was well known, they ought to be able to estimate the cost both in time and money to a fraction. At any rate, there must be a sum of £200,000 per annum added for that purpose alone. Hence, without taking into account anything extra for shipbuilding, he could see from the discussions which had taken place that afternoon that there would be £700,000 or £750,000 added to the Naval Estimate next year, and for the next five or six years on the construction of dock accommodation for our ships. If they were going to maintain the policy practically decided upon by the Government last night, though it was not included in the terms of the Resolution, then they were in for a very considerable increase of naval expenditure under any circumstances. The Labour Members had not had very much opportunity of discussing this subject yesterday, but he might say for himself, and he dared say that he might speak for some of his Labour friends, that, though they had no foreign policy—and they saw no necessity for fashioning one, seeing that there was no prospect at present of their being called upon to decide it, though if they were called upon he dared say they would be able to do so, because necessity was the mother of invention—yet they had very definite ideas about this subject of naval supremacy and naval defence, however much their general views might be in hostility to the increase of expenditure on the Army. The Labour Party thought that the Army was generally used for aggressive purposes, but that statement would not apply to the Navy, which was our first line of defence. He acknowledged that there was scarcely a subject under the sun that he would not arbitrate about, but he would not arbitrate about the cession of a single inch of our country to any other Power. When we were not manly enough to defend our shores it would be time for us to give better men a chance. But so far as the defence of the country was concerned the Labour Party were prepared to do all that was necessary in that direction. They saw no reason, however, why all that was necessary to make the Navy efficient could not be secured by reducing a useless branch of the public service. It was suggested that we should have a striking force of 160,000 men. He believed that that force could be reduced to 60,000, and the other 100,000 dispensed with. That number would be ample. Great economies might be made along these lines; but so far as the Navy was concerned, however much they might desire to see reductions, it was clear from the discussions that the majority of the Members of that House had decided upon a policy which made it utterly impossible that those reductions could be carried out. On Rosyth there was a possible expenditure of £500,000 a year, and they knew that the engineers had sunk to a depth of 100 feet and come upon swamps. He would not be surprised if for the next two or three years the estimated annual cost of the construction of the base at Rosyth was nearer £1,000,000 than £500,000, and they would sooner or later be called upon to decide whether they were prepared to go to that enormous expense or not. He did not think there was any need for alarm. The right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean, whose knowledge was unrivalled, had stated most definitely that so far as the present position of our fleet and our power on the seas were concerned there was not the slightest cause for alarm, and it was lucky for the House and the country that that was so, because he was afraid that if they ever allowed this branch of the service to get into such a condition that there was honest and genuine reason for alarm, panic would drive them a lot further than they were ever prepared to dream of now. Under these circumstances, while they were prepared to support only that portion of expenditure which was proved to be necessary, they were prepared unquestionably to agree to it, but they wanted a corresponding economy in another important branch of the service where he did not believe they got enough nor could they ever hope to get anything like a decent return for their money.

Mr. BELLAIRS asked the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the designs of the armoured ships of the 1909 programme would be prepared in advance, so that if they had to lay them down early in 1909 there would be no delay whatever.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I can only give the hon. Gentlemen the answer he must expect. I cannot off-hand decide that. I will communicate the suggestion to my Naval colleagues. That is all I can say.

*Mr. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs), in moving "That this House is of opinion that, in the interests of the men in the Royal Navy, effect should be given to the suggestion of the Victualling Committee of last year to raise the money allowance in lieu of the spirit ration, and that the issue of the spirit ration should be discontinued in the case of all new recruits, whilst preserving to them the money allowance in its place," said he wished to call attention to a small question of domestic economy. The Motion standing in his name was one in the interests of the men. After all, the success of the Navy was determined by the character and capacity of the sailor. Everyone liked the British sailor. He was the most popular man in the country. The community was greatly interested in his welfare and would gladly see him made comfortable in every way. He would like to draw attention to the needs of Scotland in one or two points. The Fleet was going now a great deal into Scottish waters, and at such places as Invergordon, there was great need for a social institute. He hoped the Admiralty would take that matter into consideration, and would also remember when a base was established at Rosyth that something in that line should be done there. He would limit himself to the report of the Committee on canteen and victualling arrangements. Many of their recommendations had been given effect to. Some were a great help to temperance, because every improvement of the condition of life diminished the force of the temptation to drink to excess. For instance, the cookery staff had been enlarged, and the tea ration increased. Another recommendation was that more attention should be paid to coffee-making and that proper appliances should be provided for the making of coffee, also that there should be a provision of fresh milk for sea-going ships, and generally that there should be a greater variety of diet. Then the Committee proceeded to make suggestions with regard specifically to temperance, which were very simple and elementary in their character. The men now had a Government ration of 10d. a day which included an item for rum. They got one-eighth of a pint of grog or as an equivalent half a pint of wine, half a gill of spirit, or one pint of porter. That alone cost the State rather over three-sixteenths of a penny a man, no duty being paid. A man who did not take the rum ration got a money allowance of nine-sixteenths of a penny a day, and the men who took the money allowance were marked in the ship's ledger T, which stood for temperance. The Committee suggested that instead of marking temperance men with T, the grog men should be marked G, and they further suggested that the money allowance for those not taking the rum ration should be raised to a full penny a day. Those recommendations were not made by teetotal fanatics, nor even by ignorant landsmen, but by naval experts who knew all the circumstances. They could not actually recommend these points, because they were outside their limits, but they were so impressed with the advisability of giving effect to them that they made the suggestions believing they would do much to promote temperance in the Fleet. He believed the suggestion was concurred in by most, if not all, naval authorities. He knew the right hon. Gentleman was very sympathetic, but the suggestions had not yet been carried out, and the object of the Resolution was to express the feeling of the House and if possible to get the Report carried out. The first point, the change of the letter T and the letter G, seemed small, and yet there was a great difference. This grog was a relic of the old times that had gone. The system had gone in civil and in military life, and it was time that it went in naval life. Nowadays there was a great responsibility upon employers, and in this case the State was the employer. There was no other employer that paid part of the wages in spirits. The force of public opinion would be directed against such a way of paying wages, and it was altogether out of date to have the system continued where the State itself was the employer. Public opinion nowadays had a great deal to do with how employers treated their employees. There was, for instance, a great outcry against the living-in system, but unfortunately in the Navy that system could not be prevented. If the change was made it would show the desire of the employer that the men should be temperate. The rule should be abstinence and the exception grog. At present the money allowance for those not taking grog was too little. It was against the regulations for a man to pass on his tot or sell it to another. Yet this was frequently done because the money allowance was so small, and that of course resulted in some men having too much grog, which did not make them any fitter for doing their work. At present 25 per cent. of the men in the Navy were marked T and the proportion was increasing by 1 per cent. annually. That was highly gratifying, and he was sure the number would increase faster if his Motion was accepted. A penny a day was 30s. a year, and he would like to have the money paid at stated times, so that the men would know perfectly that they were getting it in lieu of their grog, and not mixed up with other payments. To carry out the scheme would cost the nation £15,000 extra, which was a mere bagatelle compared with the millions spent upon the Navy, and he was sure the money could not be better spent. He appealed to all parties in the House. Hon. Members opposite talked about forcing people to be temperate. This did not do that. It adopted a policy of moral suasion, accompanied by pecuniary inducement. This proposal would allow a man to fix his own time limit. The latter part of the Motion was the logical outcome of the first part, and it provided that there should be no issue of spirit rations to new recruits. Under the present system for the first two years' service a man got no grog, and his suggestion was that that policy should be continued all the time with the new recruits. The objection had been made that the men would not join under those conditions. If there were men who only joined for grog, the Navy was better without them. On the other hand, there were those who would not join the Navy at present because of the drinking habits of the men and the ridicule that was directed against the men who did not drink. One paragraph of the Report of the Committee emphasised the advantage of adopting in peace time a victualling system that would work during war. He suggested that they should prepare some system of that kind to prevail in time of war. It was absolutely essential during war to banish strong drink from their ships. He could give instances where this had been done with great success. The Japanese Navy, which copied the British Navy, at first gave grog on our plan. They began with a very liberal allowance of rum, and then this was displaced and their native drink was substituted. Even the native drink had since been discontinued, and now there was no drink allowance in the Japanese Navy at all. They were aware, from the splendid fighting record of the Japanese Navy, what a success that had been. In the United States there used to be a grog allowance, but Admiral Foote used his personal influence so strongly that his ship, the "Cumberland," became a temperance ship and every man upon it was a temperance man. During the Civil War in 1862 the United States Navy found it essential to banish drink from their ships, and in that year a Bill was passed providing that "from and after the 1st of September the spirit rations in the Navy of the United States shall for ever cease," and five cents. per man was substituted. All the authorities in America united in showing that the system adopted there had been a complete success. He hoped it would be a long time before the British Navy had to take part in a war, but he thought they should be prepared for it in this way as well as in the more expensive ways. By his Resolution he was only asking the Admiralty to give effect to the Report of their own Committee appointed to consider another matter. That Committee felt so strongly on this point that they made the suggestion he had quoted. The adoption of this Resolution would have an excellent effect on the character and the work of the men, and consequently on the efficiency of the Navy. He begged to move.

*MR. FERENS (Hull, E.) said he rose to second this Amendment. He associated himself with everything his hon. friend had said in appreciation of the men of the Royal Navy. The Resolution contained two propositions. In the first place, it suggested that the Government should put into force the recommendation of the Canteen and Victualling Committee, 1906, viz.: "To encourage temperance amongst the men we suggest raising the money allowance to 1d. per ration in lieu of the spirit." Secondly, it was proposed that all new recruits should be paid the allowance without the option of liquor. It was not proposed to interfere with the contract made with the men who were now in the Navy. They must be allowed to continue as at present if they wished it, and they had no right to interfere with the bargain made with them when they joined the Navy. The supply of daily rations of rum was a survival from the dark ages. It was quite out of date, and in the interests of efficiency, good order, and discipline it should be abolished so far as new recruits were concerned. It would probably be said that yesterday was spent in the advocacy of economy in the Navy and to-day they were proposing an increase in naval expenditure. It was quite true that the increase from nine-sixteenths of a penny to one penny would involve an expenditure of perhaps £15,000 a year, but he maintained that this outlay would prove to be a real economy and would be returned with compound interest in improved conduct, alertness, and generally increased efficiency. The Secretary for War was continually telling them that although the number of the Army might be reduced, it did not follow that its efficiency was less. He felt that the efficiency of the Navy would be increased if the young fellows upon joining did not get rum rations, which often created an appetite for liquor which some of them went to extremes in satisfying on shore. The foremost men in the Army and Navy were strong advocates of temperance. Lord Roberts, in season and out of season, preached the advantages of temperance to soldiers. Lord Kitchener on his march to Khartoum discovered intoxicating liquor with his forces, and he had it poured out into the desert sands. Sir Frederick Treves, when on the march to Ladysmith, said—

> "It was not the tall man nor the short man that fell out of the ranks, but it was the drinker, and he was as clearly marked as if he had been branded."

Lord Charles Beresford, himself an abstainer, was doing his best to spread temperance amongst those serving under him. He had recently listened to an eloquent speech made by the Commander-in-Chief at Portsmouth when he gave most convincing testimony as to the advantages of the influences brought to bear upon the men in the Navy to be temperate. Last year the Secretary to the Admiralty stated that 25 per cent. of the men in the Navy did not take their tots of rum. *The Times*, yesterday, in an interesting account of a contingent of Marines now on the way from Vancouver, had stated that the victualling arrangements had been much upset because so large a proportion of the men—more than one-half—were abstainers. This tendency should be encouraged, and they should try to make it easier for the men to do right and more difficult for them to do wrong. A commander in the Navy had favoured him with his views on this question and he would read them to the House—

> "Rum, spirits, a ration—part of provision allowance to men in Royal Navy—now only allowed to be taken by men over twenty years of age. Age limit used to be eighteen, extension to twenty (two years at sea without it) has been great factor in inducing men to do without altogether.
>
> "The expense incurred by labour, stowage and guarding (*i.e.*, sentry and other precautions) probably cost more than the difference to make up the allowance to 1d. per day in lieu of tots.
>
> "It is said by some who know that the tot of grog is worth 1d., and probably more than 1d. to a man if sold surreptitiously; and that this goes on to some extent amongst the men is well known, as much as 3d. being given for a tot, and one case of a hard bargain is quoted when a tot was actually sold for 6d.
>
> "But the fact that grog can be, and is, sold (though contrary to regulations) for more than the allowance in lieu, is a temptation for a man who does not drink his tot to take it up and sell it instead of stopping its issue.
>
> "It is generally acknowledged by commanding officers and officers in responsible positions that the grog ration is a principal cause of insubordination in cases which frequently occur in afternoon (after grog is served out); many cases being traced to the effects of grog, particularly amongst cooks of messes and others having facilities for drinking more than their own tot. Also the effect of the grog generally seems to make men less alert and less fit for the exacting duties now required of our sailors in all departments of the Navy.
>
> "Encourage the voluntary stopping of grog, because it results in more efficient men, of greater benefit to the State, and a return of much greater value than the proposed allowance in lieu of grog.
>
> "The State will be getting a very good pennyworth."

This was the third time of asking, and he hoped the Admiralty would now consider favourably this small reform. He had much pleasure in seconding the Motion.

Amendment proposed—

> "To leave out from the word 'That,' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words: "this House is of opinion that, in the interests of the men in the Royal Navy, effect should be given to the suggestion of the Victualling Committee of last year to raise the money allowance in lieu of the spirit ration, and that the issue of the spirit ration should be discontinued in the case of all new recruits, whilst preserving to them the money allowance in its place,"—(*Mr. Gulland*)—instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON thought he had shown in his speech last year the fullest sympathy with the object of the Amendment. The Victualling Committee had calculated, on the basis of the existing number of temperance men, who took the money equivalent to the spirit ration, that the proposed increase in the allowance would involve the cost to the State of £15,000 a year. It was found, however, on a revised calculation made at the Admiralty that the cost would not be quite so large, or only £12,500. He had to confess that no provision was made in the Estimates this year for this reform owing to the pressure which had come from all sides in favour of other interests. But it would be considered in the future; and he would take it upon himself to recommend it to his colleagues at the Admiralty. He thought the Admiralty ought first to know what was likely to be the number of men that would come forward to claim this increased allowance. He therefore was going to suggest to his colleagues that they should call upon the Commanders-in-Chief of one of the home ports and two of the large sea-going fleets to report, first, the existing number of temperance men, divided between men over twenty and boys under twenty; and, secondly, the number of men who would be willing to go on the temperance list if the non-grog allowance was increased to one penny. Then there was the more doubtful point, raised on the second part of the Motion, that the issue of grog should be abolished altogether, at first in the case of recruits, and ultimately in the case of all the men. He believed the Victualling Committee were not in favour of the abolition of the spirit ration, unless it were found, at some time or other, that the great majority of the men were, of their own free will, taking the grog money in lieu of grog. They thought that if such a step were taken hurriedly and arbitrarily, in advance of public opinion on board ship, it must almost necessarily lead to the sale of spirits in the canteen without official supervision, or to what was a worse state of things, systematic smuggling on board ship.

*MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby) said he must express to his right hon. friend some little disappointment at the character of the statement he had made that evening. After all, his hon. friend did not come before the House unsupported by the authorities whom the right hon. Gentleman had appointed to look into the matter. It was perfectly true that the Canteen Committee did not recommend this alteration, but they put it forward as a suggestion and only refrained from recommending it because they felt that that would be going beyond the functions for which they were appointed. He had certainly hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would have announced that he was ready to provide the small sum of money that was necessary for carrying out this suggestion. The right hon. Gentleman had said it did not depend on him, and that he was going to consult his colleagues at the Admiralty and the Treasury. The point he wanted to put was this. The right hon. Gentleman had said he could not carry out the suggestion, because with the £34,000,000 required for the Navy he was not able to find the £12,000 necessary to carry it out. What he wanted to know was whether if there were any savings on any Vote in that £34,000,000 the first use the Admiralty, in the exercise of their power of *virement*, made of that saving would be to provide the £12,000 in question. The right hon. Gentleman had said he could not carry out the second half of the Resolution because the Committee having considered it did not recommend it. They said nothing about it in their Report. He understood they were against it. In the second case the verdict of the Committee was accepted as decisive, and it was rather hard on those who desired this reform that the recommendation of the Committee in its favour should be set on one side. He pleaded that the right hon. Gentleman should carry out the suggestion of his own Committee.

*MR. LUTTRELL (Devonshire, Tavistock) urged the Government to consider carefully the suggestion which had been made to them. It seemed to him that there was everything to be said in favour of acceding to the request. His right hon. friend had told them that the cost would be even smaller than was generally supposed, and that, for £12,500 they should be able to get rid of the issue of spirit rations to the men of the Navy. The House had heard a good deal about the necessity of maintaining the two-Power standard. But it was necessary to keep up the moral standard as well as the physical standard, and most of the offences in the Navy were to be traced to drunkenness. We were behind other nations in this respect. Japan and America had been in front of us for many years in this matter. Unless we kept up the moral standard of our men we could not expect to keep up the standard of efficiency in the Navy. He thought the money required to carry out this reform would be extremely well spent from the point of view of efficiency. In America so long ago as 1862 the following Resolution was passed—

> "The spirit ration in the Navy of the United States shall for ever cease and thereafter no distilled spirituous liquors shall be admitted on board of vessels of war except as medical stores and upon the order and under the control of the medical officers of such vessels, and to be used only for such purposes."

Rear Admiral Preble of the United States Navy, stated—

> "Three-quarters of the minor and all the major punishments of the men and a large proportion of the courts martial of the officers either originated in drunkenness or could be traced to drink. I am clearly of opinion that the Navy has been largely benefited in its *personnel* by the prohibition of distilled spirits on board ships, though the officers at the time looked upon it with dismay."

The following lines showed how popular the change was—

> "Jack's happy days will soon be past,
> To return again, no, never,
> For they've raised our pay 5 cents. a day
> And stopped our grog for ever."

Now, no commanding officer would recommend going back to the old system. Though he would not advise his friends to go to a division, he urged in the most strenuous manner that the Government should accede to the request.

*MR. MORTON (Sutherland) said that this was a step in the advancement of the great question of temperance which everybody professed to believe in, but which few carried out in practice. He was exceedingly sorry that the Government had not taken more interest in it, because it had been found everywhere else that where the allowance of drink was taken away, and an allowance of money substituted, it had always done good. The right hon. Gentleman had said that he had no recent or authentic information from America, but he gave some sort of opinion of the man in the street that smuggling went on in the American Navy, and that there was also drinking in the canteens. The right hon. Gentleman, however, had given no proof whatever that that was the case, and it was utterly wrong to make such charges against the American Navy without proof. Exactly the same thing had been said regarding Sunday drinking in Scotland. It was said that as a consequence of Sunday closing, shebeens had sprung up and that there were all sorts of means of getting drink on Sundays. Everybody who knew the facts of the case, and made a proper inquiry, was aware that these charges were entirely untrue. The stories in regard to drinking in canteens and smuggling in the American Navy had about the same amount of truth. The right hon. Gentleman had said an inquiry would be made; but that was how awkward subjects were got rid of, and by this time next year there might or might not have been an inquiry. Indeed, the Government might not be in power twelve months hence, and he wanted them to do something at once while they were in power. He wanted an assurance from the Treasury Bench that this was not to be a mere inquiry, but that something would be done as soon as possible; and he was sure that it would do as much good as the abolition of the drink allowance had done in the American Navy and in our own workhouses, infirmaries, and other institutions. He had not the slighest doubt that our sailors (a fine body of men) would gladly avail themselves of the money substitute for drink, and that they would do good to themselves and their families and to the temperance cause by showing a good example to the rest of their fellows. He (Mr. Morton) was always anxious to do something in the cause of temperance, and he was aware that strong drink was not necessary or useful to anyone, male or female.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he could assure the hon. Member that it was his intention to institute a real inquiry into the subject, and if his own recommendation could do it he would put a stop to the drink allowance. He appealed to the hon. Gentleman to allow the vote to be taken, if a division was thought necessary, so as to get the Speaker out of the Chair.

*MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said he was sorry that he was unable to respond to the request of the right hon. Gentleman, but he had experience of what it was to raise important questions in the absence of Mr. Speaker from the Chair. It was much less easy to discuss then subjects which were of vital interest. A great deal had been said about our being able to maintain our Navy at the two-Power standard. He was strongly in favour of a strong Navy.

*MR. SPEAKER: That is not the Question before the House. The Question is an Amendment relating to the drink allowance in the Navy.

*MR. CARLILE (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) said that, while he had very much sympathy with the Resolution before the House, he should say that there was one very ominous expression in the speech of the seconder, and that was an expression very often heard in certain quarters: "We ought to make it easy for people to do right, and difficult for them to do wrong." He had always noticed that whenever that observation was made it was immediately accompanied by a proposal to rob somebody. However, on this occasion there did not seem to be any proposal of that kind, and therefore one felt sympathy with the Amendment. But it ought to be made perfectly clear that there would be no tyranny about this business. They were so accustomed to attempts being made in some parts of the House to put them in leading strings with bibs round their necks, which they associated with children, that they were rather suspicious of this Amendment. He thought if a man was accustomed to have his tot of rum and desired it he should have it under proper control.

MR. GULLAND: That is quite clearly provided for in the Amendment.

*MR. CARLILE said he knew that something was said in the Amendment about recruits, but recruits to the Navy came from all classes and of different ages, and he did not think it was right to tyrannise over them. He had not himself taken any drink for thirty-two years, and got on very well without it; but he did not think it was right to lay down a hard and fast line and say that these recruits were not to get a little liquor in a properly conducted canteen if they wanted it. He thought it was a matter for sincere congratulation on the part of everybody in the House that 25 per cent. of the men in the Navy were total abstainers. He was quite certain that they were all the better for it, even in the severe climates to which they had sometimes to go. Still, he did not want to put our sailors in leading strings with bibs round their throats, and he hoped that if the matter was left in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman it would be properly dealt with. It would be a sad thing if the result was to lead to secret drinking.

Question, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question," put, and agreed to.

Main Question again proposed.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question, "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Main Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1908–9.

Committee Report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

CHINESE ON BRITISH SHIPS.

*MR. FENWICK (Northumberland, Wansbeck) in calling attention to the conditions under which Chinese subjects were employed on British ships, and in moving: "That, in the opinion of this House, the conditions under which Chinese seamen are employed on British vessels at ports in the United Kingdom calls for an immediate investigation by a Select Committee of this House, with a view to determining whether the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1906, are sufficient to enable the Board of Trade to prevent abuses arising out of the employment of Chinese in the British Mercantile Marine," said the Resolution would be seconded by his hon. friend the Member for Middlesbrough, who had, perhaps, a more intimate personal knowledge of the question dealt with than he claimed to have. The hon. Member had had considerable practical experience of seafaring life, and as the House knew, he himself was not a sailor, though some of his friends said that he was a good sailor, because often as he had been on the water he was yet in blissful ignorance of what it was to be sea-sick. He wished to state at the outset that, speaking on his own behalf and of those in whose interest this Resolution was brought forward, neither they nor he had any complaint to make against the employment of Chinese in our mercantile marine *qua* Chinese. They did not wish in any way to curtail the employment of these men, nor did they wish to ask for anything in the nature of protection or even preferential treatment for seamen born within the four corners of the United Kingdom. All that they claimed was that if Chinese or any other foreign subjects were employed in the British mercantile marine they should not be employed under terms and conditions which practically amounted to sweating or unfair agreements which tended very largely to deprive British-born subjects of their legitimate calling. They understood, and he believed that the Board of Trade would assist them in this respect, that wherever Chinese or the subjects of any other foreign Power were employed in the British mercantile marine they should comply strictly and to the letter, with the provisions laid down by the Board of Trade, both by their regulations and in their recent legislation. It was within the recollection of the House that recently they had devoted a large portion of their time to the consideration of legislation and the laying down of conditions and rules for the regulation of the mercantile marine especially with a view of improving the condition of the British sailor. It was true that the regulations and the legislation to which he had referred were based very largely upon the recommendations of a Departmental Committee, which only arrived at them after very full, careful, and exhaustive inquiry. He would remind the House of some of the things which were provided for by the President of the Board of Trade under the Act of 1906. The Act provided, amongst other things, that no foreign seaman should be permitted to engage on a British vessel unless he was able to speak and understand the English language. It also provided that no able seaman should be engaged unless he was able to prove at the time of his engagement that he had served at least for three years before the mast or in the capacity of seaman. It also enacted better food regulations, and laid down what they considered to be a reasonable and rational scale of allowances which the British seaman ought to have; and that no person should be shipped as a ship's cook unless he held a certificate granted by a school of cookery, approved by the Board of Trade. These, in his judgment, were very wholesome provisions indeed, and it seemed to him that it ought to be the duty of the House to see that the regulations which were imposed by that Act were strictly and literally observed. The importance of the language test would, he thought, be admitted by every Member who had the honour of listening to the speech in which the President of the Board of Trade introduced his Bill two years ago. He would like to quote one passage from that speech to show the importance which the right hon. Gentleman attached to the question of language. The right hon. Gentleman cited several instances which clearly showed the danger to those employed in our mercantile marine, arising from the employment of men who were, it might be, physically fit in every respect to discharge the duties imposed upon them, but who were, in consequence of their want of knowledge and clear understanding of the English language, absolutely unfit to bear the responsibility imposed upon them. The President of the Board of Trade said—

> "There is overwhelming evidence that the lives of men engaged at sea are endangered by the fact that you have seamen on board who do not understand the English language, who consequently do not understand the word of command, and who, especially in moments of emergency, are absolutely worthless for that reason."

This Resolution was brought forward not for the sake of protection, but absolutely in the interest of the safety of those employed in our mercantile marine. The Act, as the House would remember, only became operative on 1st January of the present year. Some considerable grace, it seemed to him, was allowed to shipowners to prepare for all the consequences of the Act when it became operative. What had happened? Only on the previous Saturday the stipendiary at Cardiff was engaged in an inquiry into the stranding of a steamship, called the "Huddersfield," off Hartland Point on 27th January last. That vessel had only been a few days at sea, and as the result of the inquiry the master's certificate was suspended for six months. The stipendiary, in giving judgment said—

> "The attention of the court had been drawn on several occasions during the last five years to the danger to life and navigation arising from the employment on British ships of foreigners having an insufficient knowledge

of the English language to enable them to understand the necessary orders and to make the communications necessary to be made in the performance of their duty."

What were the facts relating to this case? Two of the crew gave evidence before the Court of Inquiry, and neither of them understood a word of the English language. [AN HON. MEMBER: Were they Chinamen?] One was a Greek, and he believed the other was a Chinaman, though that was not stated in the newspaper report. The man at the look-out on this occasion was a Greek who did not understand the English language, and although he saw that the vessel was approaching broken water, and ought to have been able to give intimation to that effect and to call attention to the danger which the vessel was running, he was unable to do so in consequence of his inability to find the words necessary, and the vessel was stranded in consequence. Although this man had the advantage of an interpreter he was still quite unable to understand the nature of the warning which he ought to have given. The court went on to express the opinion—

> "Unless some vigour, care, and vigilance were exercised in giving effect to the restriction on the employment of foreign seamen contained in Section 12 of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1906, the restriction was both futile and illusory."

He contended that that was the case, and that unless more careful supervision was exercised at the ports of the United Kingdom by the superintendent or some other person in authority when a crew was signing on, to take care that these men really did understand the English language and the nature of the duties they were called upon to perform, the regulations of this House would become simply illusory and a sham. Probably the case of a vessel which signed on on 31st January this year, one month after the provisions of the Act became operative, was familiar to the Secretary to the Board of Trade. The instructions of the Board of Trade as laid down in the Merchant Shipping Act, provided that what was known as the Dis. A., which applied to the question of nationality, should be produced at the time when seamen were being signed on. In this case some thirty-eight seamen of a foreign nationality were signed on without Dis. A. having been submitted to them. It was perfectly true that by the Act of 1906 they regarded the Chinese and lascars just the same as any subject of British India, and in that respect they made a great mistake, because it was very easy for a Chinamen coming from anywhere outside of Hong-Kong and Shanghai to cry off, on the ground solely that he was a British subject. Practically no steps, and certainly no efficient steps steps, were taken to ascertain whether these men were British subjects or not. In cases such as these, very careful consideration was required. Unless a man hailing from a foreign country was capable of showing by documentary evidence that he was a British subject, he ought to be prevented from signing such articles. What was the value of all their restrictive legislation and of their regulations if they simply accepted the *ipse dixit* of any man who sought employment in the mercantile marine that he was a British subject? A Chinese, Norwegian, or Russian sailor might go down to the shipping office and say his papers had been either stolen or mislaid, declare that he hailed from Hong Kong or Shanghai, and claim to be a British subject, without producing any evidence to show that such was the case. He maintained that, in the interests of safety and proper discipline in the mercantile marine, such an individual who was unable to produce documentary evidence as to the place of his nativity should be rejected on that ground. The same thing applied with equal force to the case of rating. According to the Shipping Act, no man was entitled to be rated as an A.B. unless he could produce evidence that he had served three years before the mast or as a seaman. The House would here again observe the great laxity that was displayed in all such cases. He had in his possession the articles of agreement relating to three vessels, and not a tittle of evidence was produced to show that the men had served for any length of time before the mast. In another case thirty-eight seamen of foreign nationality had signed on as ordinary seamen, practically without having had any experience of the duties to be performed on board ship. Seventeen of these men had left German vessels, two had left Russian vessels, and four had left Norwegian vessels. He maintained that in the absence of documentary evidence these men ought not to have been treated as British subjects, and they were not entitled to the covering clauses in the Act of 1906. Steps ought to be taken to prevent such men being employed in the British mercantile marine. The Secretary to the Board of Trade might reply to his contentions by saying that the Board of Trade were fully aware of the danger that existed, and were doing all they could to meet it. He believed that was so. He believed the Board of Trade were determined as far as they could to put an end to these questionable practices. He might also remind them that they had had very little opportunity as yet to gain experience of the operation of the Act, and to say that no inquiry was needed in order to deal effectively with the two questions he had raised. He was quite alive to the importance of such an answer. He recognised that if they set up an inquiry it would be very difficult indeed for the Board of Trade to exercise even the powers they possessed, either under the Act of 1906 or former Merchant Shipping Acts, until that inquiry was completed and its findings reported to Parliament. He could see the force of such an argument, but there were other points on which it seemed to him there was good ground for the request that an inquiry should be made without delay into the conditions prevailing in the mercantile marine. They had the case of crimping. Almost every day they had articles in the newspapers calling attention to the fact that so-and-so was in the habit of providing Chinese and other seamen for the British mercantile marine, and was able to do it on certain very easy conditions, so far as the shipowner was concerned. According to Section 111, of the Act of 1894, however, it was laid down that—

> "A person shall not engage or supply a seaman or apprentice to be entered on board any ship in the United Kingdom, unless that person either holds a licence from the Board of Trade for the purpose, or is the Owner, Master or Mate of the ship, or is *bona fide* the servant and in the constant employment of the Owner, or is a Superintendent."

They had advertisements appearing in the public Press in the name of gentlemen who were willing to procure such subjects for the advantage of the shipowners. The following which appeared in one of the London newspapers only a month or two ago was an example. It came from Cardiff and ran as follows—

> "GENTLEMEN,—Encouraged by the fact that owners of ships have lately applied to me to secure Chinese crews for them, I most respectfully beg to call your attention to the fact that I always have good and reliable men in my house ready to join vessels at the shortest notice and at any port in the United Kingdom, provided half their fares and half expenses of transfer of luggage are paid. When employing a Chinese crew, you only require about two more hands than Europeans, but the difference in costs, not only in wages, is balanced by the cheaper scale of provisions the crew demands. Hoping to have the privilege to select a crew for you on some future occasion, I remain gentlemen, very respectfully yours, AH SAM."

He would like to know whether this man held a licence from the Board of Trade as a recruiting agent for Chinese seamen. If he did not, then he thought very drastic steps ought to be taken immediately in order to put an end to this state of things. He also gave in his advertisement a food scale which the Chinese would require, and it was practically about one-third of that which was only two years ago laid down as an adequate scale for European seamen engaged in the mercantile marine. In many cases, too, European seamen had to complain of the unfair contracts with which they were confronted from time to time. It was perfectly true that they were signed by the men with their eyes open, but the condition of employment in the country was so precarious that in every branch of British industry a man was not always strictly speaking a free agent when in search of work. He was often compelled by sheer force of circumstances to sign a contract which, if he were freer, he would not be likely to sign. He had before him a contract in which there was a clause providing that if the cook deserted in a European port, and a substitute had to be found, and higher wages were demanded by the substitute (which was usually the case in European ports) then the difference had to be paid out of the wages of those engaged on board the vessel. Such conditions seemed to him to be monstrous in the extreme. We were opening the ports of the United Kingdom and making them practically collecting grounds for men of foreign nationality who by the lower rate of wages which they were prepared to take were practically driving Europeans out of the service of our mercantile marine, which was at this moment manned to the extent of 40 per cent. by seamen of a different nationality from our own. This was a condition of things that we could not look upon with anything like complacency or satisfaction. In the matter of the Workmen's Compensation Act again they had ground for a careful inquiry by the Board of Trade. They had evidence that the operation of the Workmens' Compensation Act was tending probably more than anything else to drive European seamen out of our mercantile marine. That was a very undesirable thing, and unless they were prepared to tighten up the regulations provided by the Board of Trade and by legislation, the improvements which they expected they were effecting in the lot of the British sailor, which was always an arduous one accompanied by danger, were being frittered away and passing into the hands of men of a totally different nationality. He remembered when the original Workmens' Compensation Act was passing through the House that the late Sir Arthur Forwood, himself a large shipowner, and deeply in favour of extending its provision to seamen, in moving an Amendment to that effect, said that the British seaman was the worst paid, the worst organised, and the least able of all British workmen to take care of himself. It was in the interests of this class that this Motion had been brought forward; he sincerely appealed to the Board of Trade to grant an inquiry if possible, and he trusted that their labours in this respect might not become futile and illusory.

*MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough) said he was afraid he would not be able to be quite so calm on this matter as his hon. friend, because he had had to deal with the question of shipping and shipowners for a good many years, and of all the employers in the country he knew of no class who were more inclined to take advantage of their workmen than the shipowner.s There were exceptions. There were a good many shipowners who did well by their employees and did everything they could to make the conditions on board ship all that could be desired. What was it that they had to complain of? For a good many years he had complained of the unrestricted employment of alien seamen on British ships, not that he objected to any foreign seamen being employed because he was a foreigner. All he said was that if the shipowner believed, and some of them said so, that the foreigner was a better man the shipowner ought to pay him better wages, and if he was engaged as a sailor he should be a competent man. That surely implied that he should be able to understand the orders given him. If he could not understand his orders he was not a competent man, and that observation applied equally to firemen. There was no class of employer that he knew of that had libelled and defamed their own countrymen to a greater extent than the shipowner. According to statements of some shipowners the British seaman was a grumbler, would not attend to his work, never did what was right, and in fact was the worst man that they could possibly find to have on board ship, Many years ago the shipowners gave a preference to the Swedes and the Danes. They got them at less wages, but by and by those men commenced to ask for better pay and the shipowners had no further use for them. They then tried the Germans and Belgians with the same result, and they went all round Europe even taking in Turks and Greeks, but as soon as the men asked a better price for their labour their services were not required to the same preferential extent. Now the shipowners had got to India and China. He had been told more than once by Presidents of the Board of Trade that he must not ask for any conditions for the lascar or the Asiatic, because he was a British subject, and that if they asked that he should have proper accommodation and food he would not be employed. Now it seemed that to some extent the shipowner had tired of the lascar, and had gone in wholesale for Chinamen. He thought some months ago that this question was becoming very serious indeed. Ten years ago the only liners carrying lascars and Chinamen were those trading direct from the United Kingdom to the East and back, but during the last nine months it was not only the liners that had taken on Chinamen, but nearly the whole of the tramp steamers. He would respectfully suggest to his right hon. friend that when the Board of Trade were compiling figures they should be a little more fair to the seamen's side. The last quinquennial Return gave the percentage of lascars employed as about twenty-four or twenty-six. That was entirely misleading, because the lascars and Chinamen were employed in the foreign trade principally, and the number of lascars and Chinamen in the foreign trade employed as sailors, firemen, and petty officers was 30,000, while the number of Britishers did not amount to more than 59,000 of the same class. If they took from that total the number of men employed in the Western Ocean trade, it would leave nearly 60 per cent. of the men employed in foreign-going vessels to be Chinamen and lascars. When the next figures came out they would show a great increase, because he found that Ah Sam and Ahon were extensively circularising shipowners, pointing out that they were able to supply Chinamen at low wages and with a food scale a third of the cost of that provided by Act of Parliament for Europeans. There was another evil connected with that. The lascars engaged in India commenced their voyage there and went back to India and were paid off there, but the Chinamen they were now complaining of were becoming residents of the ports of the United Kingdom, commencing and finishing their voyages here. During the past eighteen months there had been an increase of no less than ten Chinese boarding houses in the East End of London. Two years ago they had not one Chinese boarding house in Cardiff. Now they had eleven or twelve. At Liverpool they had multiplied in the same way, and if any hon. Member visited the West India Dock Road to-morrow he would wonder where all the British inhabitants had gone to, because the Chinaman monopolised every public-house and every den of infamy in that particular locality. He had to complain of the action of the Board of Trade in this matter. His hon. friend had already read out to the House from a copy of an agreement certain clauses which provided that if any Chinamen deserted at an American port the remaining Chinamen were to pay the expenses of a watchman during the time the ship remained in port. That was not an isolated case, for he was present in a mercantile marine office when a crew was signed on, and a man who was acting as interpreter for the crew was the Chinese crimp who was supplying the men to the shipowners. He called the superintendent's attention to the matter and told him that he would hear more about the subject. He had seen a good deal of interpreting done in his time. His hon. friend had said that the men had signed this agreement with their eyes open, but he could assure him that they did not know what they were signing. It had to be remembered that this was a crew signing on for a British ship and signing as able seamen, whilst not one of them was able to produce a scrap of paper to show whether he was a soldier, a sailor, or a fireman, and this was the crew of a ship which was to be allowed to sail down the Channel. At any rate, the Board of Trade could stop that, and lay down that they would not allow those crimps inside their office. Surely they could insist upon a competent interpreter being provided, and that every man must produce his certificate of discharge. He knew they had them and he would tell the House why. Before the end of last year the language test was not in operation, and a good many Chinamen when asked their place of birth gave a truthful answer, and many of them stated that they came from Hong-Kong, Canton, and other places in China. But the Chinaman was a cunning fellow, and he was smart enough to discover that according to the Merchant Shipping Act if he could prove that he was a British subject the language test would not apply. Consequently the Chinamen were advised to conceal their actual place of birth and give Hong-Kong instead. Many of those Chinamen had seen previous service in British ships, and he had taken the trouble of searching their records, and he found that in nearly every case where a Chinaman had given Hong-Kong in his latest engagement, on previous engagements the same Chinaman had given quite a different place of birth, and this proved clearly that those Chinamen were with impunity deceiving the Board of Trade. It was necessary that they should have this matter thrashed out, because it was becoming a very serious question; this kind of thing was being done by shipowners in order to defeat the benefits conferred by the new Merchant Shipping Act. But this raised a much more serious question. The shipowners who went in for that class of labour knew that if a Chinaman died there was much less responsibility attaching to them than if they employed Europeans. A Chinaman might come out of the stokehole overworked, jump overboard, and that was the end of the matter; but if a Britisher did the same thing, the probability was that some friend of his, probably his wife, or some member of his family would bring forward a claim against the shipowners for compensation. Chinamen were overworked, and he was going to give to the House some figures which he thought would startle even his right hon. friend. Recently they had had a Colonial Shipping Conference, and he wished to show how easy it was for the Board of Trade to make mistakes. At that Conference, in discussing the question of the number of men dying on board ship he stated that fifteen or twenty men every month committed suicide on board ship. Mr. Norman Hill, the representative of the shipowners, was very much struck with that statement, and Captain Chalmers challenged him on the point. Captain Chalmers said that he had the official Returns for the five years 1901–1906 inclusive, and the total number of suicides in British ships amongst firemen and trimmers during that period was 152. When Captain Chalmers was asked about disappearances he said they were put down as supposed suicides and the number was 159; that made 311 in five years. He was going to quote from the quinquennial return of the Board of Trade, Table 2, ratings and nationality of seamen. He found from that return that the total number of trimmers and firemen employed on 4th April, 1906, in the mercantile marine was 46,787, whereas Captain Chalmers said the number was 120,000. If they took away from the 46,787—and he was justified in doing so—the men in the coasting trade, it brought the total down to 39,565 British seamen, foreigners and lascars employed in the foreign trade. The deaths from suicide in the year 1907 amongst firemen and trimmers were seventy-five; one in 527 men committed suicide; deaths from suicide, missing and disappearance, were 150; and that worked out that one man in every 263 employed in the stokehole including Chinamen, lascars, and others, committed suicide in one year. The deaths from suicide, missing and disappearance, heatstroke, numbered one in every 217; on shore the deaths from suicide were only one in every 4,000. That terrible state of things now existed on board ship, and he did not care whether the men affected were lascars or Chinamen, if they were being done to death through overwork, it was the duty of the House of Commons to step in and put the matter right. He thought that explained why a preference was being given to those poor unfortunate men who were not able to speak for themselves. He wanted the Board of Trade, if they were going to inquire, to make a fairly full inquiry into the whole affair. He believed that the Board of Trade had now a good many powers in their hands, and if they would only take into consideration the rating of men he believed they had very ample powers. The Board of Trade had power to detain any ship as unseaworthy in consequence of being undermanned. If a ship had taken on a crew of Chinamen, none of whom could speak English or produce a scrap of evidence that they were reliable and competent, he submitted that that ship was not seaworthy, and that it was within the power of the Board of Trade to say to the owner: "I will not allow your ship to go to sea, because I do not think she is properly manned." In putting it that way, he was putting it in a reasonable and fair manner. He would be the last to prevent any man entering employment as long as he was competent to do the work and was getting fair conditions. Many of these men did not eat the same class of food as Britishers. It was astonishing how little food these men were provided with. The following shows how these men are fed. Daily scale of provisions for lascars and other native seamen:—For Home-Trade ships. Rice, 1 lb. 12 oz.; Dal, 6 oz.; Ghee, 2 oz.; Chillies, 4 dr.; Garlic, 8 dr.; Salt, 8 dr.; Turmeric, 8 dr.; Dry fish, 4 oz.; Onions, 8 dr.; Water, One gallon of 8 pints. For Foreign-going Ships. Rice, 1 lb. 6 oz.; Flour, 10 oz.; Dal, 6 oz. Ghee, 2 oz.; Salt, 8 dr.; Curry Stuff, 1 oz.; Dry fish, 4 oz.; Vegetables, 6 oz.; Tamarind, 1 oz.; Tea, 4 dr.; Sugar, 1 oz. 8 dr.; Lime-juice, 1 oz.; oil (mustard) 12 dr.; Water, six pints daily. He submitted that that was not sufficient food for the kind of work these poor unfortunate men were called upon to do, and in despair they sometimes jumped overboard. He believed that accounted for the serious number of Chinamen and lascars who died from heat stroke or committed suicide. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board would promise a full and careful inquiry.

Motion proposed, and Question proposed, "That, in the opinion of this House, the conditions under which Chinese seamen are employed on British vessels at ports in the United Kingdom calls for an immediate investigation by a Select Committee of this House, with a view to determining whether the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1906, are sufficient to enable the Board of Trade to prevent abuses arising out of the employment of Chinese in the British Mercantile Marine."—(*Mr. Fenwick.*)

Mr. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth) said the hon. Member who had just sat down had accused the shipowners of being of all employers the most unscrupulous, and, if the statements made were justified, the terms of this Resolution ought to be much wider than they were. In listening to the speeches of the mover and the seconder of the Motion, he was struck with the confusion of thought or argument between them. The Motion before the House was strictly confined in its terms to Chinese seamen

employed on British vessels at ports in the United Kingdom, but the speeches of the hon. Members really constituted an attack upon the employment of foreigners in the British mercantile marine. The mover seemed to indicate that provided a seaman could make out he was a British subject, everything was all right, and he could be employed without question. That was not the terms of the Motion. What was desired evidently was that the foreigner should be excluded altogether. [Cries of "No! no!"] That seemed to him to be the argument lying behind the speeches of the hon. Members. If that was not the case, he was very glad. He was not there to justify any ill-treatment of seamen of any nationality. During the time the recent Merchant Shipping Bill was passing through Committee, he thought the members of that Committee would agree that those representing the shipowners raised no objection to the various improvements and mitigations put forward for the benefit of the British sailor. He would only say that he could not think the proportion of foreign sailors in our mercantile marine was suffering anything from that Act, but had shared equally with the British sailor in the benefits it conferred. He thought the shipowners as a body were not the unscrupulous men the seconder of the Motion had indicated. He asserted with confidence that shipowners as a body were honourably carrying out the spirit of the Act, and the case which the hon. Member for Middlesbrough had brought forward did not justify the belief that since the passing of the Act the proportion of foreigners, whether Asiatic or European, in the mercantile marine had substantially increased.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON said he could not give the figures, because they had not yet been published by the Board of Trade, but he could say there were dozens of vessels carrying Chinamen now which a few months ago were carrying Britishers.

Mr. AUSTIN TAYLOR: That is the assertion of the hon. Gentleman.

Mr. HAVELOCK WILSON said he had the articles to prove his statement.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR said he was not prepared to accept the statement until he saw some official justification for it. The hon. Member appeared to assert that foreigners of European origin had disappeared from the British mercantile marine. Did they not form part of his Union? Was it possible for the hon. Member to get up in the House and represent that foreign sailors from the Continent were displaced in the British mercantile marine and that there were no European foreign sailors on board British ships?

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I never said that.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR said the hon. Member came very near to saying it when he gave the House to understand that there had been a process of getting rid of the European foreigner in order to replace him by the Asiatic. He did not believe that in this matter of employing foreign seamen the shipowner was altogether a voluntary agent. He spoke with some knowledge when he said that in the class of ships where foreigners were employed it was more often than not the fortune of the British shipowner to employ them because he had no alternative. There seemed to be an impression that every British steamer did nothing but trade to and from the ports of this country, but the fact was that many vessels were absent from these shores for nearly a year at a time, and it was not always possible to get British sailors to ship on these vessels.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON said he did not admit that.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR: Does the hon. Gentleman say that every steamer leaving this country could be manned by British seamen?

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: Yes.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR: I dispute that: I give it the direct negative. He believed it was not possible to man the British mercantile marine to-day with British sailors, however much they might desire to do so, and when they manned them with British sailors such was the nature of the employment that when these vessels put into foreign ports desertions took place. The idea that it was to the advantage of the shipowner to get rid of his crew in a foreign port in order to replace them with cheaper labour was one of the mistakes which people not directly acquainted with the question fell into. There was nothing more annoying to a shipowner than to see in his accounts the items of "blood money" that had to be paid to foreign boarding masters for replacing deserters from his ships. He did not profess himself to have the slightest sympathy with those who wished to substitute for British or European sailors cheaper Asiatic labour, but he believed one of the reasons why Asiatic seamen were engaged in the Far East was that they would stick more closely to the vessel than the sailors of British or foreign European origin who were shipped here. It was not to the interest of the shipowner that Chinese shipped in the Far East and brought here should leave the vessel. They were shipped for the round voyage, and they were entitled to remain by the vessel, and it was not to the interest of the shipowner that they should desert. He felt that the House was naturally disposed, as if he were not a shipowner he himself would be disposed, to resent the employment of Asiatics at all in the British mercantile marine, and to be perfectly candid with themselves and with their own prejudices, was it not a fact that almost everybody felt that the Chinaman or lascar, whether a British subject or not, was for racial reasons someone whom they would rather see substituted by a British-born sailor if they could get him. But let them not exaggerate the extent of this necessity. He had read the evidence given before the American Commission on their mercantile marine. The Americans employed Chinese in their ships in the Pacific. No doubt there were abuses there just as there were on some British ships, but the report of the Commission went to show that even American shipowners, with all their racial feelings, found that it could not pay them in the Pacific if they displaced the Chinese who at present manned their ships and substituted American seamen. However, he felt they must be candid in the matter, and while deploring the necessity for the mercantile marine's being manned so largely in these waters with Asiatic sailors, they had to recognise that it could not be altogether avoided. He only spoke for himself; but he would call the attention of the House to the strictly limited character of the Resolution. It dealt purely with Chinese sailors engaged on British ships in British ports, and lascars, foreigners like Greeks, Turks, Jews and infidels were left out of it. If there were abuses of a grave character connected with Chinese labour engaged in British ports, he would, so far as he was personally concerned, have not the least objection to their being made the subject of inquiry. He hoped, however, the House would not act precipitately, but would be sure from official and authoritative sources as to the extent of these abuses, if they existed, and whether they were of a grave character, before they allowed a very natural racial feeling to influence them unduly in their proceedings.

*Mr. HOUSTON (Liverpool, West Toxteth) said he was entirely in sympathy with the Motion moved by the hon. Gentleman, whom he complimented upon the temperate and at the same time forcible language with which he had brought it before the House. He very much regretted that the seconder had indulged in the exaggerated statements and irresponsible language for which he was so well known. He agreed with the object of the Motion, not merely as a pious opinion, but as one which he had put in practice for the past twenty-five years. He had a decided objection to the employment of foreigners of any nationality in our mercantile marine. He looked upon such as a source of danger to our country and an evidence of an element of the decadence of our nation. To his mind it was extremely regrettable, when one viewed the appalling amount of unemployment in this country, that they should have to employ foreigners to make up the shortage in the mercantile marine. But they all knew it was impossible to make sailors out of full-grown men. This was a question which ought to be dealt with by the nation. The shortage of British seamen in the mercantile marine was due entirely to the great diminution in the number of sailing ships which, in the old days, carried a number of apprentices and boys. These were, unfortunately, rather in the way on board steamships. He had tried the experiment himself, and he was sorry to say it did not turn out a success. Regarding the employment of foreigners, some little time ago he had the percentage of foreigners taken out in the whole of his fleet, and it worked out at about 2 per cent. There would have been no foreigners employed at all had it not been that vacancies caused by desertions abroad had to be filled, and the only possible men to be obtained were foreigners. In this matter of the exclusive employment of Britishers he had had to fight against his captains. Most sea captains considered the Norwegian or Swede or German a more desirable seaman than the Britisher; as a rule he was more sober and more amenable to discipline. He looked upon such men as a greater element of danger to our country than Chinamen would be in the case of war, as we were less likely to be engaged in a great naval war with China than with nations nearer home. No one had a kinder heart towards British sailors than he had. He had sailed with them himself, and it could not be said of him by anyone that he had not been a good comrade and a good employer. There was no better man afloat in times of danger and emergency than the British seaman, although he was not always so sober or amenable to discipline as he should like to see him. Reference had been made to the boarding-house master and the seaman. Why did the boarding-house master exist? Ever since the abolition of imprisonment for desertion in the case of seamen, it was a common practice for men to come down to the sailors' home and to sign articles to be on board at a certain time and not to come on board at that time, or sometimes they came down to the ship and then for some reason or another cleared out of it. Were they to delay the sailing of a ship for the want of one or two men? Then came the boarding master with his substitutes, and he was bound to say that in most cases the substitutes were anything but satisfactory. He remembered once himself, when a young man and an officer on board a liner, sailing on

Christmas Eve. A number of men did not turn up, but the boarding-house master did with his substitutes. He took the precaution to have the men's bags opened. They all had good substantial bags, but out of one man's bag he turned a pair of window curtains, a blanket, and some straw. That was what the man was provided with to go across the Atlantic. These substitutes would not be required if the sailor would join his ship when he had signed articles. He endorsed everything that had been said as to the inadvisability—he would like to use a stronger term—of employing foreigners on board ship who could not speak English, nor understand it. He quite agreed that a ship in that position was in an unseaworthy condition, and he sympathised with the unfortunate captain and officers who had to take a ship out to sea in such a condition. But what was often as great a danger was that the British seaman came on board sometimes in a state of intoxication. He was speaking, not as a "tramp" owner but as the owner of liners, which he thought it would be admitted were a higher class of ship, in regard to Chinese labour and Liverpool in particular, he would refer the mover and seconder of this Motion to shipowners not on that side of the House but on the other, to Liberals, to gentlemen who, at the last general election, denounced Chinese labour in the South African mines as the very worst kind of slavery, and yet did not hesitate to employ them on board their ships. True, these Gentlemen were free traders, and he had no doubt that they thought and they were entitled to think that they should have free trade in labour if they were to have free trade in regard to imported articles. No doubt the hon. Member for Hexham might be able to say something about Chinese labour. So far as the Chinaman was concerned, he had many faults but he had many virtues also. He was sober as a rule, industrious, frugal, and healthy. True, he did indulge in vices, and very serious vices, but he did not do so at times when he was at work or was expected to be at work. The opium den was a very deadly place, but it did not interfere with the sailor or fireman on board ship, whereas drink did interfere with the British sailor's performance of his duty and his efficiency on board ship. ["Oh!"] It was all very well for the hon. Member behind him to sneer at this. He was as good a friend and, perhaps, a better friend, to the seaman than the hon. Member. He did not rate them as angels; they had their faults. In spite of them, however, they deserved kindness, sympathy, and consideration. Therefore he had the greatest sympathy with the Motion of the hon. Member, and would not have spoken as he had done but for the expressions used with regard to a class of gentlemen in this country who, he maintained, for patriotism, respectability, honour and ability, were second to no other class in the country.

*The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Kearley, Devonport): The subject to which my hon. friend the Member for Wansbeck calls attention is one of extreme importance, dealing as it does with legislation which has been passed in the last two years by this House, and in a special sense with the administration of it under the responsibility of myself and my right hon. friend so long as we are at the Board of Trade. I desire to associate myself with the compliments paid to my hon. friend on the moderation he displayed in bringing forward this Motion and in presenting his case, more especially because I recognise that it deals with subject matter as to which the House may be deemed to be somewhat sensitive. The desirability of the employment of Chinese labour has been combated in this House, and therefore it is very liable to excite prejudice, but my hon. friend was very careful to put his case before us in a fair and square manner. In the terms of the Motion and by his speech my hon. friend, contrary to my hon. friend who seconded, has confined in the main part the issue to the engagement of Chinese seamen in home ports. My hon. friend the Member for Middlesborough emphasised and amplified many of the facts and arguments brought forward by the hon. Member for Northumberland, but he enlarged considerably the scope of criticism over a very wide field, and even if I were disposed to endeavour to reply to him, I am perfectly certain that the time would not allow me to give him any satisfaction on many points which he has referred to in his speech. The Motion seeks an investigation into the "conditions under which Chinese seamen are employed on British vessels in the United Kingdom, with a view of determining whether the provisions of the Act of 1906 are sufficient to enable the Board of Trade to prevent abuses arising out of the employment of Chinese in the mercantile marine." This rather assumes that we are made acquainted to-night for the first time with conditions and circumstances arising out of the passing of the 1906 Act, and that no administrative steps are being taken to insure that the benefits conferred under particular sections are working in the direction contemplated. I shall hope to show during the course of my speech that there is no ground for any assumption of this kind. In preparing for the Act coming into force we took the greatest care to consider the matter in all its bearings. We took the best expert advice that we could get, not merely from shipowners, but from the hon. Member for Middlesbrough himself, and others with a view of applying it in such a way that it would bring about the results for which the Act was passed. Since the Act came into force we have had representations made to us and certain communications pointing in certain directions, and we have not neglected the warnings so given, and long before the notice of this Motion was on the Paper we had already taken steps to gather information as to what would happen or was likely to happen detrimental to our legislation. I am entitled to put that before the House, because I rather gathered that my hon. friend is under the impression that he was revealing to us to-night much information which we had not before obtained. Under the Merchant Shipping Act of 1906, and also under another Act, the Workmen's Compensation Act of the same year, the position of the seamen in our mercantile marine has been enormously improved and great advantages are conferred upon them. In the first place, the seaman has obtained for the first time a statutory food scale, the enforcement of which gives him a far more liberal and varied dietary than he hitherto secured by voluntary arrangements. In the second place, his housing conditions on board ship have been materially bettered by the increased space allotted to his use; and in the third place, he is, under the Workmen's Compensation Act, protected in case of loss of life or injury. But it has been definitely stated by my hon. friend the Member for Wansbeck and my hon. friend the Member for Middlesbrough, that these benefits, instead of accruing to the advantage of the seaman, have worsened his position in the United Kingdom ports. That raises in a direct form a question of serious importance, and it is this, as to whether the bettering of the condition of the British sailor contemplated by the recent Acts passed for his benefit, is to be allowed in practice to prejudice him in the eyes of his employers. In view of the importance of this question, I have made personal investigation into the employment of Chinamen in British ships in British ports, and as it was desirable to endeavour to secure first-hand information, I thought I could not do better than interview the various marine superintendents who supervise the engagement of crews at London and the principal outports. It appears that for the last two or three years there has undoubtedly been a growth in the employment of Chinamen in British ships in our own ports, and there is a general consensus of opinion among the Marine Superintendents that recent legislation is likely to accelerate it. I do not put it higher than that, but as to the tendency, I have figures supplied to me by the marine superintendents. I will first of all give a summary of those given to me by the marine superintendents of the three leading marine offices in London, situated at Poplar, Dock Street, and the Victoria Docks. These figure, include some other Asiatics, but the majority of the men are Chinamen. In 1905 448 Chinese seamen signed on. In 1907 they had increased to 1,211, and from 1st January to 22nd February, which represents about the seventh part of this year, there were 256 signed on. I multiply that by seven and estimate the total quantity for the year, which works out at 1,792. So much for London. I have also the figures for the leading outports, viz., Glasgow, Liverpool, Cardiff, Barry, and Newport. In 1905 in the outports the number of Asiatics engaged was 1,424; in 1907 the number had grown to 3,173, and for that period of this year to which I have referred the number was 544, giving 3,808 as the total for the year if multiplied by seven.

*MR. HOUSTON: Can the right hon. Gentleman give us the separate figures for Liverpool?

*MR. KEARLEY: I have them at the office and shall be pleased to give them to the hon. Member. Summarising the results, we have 1,872 signing on in 1905 in the same ports, 4,384 in 1907, and, on the commutation I have used, 5,600 this year. That is a serious figure. My hon. friend has been perfectly frank in saying they do not wish to interfere in any way with the employment of Chinamen or other Asiatics abroa', in their legitimate sphere. They are directing attention in a forcible way to the increase of employment of the Chinaman in the United Kingdom. What is the explanation of these figures? My hon. friend says that the explanation is to be found in the fact that those who employ Chinamen hope to escape the liabilities and obligations of that beneficial legislation which we passed two years ago, and to which I have made reference in detail. I suppose they expect to save money. They certainly do so, because in no part of the United Kingdom is the Chinaman receiving the same wage as that paid to the British or European sailor serving on the same ship. I do not think too much stress can be laid on the admission of my two hon. friends that they do not in any way wish to interfere with the employment of Asiatics in their proper sphere. I am bound to point out that it is no part of British policy to prohibit the employment of foreigners, as such, in the mercantile marine. That point has been emphasised by my hon. friend, but he pointed out that in the interests of safety, the Act of 1906 prohibited the engagement at ports within home trade limits of foreign seamen with insufficient knowledge of English. He referred to the speech of my right hon. friend in introducing the Bill, when he quoted cases in justification of that section, and as illustrations of the sort of things we sought to legislate against—cases almost identical with the Huddersfield case referred to by my hon. friend. The language test does not apply to any British subject or any inhabitant of any British Protectorate, nor to lascars; and although we have only had two months experience of the working of this section, there are indications to show that these exemptions are being used by Chinamen in such a way that they are, in effect, defeating the very objects we had in view when the section was passed. My hon. friends pointed out—and I am bound to agree with them in the main—that practically every Chinaman signing on in home ports declares himself to come from Hong-Kong or Singapore, and so claims the benefit afforded to any British subject. We are not surprised, knowing he is a wily customer, that all documentary evidence that might be offered to show that he is not what he claims to be has disappeared, so that there is really no definite record of his nationality. Not very long ago the marine superintendent either at Barry or Cardiff refused to admit some Chinamen as British subjects, and give them the benefit of the section unless they proved their nationality. They immediately trooped into the town and came back armed with statutory declarations. That gives an idea of the direction in which this language test is being abused. I have another figure that I glean from Poplar. It illustrates the position most vividly. It should be remembered that until this year there was nothing to be gained by Chinamen by mis-stating their birthplace. Therefore, the records of the places whence they came were probably more or less accurately supplied. There were shipped from Poplar last year, 590 Chinamen, of whom only 190 claimed to have been born at Hong-Kong or Singapore. This year already, out of the 192 that have been shipped, 162, or 94 per cent. declared that Hong-Kong or Singapore was their place of birth. So I do not think it is a matter that requires very much arguing to show that the wily Chinaman has detected the weak spot in our armour and is utilising it to his own special advantage. Before I say what we are prepared to do, perhaps I ought to deal with some of the special points that have been referred to. My hon. friend referred to the illegal supply of seamen—to crimping—and wanted to know whether a particular man with a Chinese name was licensed to supply them. Of course he was not licensed. We know what is going on, but our difficulty at the moment is to get sufficient evidence to bring about a prosecution. But last year we were successful in Cardiff in prosecuting one of these Chinese boarding-masters for procuring seamen, not being licensed, and I assure the hon. Member that the man whose letter we have had read to us will not escape our attention if we can get the necessary evidence. The penalty is £20 for each man illegally supplied. I am familiar with the agreement to which the hon. Member has referred. It was signed as long ago as May of last year. The question is as to whether an illegality has been committed. By Section 114 of the Act of 1894, any stipulation may be inserted in an agreement if agreed to by the parties concerned, always provided it is not contrary to the law. The whole point is a legal one, and the matter has been communicated to our solicitor, and his opinion has been invited. If I find that an agreement of this kind is illegal, we shall know exactly what to do to prevent its occurrence. But I do not hesitate to stigmatise the agreement as most harsh and unconscionable, one quite unusual, and one that no decent shipowner would attempt to support or back up in any way. I think my hon. friend went out of his way to make observations about shipowners that he was certainly not entitled to make. There may be shipowners who do things they ought not to do, but when the hon. Member spoke of them as being among the worst employers to be found anywhere, I think, if I may say so, that that is a statement that ought not to be made.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I think my hon. friend did not catch what I said. I said that many shipowners were all that could be desired, but that a large number of them were the most unscrupulous employers I know in the country. I stand by that statement absolutely.

*MR. KEARLEY: I can say on the part of the Board of Trade, in connection with the Merchant Shipping Bill, that the Department has had from time to time to consult the shipowners on many questions which tended against their pockets and in the direction of the interests of the class whom the hon. Member represents. The experience of the Department leads me to say without hesitation that a more upright and honourable body of men willing and anxious to do their best to improve the lot of those whom they employ than the shipowners cannot be found. That does not prevent the hon. Member or the Board of Trade from saying it has come to our notice that there are certain shipowners who must not be taken as a type; but these are individuals for whom we can have no particular regard when they act contrary to the practice of the best shipowners. My hon. friend has referred to Chinamen engaging without producing their discharge book. But there is no legal obligation on the part of these men to produce their discharge book. A master is compelled to give a seaman a certificate or discharge book, so that he may have a record in seeking further employment, at the end of his voyage, but there is no obligation on the part of the seaman when he goes to seek employment to produce the book. I am not quite sure, even assuming we had the power, which we have not, to impose the obligation on every seaman to produce his discharge book, that we should carry the hon. Member for Middlesbrough with us.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: That is what I have been pleading for for years.

*MR. KEARLEY: I do the hon. Member an injustice. I thought possibly at times he might find it work hardship, but I make no more of that. The argument has been used that a man who signs on without being called upon to produce his discharge book gives no evidence of his competency. The hon. Member knows that a master is bound to engage a competent number of deck hands. Does the hon. Member deny that? They are the Board of Trade orders, and no marine superintendent would dare to allow a ship to go to sea unless there is a sufficient number of competent deck hands on board. If this condition is not satisfied there is a remedy provided in an appeal to the surveyor, and the Department is certainly not lacking in the power to see that ships go to sea properly manned, and ships can be detained until the crew is made up to a competent strength. The Board of Trade are doing that. Not long ago a ship wanted to go away with only five deck hands, the minimum number being six. The superintendent pointed out that under such circumstances it would be an unseaworthy ship, and the master engaged another man. It turned out that the additional man engaged had never been to sea before, and the matter was again reported, and that ship was not allowed to go to sea until an efficient man had been substituted. I know that the hon. Member is an advocate of a manning scale, and he wants to have on board so many A.B's. The hon. Member has put forward the recommendations of a previous Committee, but there was no unanimity about that Report; no two members of that Committee agreed to the same thing. The hon. Member is at this moment a member of an Advisory Committee on the subject of manning, and he can fight the question out there. As to the course which the Government proposed to follow, we do not desire the Select Committee which we are invited to appoint, because we have a better alternative. It would be impossible for a Select Committee to report in less than two years; and the Board of Trade are unwilling to transfer to other shoulders their responsibility for administering this Act—a responsibility which they are perfectly competent to discharge. With a fairly full knowledge of what has happened and of what the tendency undoubtedly is the Board will investigate this matter in order to check and nip in the bud the abuses that threaten to defeat the object of legislation. One thing the Board is determined to do at once, and that is that, when Chinamen in the United Kingdom ports claim as British subjects an exemption from the language test, the title to exemption will have to be proved.

MR. JOHN WARD: What sort of proof?

*MR. KEARLEY: I expected that question. I know there will be some difficulty. At present there is no system of registration of birth in China, but we have our Consular officers in China, and we have our own marine superintendents in Hong-Kong and Singapore, and I do not think it is beyond the wit of the Board of Trade to bring into existence some system of identification which will provide a check. We have determined to act in that matter straight away. As to the food scale for Indian lascars, the Board of Trade has been in communication with the Indian Government, and we are awaiting their reply. Criticism has been mainly addressed to the food scale which is not a statutory one, that which is provided for Chinamen. As to that the Board of Trade are instructing their marine superintendents to watch most carefully the food scale inserted in articles of agreement where Chinese are employed, particularly in respect of its adequacy. I think I have dealt with all the points raised, and I have endeavoured to do so in a frank way. I would ask my hon. friend not to persist in his Motion for the appointment of a Select Committee, because I feel confident—and I say this in the interest of the seamen—that the Board of Trade will be able to deal with this matter satisfactorily. It will be investigated at once, and we shall take good care, as is only fair, that all the interests concerned will have an opportunity of being heard. It is in that spirit that we shall try to bring the matter to a satisfactory conclusion.

MR. JOHN WARD said the hon. Member for the East Toxteth Division of Liverpool had addressed the House in the interest of the shipowners as he usually did on occasions like this, but he had utterly failed to deal with the points raised by the Member for Middlesbrough. He had absolutely avoided the question of the language test, and he had jumbled the figures which had been quoted in support of the Motion. Before the Motion was withdrawn it was necessary to make clear that the figures supplied by the Board of Trade amply justified the contention of the hon. Member for Middlesbrough. He did not understand his hon. friend to include all shipowners in the category to which his remarks referred, any more than he understood the hon. Member opposite when he referred to the drunken habits of sailors to ask the House to take it for granted that there was not a sober British sailor. It had been stated in the course of the discussion that the British seaman was a man who usually took his trade union with him, and that he usually wanted as good a food scale as he could possibly secure. The suggestion of his hon. friend the Member for Middlesbrough was that that being the case, the British seaman was gradually being ousted from the mercantile marine. It had also been stated that the shipowners, having tried Scandinavian seamen and found that they tried to approximate to the wages and conditions of British seamen, were gradually dispensing with British seamen, and turning out European sailors generally, for the purpose of taking on a more docile and less remunerated class of labour so far as the manning of the ships was concerned. The hon. Member for the East Toxteth Division had not met that case. The figures with respect to Scandinavian labour on board British ships showed that in 1901 there were 3,385 Norwegians, and in 1906, 3,449, or an increase of only 64. In 1901 there were 1,492 Danish seamen on board British ships, and in 1906 the number had decreased to 1,453. The Asiatics employed on British ships had increased from 4,164 in 1891 to 11,644, as appeared from the recent returns of the Board of Trade. These figures clearly showed that not only British seamen, but other European seamen were gradually being ousted from the mercantile marine, and that their places were being taken by the more docile Asiatics who would work under the most slavish conditions. The hon. Member for the East Toxteth Division had not contended that the Board of Trade figures were incorrect. The figures showed clearly that the tendency was to dispense with the labour of British seamen and to replace it by Asiatic labour remunerated on a different scale. He hoped shipowners would never try to approximate the food scale of the British sailors to that of the Asiatics. He was not prepared to assent to British workmen, either in the mercantile marine, or any other trade, being reduced to the conditions which it was possible to impose on Asiatics. It was morally certain that if such a danger arose, the change would be strenuously resisted and organised labour would fight before it submitted to worse conditions than prevailed in European countries to-day. Two years ago Parliament passed certain industrial legislation. Much had been done of late years in connection with industrial legislation. The mercantile marine had been brought under the Compensation for Injury Law, and a series of reforms had been introduced in the Mercantile Shipping Amendment Act. He had been delighted to hear the hon. Member for West Toxteth state that he refused to employ Chinamen in his fleet on principle.

*MR. HOUSTON: Or any foreigners, if I can avoid it.

MR. JOHN WARD said he was still more delighted to hear that from the hon. Gentleman; but from the figures quoted by the Secretary to the Board of Trade, there was not much room to doubt that some shipowners were gradually attempting to evade the expressed wishes of this House regarding the conditions of the mercantile marine by employing Asiatic labourers in preference to European labourers, whether Continental or British. This unquestionably required very serious attention on the part of the Department of the Board of Trade responsible for the administration of these particular Acts. Under these circumstances he wondered why the House was not treated to a fuller discussion of the matter in the speech of the hon. Member for East Toxteth Division of Liverpool. It might have been different had they been discussing Church disorders; but the position which the hon. Member took up was no answer to the proposition of his two hon. friends. He thought the offer of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade was extremely satisfactory, and seeing that the Board of Trade had made a promise to take the subject into very serious consideration, and had expressed their determination to enforce the law, he thought they had done a very good evening's work.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) said that there was one aspect of the employment of Chinese on British ships which had not been much referred to, but which had exercised considerably the people of Liverpool. Chinamen were allowed to escape, or at any rate did escape from steamers in port, and had gradually formed in Liverpool a colony which now amounted to many hundreds, and tended to increase. Certain things of a very objectionable kind went on in that colony. He was not one of those who would venture any opinion whatever as to the suitability of Chinamen being employed on board ship. That was out of his ken, but he was told that some shipowners who employed Chinamen said that they made excellent sailors. The hon. Member for Hexham, who had opposed him at the last election, when he was charged with being a party to the importation of Chinamen into the Transvaal, was a Gentleman who himself employed some thousands of Chinamen on board his ships coming into such British ports as Liverpool and London. He did not make any charge against the hon. Member, for he was convinced that it was sometimes an excellent thing to employ Chinamen, and a good thing also for the shipowners; but he wanted to know what the hon. Member for Hexham thought were the great advantages of employing Chinese seamen exclusively.

*Mr. HOLT (Northumberland, Hexham) said he had not intended to intervene in this debate, but circumstances had arisen which made it necessary for him to do so. One of the reasons why he was inclined to hold back from taking part in the debate was that he thought his old antagonist would insist on dragging him into the discussion, and he preferred to speak after the hon. Member rather than before him. He reminded the hon. Member that, if he knew anything of the character of the business he carried on, he would see that the Motion did not refer to it. It referred to the engagement of Chinese sailors in British ports.

Mr. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: It is a question of employment.

*Mr. HOLT said that the Motion referred to a different thing altogether. The hon. Member was entitled to bring forward a Motion himself with regard to employment if he desired. He entirely agreed with the Motion, and was glad the whole question was going to be thoroughly inquired into. So far as he and his firm were concerned, they had done nothing they were ashamed of. They were quite prepared to have everything connected with the engagement of sailors thoroughly and publicly inquired.

into. It would dissipate a good many misconceptions on the part of the hon. Gentleman. It had been said that it was the duty of British shipowners to send their ships to sea in a thoroughly sound and sea-worthy condition; but he thought no evidence could be adduced of any ship manned by Chinese coming to grief on account of these crews. As far as he was concerned in regard to any of the vessels of his line he would be quite willing to submit them to the arbitrament of any competent committee of underwriters that could be found, and he was quite sure that that would be the case with other shipowners. The Chinaman was not necessarily an inefficient seaman, and he did not think that he was cheaper than the English sailor. There was very little in it, as any shipowner who had investigated the matter would tell them. These men were paid about £3 10s. a month whereas the British sailor was paid from £4 to £4 10s. a month. There was therefore not much difference in the wages, particularly as a Chinese crew would exceed an English crew in numbers. So far as diet was concerned they found that it cost just as much to feed a Chinaman as to feed an Englishman. He thought the Board of Trade should insist that whatever was the class of labour employed on a ship there should be the same diet or an equivalent diet for all. Of course people of different nationalities did not like the same food, but there should be a diet which was equivalent in value. Then, again, the accommodation provided for the men should be equal, and he thought that a great deal was being done to improve the condition of men on board our ships. In securing this, public opinion had been of great advantage and everybody was taking steps in favour of the seamen. The hon. Member for West Toxteth had alluded to him in the course of the debate and had also expressed great interest in the British sailor, expressing a great wish and desire to benefit him and to open up a better career for him. He had spoken very emphatically of his devotion to the British sailor, but he had also spoken of the drawback which his habits of intemperance created in the eyes of many people. Might he suggest that if the hon. Gentleman felt in that manner upon this subject he should give a very cordial support to the Licensing Bill of the Government? If he wished to give the British sailor a better chance in his competition with the foreigner the hon. Member ought to do his very best to support the Government's Licensing Bill and to endeavour to strengthen its provisions and improve the habits of the British sailor which were a far greater detriment to him than all the foreigners.

*MR. HOUSTON: Then the British sailor would get his drinks from the shebeens or clubs.

*MR. HOLT said he did not think the British sailor had time to join clubs. In conclusion he would say that as a shipowner he would have very great pleasure in supporting any steps which the Board of Trade might think it necessary to take in this matter.

MR. FENWICK said that after the statement made by the Secretary to the Board of Trade he wished to ask the leave of the House to withdraw his Resolution, but before doing so he could not help expressing his regret that a tone of recrimination should have been introduced into the debate by the two hon. Members for Liverpool who had spoken on the other side of the House. The House would do him the justice to say that in moving this Resolution he had studiously refrained from bringing any recriminatory charge against Gentlemen on either one side of the House or the other, and he regretted more than he could say that the two hon. Members had gone out of their way, as it seemed to him, to bring a charge such as they had brought against his hon. friend the Member for Hexham. He begged to ask leave to withdraw his Resolution.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs) moved the Adjournment of the House.

Question proposed, "That this House do now adjourn."—(*Mr. Lloyd-George.*)

*MR. MORTON protested against the House adjourning at five minutes to eleven, and at a time when the Bills of private Members might be considered and perhaps passed. If, however, the Government would not allow them to do so they could not bring them on, but some of the Bills were of the utmost importance. Some of them, like his Bill for the regulation of sea fisheries in Scotland, were absolutely necessary to carry out the present law as to illegal trawling, and if the Government refused to allow them to do anything with it they would be backing up companies and trusts, and aiding them to break the law. But the Government would not allow private Members to legislate on any subject, and he thought that they were entitled to a little more consideration. Nearly all their rights and privileges had been taken away from them, although there was no doubt that a good many of the measures proposed and carried through the House by private Members had been just as good as those which had been brought forward by any Government. He thought the time had come when the Government should not attempt to impede public business in this reckless way, but should allow them at least to go through the Orders of the day. He hoped the Government would reconsider its action and not obstruct necessary and useful legislation.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) thought that after the news which had just arrived from Hastings, culminating a long series of remarkable bye-elections, the desire of the Government to retire at the earliest possible moment to think over the situation was only natural, and he therefore agreed that the House should rise.

CAPTAIN J. CRAIG (Down, E.) said that he certainly did not agree that, after listening with great interest to the Naval debate, and the discussion upon the employment of Chinese in British ships, they should go on to consider the question of the prohibition of medical practice by companies. Such a proposal seemed to him to be one which would not commend itself to any hon. Member in the House, and he hoped the House would agree to the Adjournment.

Question put, and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at one minute before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 4th March, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz. :—Dublin and South Eastern Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS].

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in respect of the Bills comprised in the List reported by the Chairman of Ways and Means as intended to originate in the House of Lords, they have certified that the Standing Orders have not been complied with in the following case, viz. :—London and Windsor Motor Roads, Tramroads, and Tramways.

PRIVATE BILL PETITIONS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the Petition for the following Bill, originating in the Lords, the Standing Orders have not been complied with, viz. :—London and Windsor Motor Roads, Tramroads, and Tramways [Lords].

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Harwich Docks Bill, reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

PETITIONS.

HUMBER COMMERCIAL RAILWAY AND DOCK BILL.

To be read a second time upon Wednesday next.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation; from Ilminster; Kirby Moorside; Plymouth; and, Whyteleafe, ; to lie upon the Table.

MORAY FIRTH (ILLEGAL TRAWLING.)

Petition from Macduff, for prevention; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Exeter; Heavitree; Ushaw Moor; and Worksop; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour; from Nelson; and, Walton on Thames; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

VIVISECTION (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Copy presented, of Fourth Report of the Commissioners, with Appendix (Minutes of Evidence), October to December, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS, 1908-9 (VOTE ON ACCOUNT).

Estimate presented, showing the several Services for which a Vote on Account is required for the year ending 31st March, 1909 [by Command]; Referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 82.]

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Supplementary Regulation for Secondary Schools in Wales (including Monmouthshire), 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

REVENUE (COLLECTION OF TAXES).

Return ordered, "showing for each of the three Kingdoms (1) the amount charged for Income Tax, Land Tax, and

Inhabited House Duty for the financial years 1906, 1907, and 1908; and (2) the amounts and percentage of the same collected in each country by the 31st day of January and the 28th day of February, respectively, in each of the said years (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 82, of Session 1907)."—(*Mr. McCrae.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Positions of Ex-telegraph Messengers.

MR. J. P. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of his statement in the House of Commons during the debate on the Post Office Estimates last year, as to the lot of those telegraph messengers who, under the rule in existence, are compelled to leave the service at the age of sixteen years, he will issue instructions, that in all cases where casual and auxiliary labour is employed in the postmen's office, Dublin, ex-telegraph messengers should be regarded as having prior claim to outsiders, provided their health and character is good; and will he state the number of telegraph messengers in Dublin dismissed since the termination of the South African War, and the cause of their dismissal, and the number of telegraph messengers in Dublin promoted to be assistant postmen during the past two-and-a-half years.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The question raised in the hon. Member's inquiry is one which I have at present under my consideration, but I may say at once that those telegraph messengers for whom permanent employment in the Post Office cannot be provided are required to leave at sixteen in order to give them the best opportunity of obtaining other employment. The same consideration makes it undesirable to continue their employment as auxiliaries, without a prospect of establishment. The statistics asked for by the hon. Member would take a considerable time to prepare and would not assist in arriving at a decision in the matter.

Promotion of Engine Room Artificers.

MR. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will state the method by which engine room artificers of the Royal Naval Reserve are promoted to warrant engineers, and the nature of the examination.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) Engine room artificers of the Royal Naval Reserve, who have been specially recommended by the commanding officer of one of His Majesty's ships on the completion of a period of training in the Fleet, are eligible for advancement to the rank of warrant engineer, Royal Naval Reserve. Advancements to this rank are made from time to time by selection from experienced engine room artificers, Royal Naval Reserve, between twenty-nine and forty years of age but no man is considered eligible for promotion who has not received the special recommendation referred to above. No examination is held.

Shipping Rates.

MR. CURRAN (Durham, Jarrow): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, in view of the subsidies being paid by the Government to various shipping companies, and the present high Atlantic shipping rates, consideration will be given to the advisability of fixing maximum rates for British ships sailing from British ports.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) My hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question. The so-called subsidies referred to in the Question are, generally speaking, payments for services rendered, and these payments would presumably have to be increased if a limitation of rates were imposed as a condition. The subject of combinations of shipowners to maintain rates by a system of deferred rebates is at present being considered by a Royal Commission. I do not, as at present advised, propose to take any further action in the matter.

Death Duties.—Valuation of Licensed Premises.

SIR HENRY KIMBER (Wandsworth): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is possible to obtain from the accounts of the estates of deceased persons at the Inland Revenue Office some particulars, for the information of the House, as to the number of years' purchase at which licensed property has been valued for the purpose of the assessment of the death duties.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) As I stated in reply to a Question by the hon. Baronet on the 2nd of March, no separate record is kept of the death duties derived from licensed property. It is not often that the Board of Inland Revenue have to consider, on any one occasion, the value of more than one of the many interests in such property. The information obtained from the Estate Duty statistics relative to the sworn value of licensed property is, therefore, very incomplete, and it would probably be only misleading unless supplemented by other information of a confidential character.

The Zakka Khel Territory.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the territory occupied by the Zakka Khel lies inside or outside of the external frontier of His Majesty's possessions in India; and, if inside of that frontier, whether he can lay within the Library a map which will clearly indicate the position of that frontier.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The territory of the Zakka Khel lies within the external frontier of His Majesty's possessions in India, as I stated in reply to the hon. Member's Question of Monday. A copy of the official published map of Afghanistan, showing that frontier, will be placed in the Library.

Free Grant of Ammunition to Civilian Rifle Clubs.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in order to promote efficiency and keenness among civilian members of rifle clubs, he will make a grant of ·303 service ammunition to rifle clubs at the rate of 100 rounds for each skilled shot certificate issued by the National Rifle Association to members of such clubs who have attained a high standard of skill with the service rifle on open ranges.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) There are no funds at my disposal at present to enable me to make the grant suggested in the Question. It is just possible we may be able to do something for them by supplying a certain amount of ammunition at reduced rates.

The Territorial Army Attestation Form.

MR. COURTHOPE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can give any further information as to the amendment of the attestation form for the Territorial Force.

MR. COURTHOPE: To ask the Secretary of State for War what steps should be taken or statements made, with reference to the attestation form, by Yeomanry or Volunteer officers who are under orders to ascertain during the present week whether the men now serving under them will continue to serve in the Territorial Force.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) In reply to these Questions the attestation form has been submitted to the advisory council, and a modified form will be issued. In the meantime there is no reason why Yeomanry and Volunteer officers should not continue to ascertain whether the men now serving under them will serve in the Territorial Force. The terms and conditions of service under the Act have been fully explained in the published leaflets, and are not in any way affected by the particular form adopted for the attestation.

Swivel-lug of the Enfield Rifles.

MR. COURTHOPE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Small Arms Committee who rejected the swivel-lug immediately in front of the magazine from the design of the converted long Lee-Enfield rifle intended that the guard-screw in front of the magazine should be interchangeable with the swivel screw on the toe of the butt; and whether he will consult the Small Arms Committee as to the advisability of making this alteration in the case of all future conversions.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The question of placing the swivel-lug immediately in front of the magazine of the converted long Lee-Enfield rifle was not referred to the Small Arms Committee, and was therefore not dealt with by them. The swivel-screw on the toe of the butt, which is a wood screw for screwing into the butt, cannot be used in place of the guard-screw in front of the magazine which screws into the metal of the body, as the present butt-swivel cannot be detached from the screw of which it forms part.

Guns for the Territorial Army.

Sir GEORGE DOUGHTY (Great Grimsby): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the guns to be supplied to the field artillery of the Territorial Force are ready for distribution; when will they be distributed to the field artillery brigade at Grimsby, Boston, and Louth; and whether, if the whole of the guns cannot now be sent, two guns per battery will be forwarded to each of the places mentioned, in order that drill may be commenced as soon as possible.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) These guns are not yet ready for distribution, but sufficient will be completed this month for an issue of one gun per brigade, and such issue is now proceeding. The conversion and issue of the remainder will be carried out rapidly during the coming financial year, by the end of which, as I have previously explained to the House, it is proposed to issue all the guns required.

Territorial Army—Pay of Quartermasters.

Mr. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the quartermasters (many of whom are old soldiers with distinguished service) now serving in the Volunteer Force, and receiving a salary from the commanding officer out of the funds of the corps, will in future be paid by the County Territorial Associations; and, seeing that in future their duties will be more onerous than before, whether an increase of pay can be guaranteed to them.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Will my hon. friend kindly refer to my reply to a Question put on the 26th February on this subject by the hon. Member for Dundee?

The Territorial Army—Attestation Form.

Mr. GRETTON (Rutland): To ask the Secretary of State for War if Army Form 502, the attestation paper for the Territorial Force, is definitely withdrawn; and, if so, whether he will consider the expediency of postponing the time for the completion of the new attestation papers to some date later than the 31st March, in view of the great amount of clerical work entailed and the delay in issuing the papers.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The original attestation form for the Territorial Force has been cancelled, and it is hoped to issue the revised form very shortly. Serving Yeomen and Volunteers who wish to enter the Territorial Force need not attest before 30th June and cannot begin to do so before 31st March, so that ample time has been provided.

Arrest of Eugene O'Riordan at Kingwilliamstown.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Constabulary authorities are aware that a respectable young man named Eugene O'Riordan was arrested on Sunday 23rd inst. in Kingwilliamstown, county Cork, by an acting sergeant of Royal Irish Constabulary, and taken to the police station, but on arrival there no charge was preferred and he was immediately released; and what explanation can be given to justify the arrest of this young man against whom no charge was made.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) A police sergeant found O'Riordan on licensed premises during prohibited hours on Sunday, and, as he failed to give his full name and address, the sergeant took him to the police station under the authority of the 37 and 38 Vic., c. 69, s. 27. Upon arrival at the police station O'Riordan's name and address were given by his uncle to the police, and O'Riordan was at once released. It was then found that he was a *bona fide* traveller, and consequently he was not prosecuted.

Purchase of the Cooper Estate.

Mr. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that negotiations for sale and purchase as between landlord and tenants have been for some time in progress on the Cooper estate, around Knocklong, in the county Limerick; is he aware that John McGrath and Thomas Barry have been evicted tenants on that estate for more than twenty years; has an inspector from the Estates Commissioners visited McGrath and Barry, and, if so, with what result; and will he ask the Estates Commissioners to put themselves in communication with

Messrs. Sanders, of Charleville, and Mr. Halte, with a view to the immediate reinstatement of Messrs. McGrath and Barry through those agents.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that no proceedings for the sale of the estate referred to in the Question have been instituted before them. The Commissioners, however, have inquired into the cases of John McGrath and Thomas Barry, who were evicted from the Cooper estate about twenty years ago, and the holdings have been inspected. The Commissioners have recently furnished to the owner a preliminary estimate of the amounts they are prepared to advance for the purchase of these holdings; but they have not yet received a reply.

South African War Compensation Claims —Case of the Lydenburg Estates.

MR. B. S. STRAUS (Tower Hamlets, Mile End): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that a company called the Lydenburg Estates duly lodged a claim with the proper authorities for damage done by the British troops during the South African War, and for goods requisitioned; and that, on the advice of the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, they withdrew their claim in respect of the first item and restricted their claim to goods absolutely requisitioned by the British troops, and for which they have produced the receipt of a major in the British Army, but after repeated applications they have failed to obtain a settlement; and will he look into this, with a view to arranging that this private company shall be paid for the goods supplied to His Majesty's troops.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The Lydenburg Estates were informed by the Colonial Office when they sent in their claim that no compensation could be paid to companies for general war damage whether caused by the Boers or by British troops, compensation being paid only to individuals to enable them to resume their normal occupations. That part of the claim which rested on a certificate signed by a major in the British Army was very carefully considered both by the Governor and by the Secretary of State, and it was decided that the view of the Central Judicial Commission, which adjudicated upon the claim, that the certificate in question could not be regarded as a military receipt but only as evidence of war losses, must be upheld. The claim has been exhaustively considered and it is not possible now to re-open it.

Irish Technical Schools Building Fund.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that serious financial difficulties have arisen in various Irish technical schools owing to the repayments made for building; and whether the Treasury will arrange immediately to provide the amount necessary as a building fund to enable those schools to be efficiently and economically worked.

(*Answered by Mr. T. W. Russell.*) My hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury has asked me to answer this Question. The matter referred to in the Question is under consideration.

Foot-and-Mouth Disease—Importation of Foreign Forage.

MR. FIELD: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether in view of the fact that the foot-and-mouth disease was introduced into Scotland through the medium of imported foreign forage, he will, in conjunction with the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland), arrange to prohibit the importation of any foreign forage from countries where there is not a clean bill of animal health into any part of the three kingdoms.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The Answer is in the affirmative.

Single School Areas in Yorkshire.

MR. ACLAND (Yorkshire, Richmond): To ask the President of the Board of Education what number of parishes in the rural districts of the North Riding of Yorkshire contained on the 1st of January of this year only one public elementary school, and more than one respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) A Return is in course of preparation giving the names and other information regarding all voluntary schools in single-school parishes as defined by the Education Bill, but I regret I am unable to extend its scope so as to include parishes with more than one school.

Post Office Appointments.

MR. J. P. NANNETTI: To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state the number of assistant postmen, ex-telegraph messengers, awaiting appointments; their average service and wages; the number of ex-Army and Naval men who have been appointed over those men during the period from which their service is taken; if he has any official reports showing that the majority of ex-Army and Naval candidates at Dublin are incapable of performing the ordinary duties of town postmen after reasonable training; will he say how many ex-Army and Naval men were capable of substituting the regular walk holders last year whilst they were on annual and sick leave, and if the assistant postmen (ex-messengers) over whom those men are appointed are capable of taking up any duty on a moment's notice, and will he recommend the abolition of the Army scheme in the interests of the public service; how many ex-Army and Naval men, employed as town postmen in Dublin, were medically disqualified from the Army and Navy; how many of those men are in receipt of pensions, and, in the interests of the public service, will he discontinue the employment of those men; and will he say how many ex-Army and Naval men, employed as town postmen in Dublin, are competent in setting in correspondence on heavy commercial walks.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The system under which every other postman's place has to be offered to an ex-soldier or ex-sailor was instituted some years ago for national reasons; and I cannot discontinue the system even if I desired to do so. To obtain the detailed information asked for would entail much expense and trouble.

Manufacture of Horseshoes at Woolwich.

MR. A. L. STANLEY (Cheshire, Eddisbury): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether any of the horseshoes required by the Army have at any time, during the last five years, been manufactured at Woolwich Arsenal.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) No horseshoes have been made in the Ordnance Factories within the last five years.

Malta Fever.

SIR W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for War what was the number of cases of Malta fever occurring among the troops in Malta in the years 1905, 1906, and 1907, respectively; how many of the cases in each year terminated fatally; whether the reduction in the number of cases is attributable to the prohibition of the use of goats' milk or to any method of protective inoculation; and whether the disease continues to prevail among the native population.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The number of cases of Malta fever occurring among the troops in Malta, and the number of deaths during the years 1905, 1906, and 1907, was as follows:—

	Cases.	Deaths.
1905 - -	643	16
1906 - -	161	4
1907 - -	11	1

The reduction in the number of cases of Malta fever among the troops in Malta is solely attributable to the prohibition of the use of goats' milk in barracks and hospitals. Protective inoculation has not been used for the troops. The disease, according to information received from the Board of Health in Malta, continues to prevail among the native population without any change or abatement.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

East Indians in Nyassaland.

MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has any information regarding the number of His Majesty's East Indian subjects in Nyassaland.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (MR. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): I regret that I am unable to supply the hon. Member with exact statistics, but I understand from the Governor of Nyassaland, that, exclusive of the soldiers of the Indian contingent, there are some 300 or 400 of His Majesty's East Indian subjects in Nyassaland.

Chinese Labour in South African Mines.

EARL WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, if he will state the number of Chinese labourers who were working in the South African mines on 1st January, 1906, and on 1st January, 1908.

MR. CHURCHILL: The official returns show the numbers employed on the last day of the month. The figures are, 31st December, 1905, 47,267, but for the purpose of accurate calculation, to this should be added the 16,000 coolies liable to be imported on licences issued under the late Government during the last few weeks of its tenure of office, making a total of 63,267. The total number on 31st December, 1907, was 35,676.

EARL WINTERTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will cause a copy of his answer to be circulated with the Votes, and others to be sent to the past and present presidents of the Liberal Publication Department?

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): Are these slowly-disappearing Chinese being replaced by natives?

MR. CHURCHILL: Questions which are answered orally are not circulated with the Votes, according to the present procedure of the House, which I have no power to alter. As to the other part of the noble Lord's Question, I am sure he does not expect me to take it seriously. The places of the repatriated Chinese have been more than filled by natives.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: Why, then, is the Transvaal Government proceeding to recruit natives from Madagascar?

*MR. SPEAKER: That hardly arises out of the Question on the Paper.

The Transvaal Government and the French Government — Indentured Labour from Madagascar.

EARL WINTERTON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will lay upon the Table of the House a copy of the correspondence that has passed between His Majesty's Government, the Government of the French Republic, and the Transvaal Government, with reference to a supply of indentured labour for the Transvaal mines.

MR. CHURCHILL: As no correspondence has passed with the French Republic I do not feel that the noble Lord's suggestion can be fruitfully adopted.

EARL WINTERTON asked whether it was not a fact that, according to an answer given some time ago in the House, negotiations had been carried on between the Transvaal Government and the Government of the French Republic with regard to the supply of indentured labour from Madagascar?

MR. CHURCHILL: No, sir.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): Are we to understand that no correspondence on this subject has passed between the Government of the Transvaal and the French Government?

MR. CHURCHILL: Yes, Sir, I have said so distinctly. No correspondence has passed between the Government of the Transvaal and the French Government, so far as I am aware.

MR. HOWARD (Cumberland, Eskdale) asked whether there was any truth in the statement of the hon. Member for Hastings that the Chinese have been replaced by men, women, and children from the New Hebrides.

[No Answer was returned.]

SIR GILBERT PARKER: May I ask whether it is not the case that the right hon. Gentleman stated in this House that negotiations had been proceeding between this Government and the French Government on behalf of the Transvaal Government for the recruiting of natives?

MR. CHURCHILL: I stated that the Transvaal Government had approached us on the subject of approaching the French Government; but I did not say that correspondence had actually taken place, and none has actually taken place.

Earl WINTERTON: I have some doubt as to whether the Question I am about to put arises directly out of the right hon. Gentleman's reply—

*Mr. SPEAKER: If the noble Lord has any doubt, he had better not ask it.

Earl WINTERTON: On consideration, Sir, I think I have no doubt.

*Mr. SPEAKER: On consideration, I think I have.

Earl WINTERTON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will afford the House an opportunity of discussing any fresh proposal that may be made by either His Majesty's Government to the Transvaal Government, or by the Transvaal Government to His Majesty's Government, for the supply of indentured labour to the South African mine before any definite action is taken.

Mr. CHURCHILL: Questions of business should be addressed to the Leader of the House.

Uganda Game Reserve.

Sir CLEMENT HILL (Shrewsbury): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Uganda railway zone is still maintained as a game reserve; whether any infringements of that reserve have recently occurred; and, if so, whether any proceedings have been taken against a person or persons implicated.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The game reserve in the neighbourhood of the Uganda railway is still maintained. No notification has been received in the Colonial Office of any recent infringements of the reserve.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) asked whether, in view of the field presented for British settlers in this district, the right hon. Gentleman intended to follow the policy of his predecessor in establishing great game preserves at the public expense for the sole benefit of the rich man's sport.

Mr. CHURCHILL was understood to say there was a good deal in the suggestion of the hon. Member with which he was in sympathy.

Mr. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.) asked whether the hon. Gentleman who put the Question had not himself been guilty of breaking the law.

Mr. CHURCHILL replied that he could not answer for the hon. Gentleman who put the Question.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork N.): Can you answer for yourself?

Mr. CHURCHILL: Under Section 23 of the Game Ordinance of the East African Protectorate, the Governor has authority to permit individuals whom he may think fit to go in pursuit of game, and it is entirely on the operation of that statute that the hon. Gentleman who put the Question would rely.

Martial Law.

Mr. G. GREENWOOD (Peterborough): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the statement in the Circular Dispatch of 16th January, 1867, printed as an appendix to the Natal Blue-book of May, 1906, viz. that to the Governor alone belongs the responsibility both of proclaiming and of revoking at any moment martial law, applies to self-governing Colonies as well as to Crown Colonies.

Mr. CHURCHILL: No, Sir. The Secretary of State is advised that in a self-governing Colony martial law can only be proclaimed or revoked on the advice of Ministers.

Dinizulu's Trial.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Colonial Office has received any statement from Mr. Jellicoe in reference to the trial of Dinizulu; and whether any steps are being taken in consequence to secure for Dinizulu every facility to prepare his defence.

MR. CHURCHILL: Yes, Sir, but I fear that I cannot add anything to the reply which I gave yesterday to my right hon. friend the Member for the Rushcliffe Division.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Are we to understand that the Colonial Office have received the statement from Mr. Jellicoe, and if so, will an inquiry be made into the serious allegations made by him?

MR. CHURCHILL: Lord Elgin has received a communication. As to whether any special inquiry will be made I cannot say, but we are keeping ourselves well informed from Natal.

Charges against Dinizulu.

MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can now state if Dinizulu has been informed of the definite charges on which he is to be tried; and will he state what those charges are.

MR. CHURCHILL: As I informed my hon. friend on the 10th instant, Dinizulu has been arrested upon warrants charging him with: (1) High treason; (2) contravening the provisions of Section 44 of Act No. 1 of 1906, known as the Firearms and Ammunition Act of 1905; (3) Sedition and rebellion; (4) (*a*) Murder; (*b*) being an accessory to the crime of murder; (*c*) conspiracy to murder; (*d*) inciting to murder. So far as I am aware, these general charges have not been amplified by any specific facts as to whom he is accused of inciting to murder, or who was the person murdered, or when the incitement was given, or in what the acts of treason, sedition and rebellion, etc., consist. The Secretary of State is informed by the Natal Government that this procedure, which seems scarcely immune from criticism, is in full accordance with the laws of the Colony of Natal during the stage of preliminary examination against an accused person. If, however, the examining magistrate decides that a *prima facie* case exists for the committal of Dinizulu for trial a full indictment will have to be framed in accordance with the usual practice of courts of justice.

MR. JOHN WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): Are we to understand that the law of Natal allows a charge of murder, even against a white man, to be instituted and pressed without identification being made of the person who is supposed to have been murdered, or does that principle of law apply only to the native population?

MR. CHURCHILL: I understand that the special law in this matter rests upon various proclamations which have been issued from time to time by the Governor in Council, or upon advice, and which have the effect of law. These proclamations do not discriminate between different races, but they do permit a preliminary examination to take place without precise definition of the charge.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Can the right hon. Gentleman cite a single case in which a white man has been treated in the same way as Dinizulu?

MR. CHURCHILL: I cannot cite it now, but I should not like to say there were not cases.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I should think not.

MR. MACKARNESS: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell the House how a prisoner is to meet the charges, if he is not told what they are?

MR. CHURCHILL: I am afraid I must ask for notice of a Question of that kind.

MR. LEHMANN (Leicestershire, Market Harborough): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state what arrangements have been made and what date has been fixed for Dinizulu's trial; have counsel been appointed to defend him; and have they had free access to him for the purpose of preparing his defence.

MR. CHURCHILL: Dinizulu has not yet been committed for trial. With regard to his defence, I am not at present in a position to add anything to the full reply on the subject which I gave yesterday to my right hon. friend the Member for the Rushcliffe Division.

Fighting at Suj Bulak.

*MR. REES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether a pitched battle has been fought between the Kurds and Persians at Suj Bulak; and, if so, with what results.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury; for Sir EDWARD GREY): Fighting of a more or less desultory character took place in January between the Persians and Kurds in this neighbourhood. The Kurds have apparently now withdrawn, and the Turks have evacuated Suj Bulak, where they had been in occupation for several days.

*MR. REES: Are these Kurds Turkish or Persian subjects?

MR. RUNCIMAN asked for notice of that Question.

Workmen's Compensation.

*MR. REES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he proposes to amend the law so as to provide a remedy for a workman who has been awarded compensation against a contractor who was not insured in respect of such liability, and who, owing to his inability to pay, has been declared bankrupt.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I do not see what remedy could be provided to meet the cases contemplated by my hon. friend, except by the establishment of some system of compulsory insurance. As to this, I think that some experience of the working of the present law is necessary, but I am considering at what time it will be desirable to undertake the inquiry into the question of a general scheme of compulsory insurance which I promised on the Second Reading of the Workmen's Compensation Bill in 1906. I may perhaps remind my hon. friend that in the cases of sub-contracting, dealt with in Section 4 of the Act, the workmen employed by a sub-contractor is given a right to proceed either against his immediate employer, or against the principal contractor.

Welsh Mining Inspector.

*MR. REES: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is proposed to make Welsh a subject of examination for appointment to the post of mining inspector in Wales.

MR. GLADSTONE: The answer is in the negative. No difficulty has been experienced hitherto in ascertaining whether an inspector, whom the Home Office proposed to send to a Welsh district, is acquainted with the Welsh language.

Railway Inquiry.

MR. G. A. HARDY (Suffolk, Stowmarket): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is now prepared to announce the composition of the Committee of Inquiry into the railway system of the United Kingdom, and give terms of reference.

MR. WARDLE (Stockport): At the same time I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether an inquiry into the existing relations between the railways and the State is to be held; and, if so, if he can say what the nature and extent of the inquiry will be, and when the inquiry will commence.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): The informal Railway Conference which is meeting at the Board of Trade is composed of representatives of railway companies, traders, agriculturists, the general public, and Government Departments. Its object is to endeavour to arrive at a general agreement with regard to such modifications of the existing law and of the relations subsisting both among the companies, and between the companies, traders, agriculturists, and the general public as may conduce to economy and elasticity of railway working, and also provides for the equitable apportionment of any advantages accruing therefrom. The Conference has decided to appoint several

Sub-Committees consisting partly of its own members partly of others to consider and report to it on certain groups of questions, among which is the question of the conditions and procedure for working agreements, combinations and amalgamations of railways, including any change in the relations between the railways and the State which might arise therefrom.

MR. CURRAN (Durham, Jarrow) asked whether the State purchase of railways would be one of the subjects discussed.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said it was, of course, in the power of the Committee to consider that among other things; but the Committee was not specially appointed to consider the nationalisation of railways, but rather to consider the question of what economies could be effected by combination generally.

MR. JOHN WARD: Are we to understand that this is the Committee that was agreed upon as the outcome of the debate the other evening?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: This last Committee that I have referred to is.

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD (Leicester) inquired how the extra appointments to the Committee had been made.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: In the usual way on the responsibility of the Government.

SIR F. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): May I ask whether these Committees and Sub-committees are to report their recommendations to the Board of Trade, and whether these reports or recommendations will be placed in possession of the Members of this House?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Most certainly I contemplate that.

Proposed Whaling Station on the Donegal Coast.

MR. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that a company has commenced the erection of a whaling station on the Island of Arranmore, Donegal; whether he is aware that where whaling stations have been established herring and other fisheries have been ruined; and whether he will refuse to permit the construction and use of the proposed whaling station at Arranmore.

The following Question on the same subject also appeared on the Paper:

MR. HUGH LAW: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the proposed establishment of whaling stations at Arranmore and elsewhere on the coast of Donegal; whether he is aware that the modern methods of whaling, wherever whaling stations have been established, have resulted in the destruction of the herring and other fisheries; whether he is aware that the livelihood of 20,000 fishermen on the coast of Donegal and the adjoining islands is dependent on the preservation and extension of the existing fisheries; and whether seeing that the proposed stations cannot be erected without encroachment on the foreshore, the Board of Trade will refuse its assent to the erection of any whaling stations on the coast of Donegal.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: As this Question and that of the hon. Member for West Donegal relate to the same matter, I may, perhaps, be allowed to deal with them together. The Board of Trade have received an application from the Arranmore Whaling Company, Limited, for permission to construct certain works on the foreshore and seabed of Arran Island, county Donegal. In accordance with their usual practice the Board of Trade have given instructions for the application to be advertised and several objections have already been received. These and any other representations will receive careful consideration, and we are also consulting the Irish Government in the matter, as the possible serious effect of the operations of a whaling station upon the local herring and other fisheries is a matter for the consideration of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland. As the time fixed by the advertised notice for receiving objections has not yet expired, I am not yet in a position to state what the decision of the Board will be.

Non-Provided Schools.

Sir EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, what was the average sum per scholar in non-provided schools paid out of the Exchequer in the past year.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of EDUCATION (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.): Exchequer grants are paid in aid of the general expenses of local education authorities under Part III. of the Education Act, and are not allocated to individual schools and indeed in some cases, are not paid on the basis of attendance. It is impossible, therefore, to separate the grants paid in respect of council and voluntary schools respectively.

Sir EDWARD SASSOON asked whether the allocation of money for educational purposes to non-provided schools was not made in a lump.

Mr. McKENNA: Yes, Sir, in the case of the non-provided schools. Does the hon. Gentleman mean in the Bill?

Sir EDWARD SASSOON: The existing ones.

Mr. McKENNA: No; it is paid to the local authorities, not to the schools.

Sir EDWARD SASSOON: Can the right hon. Gentleman indicate how much is paid?

Mr. McKENNA: I am afraid not.

Voluntary Schools.

Mr. HENRY (Shropshire, Wellington): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, if he will give the number of voluntary schools built since 1890, and the average number of children attending these schools.

Mr. McKENNA: I have no collated statistics on this point prior to October, 1895. Since that date 588 voluntary schools with accommodation for 103,185 children have been placed on the list of public elementary schools. I regret that, owing to the labour involved, I am unable to state the average number of children in attendance in each of the schools.

Grants to Elementary Schools.

Sir WILLIAM ANSON (Oxford University): On behalf of the noble Lord the Member for East Marylebone, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, to whom, under the Education Bill, will be paid the grants proposed to be made to the elementary schools other than public elementary schools.

Mr. McKENNA: The grants will be paid to those persons who have made themselves responsible for maintaining and conducting, and have, in fact, maintained and conducted, the school.

Sir WILLIAM ANSON inquired whether the grants which had to be made to the contracting-out schools under the Bill had any reference to the White Paper which had been issued.

Mr. McKENNA: Yes, Sir. The calculation of the grants to the voluntary schools is based upon the exact proportion of the amount which is paid in respect of any child on the average all over the country. If the total average attendance is multiplied by 47s., it will exactly equal the total amount of the grants paid.

Sir WILLIAM ANSON asked whether the grant to the voluntary schools would be based on this calculation and deducted.

Mr. McKENNA: No, Sir, it will not be deducted from the grant. The local authority will receive its full grant according to the number of children in average attendance in the public elementary schools. They will not receive any grant for children in voluntary schools. That grant will be paid direct to the managers or trustees of those schools.

Scottish Justices of the Peace and Jury Service.

Mr. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether justices of the peace are liable to be summoned to serve on juries in Scotland though they are exempt in England; and whether, in his proposed legislation, he will relieve Scottish justices from this duty.

THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. THOMAS SHAW, Hawick Burghs): The position and duties of justices in the two countries are not exactly similar. The point as to the distinction noted by my hon. friend I shall however consider in framing the text of the forthcoming Criminal Procedure Bill.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): And in the proposed legislation will the right hon. Gentleman deal with the age limitation for sheriffs-substitute?

MR. THOMAS SHAW was understood to reply in the negative.

MR. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs): In view of the rate at which justices of the peace are being manufactured is it not possible we may not be able to get any juries at all?

MR. HOLT (Northumberland, Hexham): Is it the fact that justices of the peace do not have to serve on Juries in England?

MR. THOMAS SHAW: Before answering that I must get English advice.

Scottish Fishery Cruiser.

CAPTAIN WARING (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the practice adopted by those in charge of the fishery cruiser when in Aberdeen Harbour is so stereotyped in character that the trawlers can thereby judge in what direction the next intended movement is to be.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The movements of the fishery cruisers are not stereotyped, but are being constantly varied to meet the exigencies of their duties.

MR. WATT: Is it not the fact that during the time any of the crew are required to give evidence the waters are not patrolled at all?

MR. SINCLAIR asked for notice of the Question.

Scottish Local Government Act.

MR. YOUNGER: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether it is his intention to introduce this session a Bill to amend the Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am unable now to give any undertaking on this point, though I hope the introduction of such a Bill may be possible. If the hon. Gentleman will be good enough to repeat his Question shortly before Easter I will endeavour then to give him a definite reply.

Seine Nets.

MR. WATT: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the net known as the seine trawl is used by any herring fishermen in Scotland, except those in the Firth of Clyde; and, if so, will he say in what ports it is used.

MR. SINCLAIR: The seine net for the capture of herrings is used only in the Firth of Clyde; and its use is not confined to any particular ports there.

MR. WATT: Why are they not used in other ports. Is it because they damage the herrings?

MR. SINCLAIR asked for notice.

Drift Nets.

MR. WATT: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, whether the net known as the drift net is in any way injurious to the spawn of the herrings when deposited on the bottom of the sea; is there a minimum size of mesh fixed by Statute for both the seine trawl and the drift net; and, if so, what are the minimum sizes.

MR. SINCLAIR: The net known as the drift net is not in any way injurious to the spawn of the herrings when deposited in the bottom of the sea. There is a minimum size of mesh fixed by Statute for both the seine trawl and the drift net: the minimum size is 1 inch from knot to knot by the Acts of 1808 and 1867.

MR. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the desirability of suspending the use of the seine net in the Clyde either altogether or during the spawning season?

Mr. SINCLAIR: I will consider that.

Mr. YOUNGER: And will the right hon. Gentleman also bear in mind that a very large proportion of the fishermen use the seine that net? Will their interests be considered?

Mr. SINCLAIR: I think it should be remembered that any prohibition of the use of the seine net could only be arrived at by voluntary agreement.

Organs in Scottish Poorhouses.

Mr. GULLAND: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, with reference to the opinion of the Local Government Board for Scotland in its last Report to the effect that it is illegal to provide organs for use in poorhouses out of the rates, whether he is aware that organs are provided by the Prison Commissioners for the prisons in Scotland; and whether he will take steps to have poorhouses put upon an equal footing with prisons by making it permissible for parish councils or poorhouse committees to purchase such instruments when so desired

Mr. SINCLAIR: The point will be considered when legislation on the subject of Poor Law administration is contemplated.

Mr. GULLAND: Cannot what is asked here be done by Ministerial act?

Mr. SINCLAIR: No, sir.

Highland Railway Extensions.

Mr. YOUNGER: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in what form and to what amount the Government subsidised the extension of the Highland Railway from Strome Ferry to Kyle of Lochalsh, and the extension of the West Highland Railway from Fort William to Mallaig.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: As regards the railway from Strome Ferry to Kyle of Lochalsh, a Supplementary Estimate for £45,000 was voted by the House in 1898 as a grant-in-aid to the Highland Railway Company in respect of the construction (i.) Of this railway; and (ii.) of the piers at Kyle and at Kyleakin in Skye. (House of Commons Paper, No. 56, of 1898.) As regards the second part of the Question, the Treasury were authorised by the West Highland Railway Guarantee Act, 1896 (59 & 60 Vict., c. 58), to guarantee for a period of thirty years from the date of the opening of the railway for passenger traffic payment of interest at the rate of 3 per cent. per annum on the capital of £260,000 raised by the Railway Company for the construction of the railway from Banavie to Mallaig. Under this guarantee there has been paid to 31st March last the sum of £20,860 in all.

The Irish Police and the Peace Preservation Act.

Captain CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, whether, in view of the fact that the constabulary authorities were consulted by the Irish Government before the introduction of the Peace Preservation Act of 1881, he can say if a similar course was adopted prior to the withdrawal of the Act twelve months ago; and, if so, whether it was upon the advice of the constabulary authorities, and with their approval, that the Government decided to terminate the operation of the Act.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.): I do not know what foundation there may be for the suggestion containing in the Question that the constabulary authorities were consulted by the Irish Government before the introduction of the Peace Preservation Act of 1881. But however that may be, I do not propose to make any statement as to whether or not His Majesty's Government thought fit to adopt a similar course before deciding not to renew the Act. The hon. and gallant Member is of course aware that any communication upon such questions which may pass between the Government and the police authorities are of a strictly confidential nature. I will only say that the Government were in full possession of all the facts bearing on the matter, and that they gave the question full consideration.

Firearms in Ireland.

Captain CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether representations have been made to the Irish Government by the constabulary authorities pointing to the difficulties and dangers affecting the maintenance of the public peace that have already arisen, and are likely to continue, consequent on the absence of restrictions in respect to the acquisition of firearms in Ireland; and will he ascertain from these authorities whether the provisions of the English Pistols Act of 1903 are suitable to the conditions prevailing in Ireland.

Mr. BIRRELL: For the reasons stated in reply to the last Question, I must decline to state what representations, if any, have been made to the Irish Government by the constabulary authorities upon the subject of the present Question. I have already stated that the Government are considering the advisability of introducing legislation for Ireland upon the lines of the English Pistols Act of of 1903, but I am not at present in a position to make any definite statement on the subject.

Condition of Galway.

Captain CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. Horne, a resident magistrate stationed at Queenstown, was recently deputed by the Irish Government to make a special investigation respecting the condition of the county of Galway; how many days were occupied by Mr. Horne in conducting his investigations; whether he has made a Report to the Government embodying the results of his local inquiries; and, if so, will such Report be laid upon the Table of this House.

Mr. BIRRELL: Mr. Horne was employed in County Galway for ten days in the month of January last. His communication to the Government was of a strictly confidential nature, and will not be published.

Irish Congested Districts Board.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford)—On behalf of the hon. Member for East Mayo, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the funds at the disposal of the Congested Districts Board for the improvement of estates and division of untenanted land in their possession will be exhausted on 31st March next; and, if so, what steps the Government propose to take to enable the Board to continue their work during the coming financial year.

The following Questions on the same subject also appeared on the Paper:—

Mr. DILLON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the fact that the Congested Districts Board has announced that it is not in a position to purchase any more estates; whether this refusal to purchase applies to several most suitable estates which have been offered to the Board and which had been already inspected for purchase; whether his attention has been drawn to the very serious situation which has arisen on these estates from the disappointment of the confident hopes which had been aroused in the tenants of the abovementioned estates; whether he can state what is the cause of this stoppage in the work of the Congested Districts Board; and what steps the Government propose to take to remedy the serious situation to which it has given rise.

Mr. DILLON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board have decided not to make any parish grants during the coming financial year; if so, on what grounds the Board arrived at this decision; and whether his attention has been drawn to the evidence as to the working of the parish grant system published by the Dudley Commission

Mr. DILLON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that the estates purchased by the Congested Districts Board were, in 1904-1905, £649,544, in 1905-1906 £346,706, and in 1906–1907, £108,861; whether this decrease in the operations of the Board has been due to pressure from the Treasury, and not to want of estates offered for sale to the Board; and whether the Treasury has any power to prohibit the Congested Districts Board from purchasing estates offered to them.

Mr. BIRRELL: The funds of the Congested Districts Board available in any one year for the general work of the Board are derived from two sources. First, from public moneys, there is a fixed income of £86,250. Secondly, receipts accrue in the course of the operations carried on by the Board under the wide powers conferred upon it. The principal heads of these receipts are—rent and other receipts on account of estates held by the Board, cash received for the sale of estates bought before 1903, and cash received as enhanced price of resale of estates bought under the Act of 1903. They are also allowed to borrow from the Board of Works to the amount of two-thirds of expenditure on improvements within certain definite categories. The aggregate funds of the Board thus accruing in the year provide the income available for expenditure on administration, technical instruction, grants to parish committees, fisheries, industries, piers, roads etc., in the congested districts; and for expenses of improving estates, the payment of interest to vendors of land, the payment of interest to the Land Commission on money advanced for purchase of estates, the payment of interest on, and the repayment of capital of, borrowings from the Board of Works. In the current year it was anticipated that a sum of £158,000 would be realised by the re-sale of estates, but as a matter of fact not more than £76,500 will be so realised. The Board were thus faced with the alternatives of suspending the improvement works on their estates with a view to keeping their expenditure within their actual income, or of asking for a temporary loan to carry on the works to the end of the financial year. The latter course has been adopted. Having regard to their other obligations, the Board consider that a comparatively small amount of their present income is applicable to meet the net losses which are incurred upon the work of improving estates for resale to the tenants. It is necessary, therefore, unless the fixed income of the Board is increased, to restrict within narrow limits the amount of land which the Board buy, since every estate bought by the Board must ultimately involve a charge upon its income for the irrecoverable cost of improving the land for resale. The facts as to the value of the estates purchased in the three years referred to are as stated by the hon. Member. The Congested Districts Board have, since the passing of the Act of 1903, been anxious to buy all estates for which they could arrange terms of purchase, and grass lands suitable for enlarging congested holdings, and have more than once asked for an increase of their income in order to carry out improvement works. There has been correspondence on this subject since August, 1905. Pending the Report of the Royal Commission on Congestion His Majesty's Government consider it impossible to introduce legislation providing for an increase in the Board's income which is limited by statute. The Treasury have therefore strongly advised the Board to purchase only so far as their means enable them to execute improvements, but this advice does not apply to the purchase of certain grass lands for which the Board have made offers. The Treasury, it must be observed, do not claim any right to place restrictions upon any particular operation of the Board. But the duty is imposed by statute upon the Board of submitting their estimates to the Treasury, and the Treasury obviously could not approve of such estimates if they showed an excess of expenditure over the income available. Pending the consideration of the Report on the whole question of congestion, which I earnestly hope will be issued by the Royal Commission before, or, at the latest, shortly after, Easter, the Government think that it is essential that the Congested Districts Board should be extremely cautious in the purchase of estates. The Board's income will not enable them to carry out in the coming year any large schemes for improvements of tenanted estates, or for dividing untenanted land; and, with a view to making as rapid progress as possible in improving for resale estates already purchased, or to be purchased, the expenditure on other heads has been restricted within narrow limits. It is for this reason that they have announced the suspension of the Parish Committee Grants in the coming financial year. They do this with great regret.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND asked with regard to the first question if he was to understand that the funds at the disposal of the Congested Districts Board, even including the loan which had been obtained, for the improvement of estates and the division of untenanted land, would be exhausted at the end of this month, and whether this meant the stoppage of all improvement works and of the employment in these districts, and whether the Government realised the seriousness of the position which would arise?

Mr. BIRRELL said it did not mean that the Board would be obliged to stop work altogether, but it did mean that the Congested Districts Board would be obliged to stop the work of improvement at this time of the year. There would be considerable restrictions and limitations in the amount of the work.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND asked whether the Board had not entered into provisional agreements for the purchase recently of certain estates, and whether now, in consequence of restrictions on the amount of money available, and after the inspection of these estates, the Commissioners had informed the tenants, who had been led to believe that the estates would be acquired, that the purchase could not go on? Did the Government realise the serious situation that was likely to arise in respect of these estates on account of the disappointed hopes of the people?

Mr. BIRRELL said it was no doubt the fact that the Board had entered into preliminary investigations, going to the expense of sending down their inspectors to look at the land, and thereby creating a hope that immediate purchase was likely to ensue. But he was afraid that, while no actual restriction was placed on the Board in respect of the purchase of the estates, they would have to consider how far they were justified in entering upon the purchase of the land when they had not the income to make the necessary improvement works which, after all, were the sole object of the purchase.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: I am sorry to press the right hon. Gentleman, but is it not the fact that the Board have provisionally agreed to purchase certain estates and in consequence of the restrictions imposed by the Treasury the purchase cannot go on? What does the right hon. Gentleman propose to do to obviate the extremely critical situation that may consequently arise?

Mr. BIRRELL: I am afraid it is an undoubted fact that the Board will not be able to proceed with the purchase of a considerable number of estates, though they hoped to be able to do so. I do not say that none of the transactions will be proceeded with, but that a considerable number of these estates cannot be purchased.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND, in view of the right hon. Gentleman's suggestion that the difficulty might be got over by legislation, as an outcome of the Report of Lord Dudley's Commission, pressed the right hon. Gentleman to induce the Treasury to make temporary provision so as to prevent a deadlock and a critical situation arising in the districts.

Mr. BIRRELL: We are really in the position of having a statutory income, and of being obliged, if the Treasury put us to it, to confine our efforts within that income.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: I beg to give notice that I shall take an early opportunity of pressing on the Government the necessity of providing an occasion to discuss this matter, which is one of the most vital importance.

Mr. WILLIAM O'BRIEN (Cork) asked when the Dudley Commission's Report might be expected.

Mr. BIRRELL: It is a matter of great regret to me that the issue of this Report has been so long delayed. If it had been presented some months ago a great many difficulties would have been removed. I shall endeavour to accelerate the Report as much as possible—even by twenty-four hours.

Mr. MOORE (Armagh, N.): Will this Motion relating to the urgency of providing funds for the Congested Districts Board take precedence of the Home Rule Motion?

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: No, it will not.

Mr. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the circular issued by the Congested Districts Board on 22nd February, by which parish committees are requested to note that, so far as can be foreseen at present, the Board, owing to the state of their funds, will not be in a position to continue the parish committee scheme next year; whether the year referred to in this circular is the next financial year or the year 1909; and whether, in view of the fact that about 160 parish committees have been formed, of which fourteen are at work in county Kerry, he can state what steps he now proposes to take in order to prevent the complete cessation of the valuable work done by these parish committees.

Mr. BIRRELL: I have already dealt with this matter in my reply to the questions put by the hon. Member for East Mayo. The suspension of grants to parish committees will take effect from the beginning of the next financial year, on 1st April.

Irish University—Speech of the Provost of Trinity College.

Mr. MOORE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if, in view of the correspondence of the Rev. Mr. Gray and the Provost of Trinity College, he will now state if he amended or altered the proof of the Provost's speech at Manchester on the University question before its delivery; and, if so, what were these alterations, and does he now accept responsibility for them.

Mr. BIRRELL: The learned Provost of Trinity College has already made it plain that I never asked him directly or indirectly to make any speech either at Manchester or elsewhere. The Provost told me he was going to make a speech and asked whether I objected to his saying that the Government did not propose in their University legislation this session to do anything affecting the status or revenues of Trinity College. I told him he was at perfect liberty to say so if he wished to do so. The next day the Provost sent me two short type-written paragraphs which he proposed to incorporate in his speech. The first paragraph, relating to the *status* and revenues of Trinity, was not altered by me, but the second paragraph appeared to me to contain one or two expressions which might suggest, contrary to the facts, that the Provost was speaking on my behalf, and accordingly I made in pencil one or two alterations with the object of rendering that criticism impossible. I returned the two paragraphs to the Provost, and after that thought no more of the matter.

Mr. MOORE: When the right hon. Gentleman stated to the House that he had not read the speech, but had a portion of the proofs of the speech beforehand, was he not rather unintentionally misleading the House?

Mr. BIRRELL: I am very sorry that under the pressure of an interruption I said that I had not read the speech. It is true that I had not, and I have not now. But I am sorry if I used language which might seem discourteous to the Provost, whose hospitality I had accepted and for whose straightforward character I have the greatest possible regard. But it is the fact that I have not read the speech; and it is one of the advantages of my position that it is not necessary for me to read speeches.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: When are we likely to have the Bill, the purport of which was indicated in the speech?

MR. BIRRELL: I am very much obliged for this Question being put to me. I hope that before the end of this month I shall have an opportunity of unfolding this measure to the House.

MR. MOORE: May I remind the right hon. Gentleman that in a written Answer to the Member for Cambridge University he made the same statement about not having read the speech?

MR. BIRRELL: And I have not read it.

United Irish League and Servant Girl.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to an assault on a servant girl in the employment of a lady, named Mrs. Greated, of Lough George, county Galway, by a number of men when leaving the chapel where she had attended mass on Sunday, 23rd February last, and whether the police present were obliged to charge the crowd of men who were hooting and hustling the girl; whether he has any official information showing that the girl was so assaulted in consequence of the refusal of Mrs. Greated to obey the behests of the local branch of the United Irish League to give up her farm; and whether the Irish Executive will notify that branch of the League that it will be no party to the dividing of grass lands among the neighbouring tenants where intimidation has been brought to bear to dispossess the present tenant.

MR. BIRRELL: On the occasion in question a number of men followed the sister of a servant in Mrs. Greated's employment, and hooted and groaned at her. The police warned the men to desist and, upon their failing to do so, dispersed them. The girl was not assaulted. Seven of the persons were summoned by the police to find sureties to keep the peace. The case was heard yesterday, when the summonses were adjourned for two months upon the defendants undertaking not to interfere with Mrs. Greated or her servants in the meantime. The police have no knowledge that the United Irish League has interfered with Mrs. Greated. In fact, no branch of the League exists in the locality.

Royal Irish Constabulary Fund.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say under what Act of Parliament or authority subscribing members to the Constabulary Force Fund forfeit all claim to the money stopped from their salaries in case the wives of such members die or the children become over age.

MR. BIRRELL: The deductions made from the pay and pensions of members of the Royal Irish Constabulary for the Constabulary Force Fund under the Statutes relating thereto are made available by Section 9 of 29 and 30 Vict., cap. 103, for the relief of the widows and children of the members of such force under such regulations as the Lord-Lieutenant may from time to time make. The statutes make no provision for any refund of contributions to subscribers themselves, and consequently, under the Lord-Lieutenant's regulations, all the receipts from contributions to the fund are appropriated to the widows and orphans who become eligible for grants from the fund. If it were not for the fact that many subscribers to the fund die or leave the force unmarried, or leave no member of their families after them who are entitled to a grant, the very liberal scale of gratuities paid from the fund to those entitled under the rules could not possibly be maintained.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that the majority of subscribing members to the Constabulary Force Fund are now retired on pension, and that fully three-fourths of the same are anxious to have the fund wound up, he will take the necessary steps to do so.

MR. BIRRELL: The Constabulary Force Fund is being gradually wound up by meeting its obligations to widows and orphans of subscribers as they arise.

This process of winding up was provided by the Act of 1883, which closed the fund to new entrants, and no more summary method of winding it up is possible.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the amount of money received into the Royal Irish Constabulary Force Fund from all sources since date of inception; the amount paid out; to whom paid; the amount paid to each person; under what authority, and for what purpose; and what is the exact balance of the fund at present.

MR. BIRRELL: It would be quite impossible to give a Return containing the information which the hon. Member asks for, and in any event the Return would serve no useful purpose. The Constabulary Force Fund came into existence in 1836, and the books of that remote period are not now forthcoming. I would, however, refer the hon. Member to Return No. 301 of 1905, and the previous Return of which that is a continuation. These Returns show the receipts and payments from the Fund for each year since 1880. I have no information as to the present balance of the Fund in the hands of the National Debt Commissioners, but in any event this is not a matter which concerns the subscribers, seeing that the surplus, if any, which may remain after the Fund has been wound up must be surrendered to the Exchequer. As the hon. Member has already been informed, a Parliamentary Grant of £150,000 was made in 1891, in order to make the fund solvent, and it was a condition of the grant that any unexpended balance should be surrendered to the Exchequer.

MR. SLOAN: Is there no possibility of getting from the National Debt Commissioners the exact amount of the fund?

MR. BIRRELL: I will inquire, but I do not see what good it will do for anybody to know.

Toughboy Labourers Cottage Scheme.

MR. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the grounds put forward by the Local Government Board inspector for the refusal of three labourers' cottages applied for in the electoral division of Toughboy, Mount Bellew rural district, are that the sites were half-a-mile from the public road and inconveniently situated; and, if so, will he see that more convenient sites are provided.

MR. BIRRELL: The selection of sites for labourers' cottages is a matter within the sole discretion of the rural district council. The Local Government Board have no power to direct the council to select any particular sites. The hon. Member should approach the council in the matter.

Instruction in Cookery in Irish Schools.

MR. MOORE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland out of what funds provision is made for the teaching of cookery in the Irish national schools; if he is aware that organisers in the employment of the Commissioners of National Education have in several centres intimated to female teachers that unless they attend lectures in cookery at their own expense their increments of good service salary will be withheld.

MR. BIRRELL: Provision for the teaching of cookery in national schools is made in the Vote for Public Education, Ireland. The Commissioners of National Education inform me that organisers of cookery instruction have no authority to express any opinion as to the withholding or granting of good service increments to teachers. They are merely authorised to invite teachers to attend the lectures and demonstrations given for their benefit. If any organiser has exceeded his authority, the Commissioners will be prepared to investigate the matter on being furnished with particulars.

Cookery Apparatus in Irish Schools.

MR. MOORE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the fees earned in respect of cookery instruction in the national schools are to be received by the managers, with authority to deduct therefrom the cost of the apparatus; and, having regard to the fact that the salaries of junior assistants at £24 and senior assistants at £44 leave a slender margin, will he see that the cost of financing this subject is not cast on the teachers' salaries.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that cookery instruction is given as part of the ordinary school programme, and that the salaries awarded to teachers are for all the work done by them during ordinary school hours. The Commissioners, however, recognising that instruction in cookery cannot effectively be given without practical demonstrations involving the use of materials and apparatus, make a grant of 5s. for each girl enrolled in the cookery class under specified conditions. This grant is made to the manager who is empowered to pay to the staff the balance, if any, which may remain after defraying any necessary incidental expenditure. It is not the wish of the Commissioners that any portion of the cost of giving cookery instruction should fall upon the school staff; on the contrary, it is their intention that the teachers should profit to the extent of the unexpended balance of the fees awarded for the instruction.

In reply to a further Question by Mr. Moore,

Mr. BIRRELL promised to look further into this matter, as he was desirous that the slender income of the teacher should be in no way infringed upon by providing apparatus.

Millstreet Labourers Acts Inquiry.

Mr. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Local Government Board have received the petition to hold an inquiry under the Labourers Acts from the Millstreet Rural District Council; if not, can he state the causes of delay, and whether due to the council or its officials; and when is the improvement scheme likely to be received by the Local Government Board from the District Council.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Local Government Board have not yet received the petition in this case, but they understand that the rural district council expect to be in a position to sign the petition at their next meeting on the 12th instant. It appears from the minutes of the council's proceedings that there was some delay on the part of the council's engineer in preparing some of the necessary documents.

Evicted Tenant—Case of James Gore.

Mr. PATRICK WHITE (Meath, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners, before finally deciding on the application of James Gore to be reinstated in his former holding, will submit to him, or to someone authorised to act on his behalf, the map showing the division which they propose to give him, and the boundaries of the other divisions into which they propose to cut his farm. I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in the case of James Gore, an evicted tenant on the estate of R. B. Balfour, representations have been made to the Estates Commissioners by representative and influential men in the district where the farm is situate that Gore should get the whole of his former farm; whether he is aware that public feeling in the locality is unanimously in favour of Gore getting at least his former residence and the land of best quality on the farm; and if the Commissioners will take into account the desirability of effecting a settlement that will leave no soreness behind.

Mr. BIRRELL: Before finally allotting the untenanted land on Mr. R. B. Balfour's estate, the Estates Commissioners will direct their inspector to attend with the map of the land and show to James Gore or anyone authorised to act for him the allotment which it is proposed to give him. The Commissioners have received representations that Gore shall be allotted the whole of the land, namely, 200 acres, formerly occupied by him, but they do not think it advisable to give him so much land. They propose to give him either his former residence and an allotment of land adjoining it, or another allotment with assistance to build a house, whichever he may prefer.

Proposed Whaling Station on the Donegal Coast.

Mr. C. MACVEIGH (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) if his attention has been called to a resolution passed by the Donegal County Council, at their meeting held on the 26th instant, protesting against the establishing of whaling stations on any part of the Donegal coast, as ruinous to the fishermen and the fishing industry; and whether, in view of the evidence given at the inquiry, held at Derry and Burton Port, he will take steps to protect the Donegal Coast and its waters from being polluted by whaling stations.

The VICE-PRESIDENT of the DEPARTMENT of AGRICULTURE for IRELAND (Mr. T. W. Russell, Tyrone, S.): The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. The Department are taking steps to make a by-law which, if approved by the Lord-Lieutenant in Council, will have the result of prohibiting the establishment of any whaling stations on the Donegal coast.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: Will the hon. Gentleman use his influence with the Secretary for Scotland and get a similar by-law for that country?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: No, Sir.

Potato Spraying in Ireland.

Mr. GWYNN (Galway): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland), what the experience of 1907 proves as to the efficacy of potato-spraying and as to the extension of the practice; and what power the Department has to prevent the sale of adulterated or useless spraying mixtures.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: The experience of 1907 undoubtedly proves that potato-spraying was most effective. Apart from the favourable reports of the Department's own officers, numerous letters have been received from individual farmers testifying to the excellent results which followed from the spraying of their crops. The Department regret that, as yet, they have no power to prevent the sale of adulterated or useless spraying mixtures. The Department, however, had placards displayed in every district in Ireland during the season of 1907 warning farmers against purchasing worthless ready-made spraying mixtures and advising them to use materials recommended in the Department's leaflet on the subject.

Mr. GWYNN: Will the hon. Gentleman introduce legislation enabling the prosecution of people selling adulterated spray mixtures?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I am in consultation with the officials of the Department on the subject. I hardly know anything more important than the protection of the farmer against such things.

Adulterated Food-Stuffs.

Mr. GWYNN: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland), what power the Department has to prevent the sale of adulterated food-stuffs.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: It is presumed that this Question refers to food-stuffs for cattle, as defined in the Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act, 1906. The Department have no power to prevent the sale of adulterated food-stuffs. The only power they have is that vested in them by Section 12 of the Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Act, 1906, which enables them to take samples for the purpose of instituting prosecutions. In the opinion of the Department the powers afforded them under this Section are not sufficiently clearly defined, and they propose to ask for more extended and more clearly defined powers under the section in question.

Skim Milk.

Mr. GWYNN: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) how far the evils resulting from the use as food for animals and for human beings of skim-milk returned from creameries are abating or increasing.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: The ill effects of the use of separated milk as a food for young calves are due to feeding the calves on such milk without the addition of a suitable substitute for the fat which had been removed in the process of separating. In the first few years of the Department's existence the complaints on this subject were very numerous. In recent years, however, there have been very few complaints. This may be attributed to the widespread circulation of the Department's leaflets dealing with the subject of calf feeding, and also to the advice given by the county instructors. Such complaints as have latterly been received by the Department have been attributable to the use of inferior calf meals, which contain a low percentage of fat, and are therefore quite unsuitable for being mixed with separated milk as a food for calves. The majority of these inferior calf meals are sold to farmers by travelling agents of the manufacturing firms. The meals are represented by these agents to be excellent substitutes for mixing with separated milk as a food for calves The Department have had a number of samples of these meals analysed, owing to complaints received from farmers in different districts in Ireland to the effect that when calves are fed on such meals they do not thrive. In these cases the Department have recommended the purchasers to offer payment of the amount which the Department estimated as the full value of these meals—this being approximately 25 per cent. of the price actually charged. When the purchasers were proceeded against by the manufacturers for the full price of the meals, the plea of misrepresentation put in by the defendants has been upheld by the court, and the cases have been dismissed with costs against the manufacturers. The question with regard to the effects of the use of separated milk as food for human beings is not one within the province of this Department.

Mr. GWYNN: Do I understand that the Department has power to prosecute for fraud in such cases?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: They have no power.

Mr. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): Then are the public compelled to depend solely on the leaflets for information? Are they generally read?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: They are widely read, and in the absence of legislative power it is the best thing we can do.

Down Hand-Loom Weavers.

*Mr. J. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) whether the Government intends to introduce legislation for the defence of the interests of the land-loom weavers in County Down.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: The Irish hand-looms weavers have asked that it should be made mandatory that the products of Irish damask hand-looms should have woven into them the words "Irish Hand Woven Linen Damask." The selling as Irish hand-woven damask, or goods not coming under that description would constitute a presumptive offence under the existing Merchandise Marks Acts. The matter is now under consideration.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): Has this action by the hon. Member anything to do with the issue of the writ for West Down?

*Mr. J. MACVEAGH: The suggestion that the Question was put down by me in view of that election is a reflection on my intelligence. I desire to state in the most emphatic manner that I do not take the slightest interest in the domestic differences of the Ulster Unionist deadheads.

Captain CRAIG: Have not the Unionist Party been in correspondence with the President of the Board of Trade on this question since August last, and are they not still awaiting an answer?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I am not aware of it.

Mr. SLOAN: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the Countess of Aberdeen in a speech in the North of Ireland expressed a hope that the Government would legislate on this question? And will the Government give its assistance to pass the Bill brought in by a private Member?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL was understood to say he would be glad to see a Bill introduced.

Irish Imports of Foreign Fodder.

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) whether his attention has been drawn to a resolution of the County Dublin Farmers' Association protesting against the continued importation of foreign hay, straw, and other commodities constituting mediums through which foot-and-mouth and other diseases are introduced into Ireland, and suggesting that all such commodities before being landed should be subjected to a rigid examination, or excluded if coming from countries where such diseases are known to exist; whether his attention has been directed to another resolution, passed by the association mentioned, to the effect that, in view of the ever present danger of the introduction of foot-and-mouth and other diseases being introduced into Ireland from abroad, all Government advertisements for tenders for hay, straw, and corn, should expressly stipulate for home-grown products of the kind mentioned; and whether any, and, if so, what action will be taken in these matters.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: The attention of the Department has been drawn to the resolutions referred to. I would refer the hon. Member to the reply given by me on Monday to a Question put by the hon. Member for South Roscommon, in which I stated the action taken and about to be taken by the Department respecting the prohibition of imports of hay and straw from countries infected with foot-and-mouth disease. It is not considered that sufficient grounds at present exist for interference with the importation of any other commodities. The Department cannot interfere with the discretion of other Government Departments as regards the terms of advertisements of the nature referred to. The Department do not purchase foreign hay, straw, or corn. Any supplies of these commodities that they require for their own purposes are obtained locally.

County Donegal Joint Railway Crossing, near Ballinamore.

Mr. C. MACVEIGH: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the level crossing on the County Donegal Joint Committee Railway line, which is about half a mile from Ballinamore station, at which there is no gatekeeper, but is under the control of an efficient stationmaster, who would be held responsible if an accident occurred, but who is so far away from the crossing he can exercise no proper supervision over the gates, and when trains are passing can give no attention whatever to the crossing; whether he is aware that there is no porter or assistant at this station to close the gates or prevent the people who use the crossing from opening them at risk to themselves and leaving one gate standing across the line in front of the incoming train and thereby exposing the travelling public to danger, and whether he will take immediate steps to have this state of things remedied.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: My attention has not been previously called to this crossing, but I will communicate with the Joint Committee and inform the hon. Member of the result.

The Government and the Lords.

Earl WINTERTON: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he is yet in a position to state if the Government will, during the present session, introduce a Bill dealing with the relations between this House and another place on the lines of the Resolution passed last session.

The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Asquith, Fife, E.): I am not in a position to make any statement.

Mr. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): May I ask whether the House is to understand that this question is no longer one of extreme urgency, as the right hon. Gentleman stated it was last session?

Mr. ASQUITH: The hon. Gentleman can draw any conclusions he likes.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND asked the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he could state the date on which the Home Rule Motion would be taken.

Mr. ASQUITH: We hope to be able to take it on Monday, 30th March.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES.)

Sir William Brampton Gurdon reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had added the following Member to Standing Committee A (in respect of the Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) and of the Police (Superannuation) Bills): Mr. Essex.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

HOURS OF LABOUR (BAKEHOUSES) BILL.

"To restrict the Hours in Bakehouses to eight Hours per day, and not more than forty-eight Hours per week," presented by Mr. Wilkie; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 18th March, and to be printed. [Bill 135.]

HANDLOOM WEAVING (IRELAND) BILL.

"To protect the interests of Handloom Weavers in Ireland; and for other purposes in connection therewith," presented by Mr. Sloan; supported by Mr. Thomas Corbett, Mr. MacVeagh, Mr. Glendinning, and Mr. Ward; to be read a second time upon Monday, 30th March, and to be printed. [Bill 136.]

DEATH CERTIFICATES (CHARGES) BILL.

"To amend the Births, Deaths, and Marriages Act, 1836, for the purpose of reducing the charges for Death Certificates in certain cases," presented by Mr. Gill; supported by Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Bell, Mr. Thorne, Mr. James Haslam, Mr. Wilkie, Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Steadman, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Kelley, Mr. George Roberts, and Mr. William Wilson; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 137.]

PEDLARS ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Pedlars Acts as regards persons for whom certificates shall not be required," presented by Sir George Kekewich; supported by Mr. Charles Duncan, Mr. Gibbs, Mr. Long, Mr. William Redmond, Mr. Simon, and Mr. Brooke; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 138.]

SUMMARY JURISDICTION (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Drunkenness in Ireland, and for purposes connected therewith," presented by the Marquess of Hamilton; supported by Mr. Moore, Mr. Fetherstonhaugh, and Mr. Thomas Corbett; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 139.]

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).

Order for Committee read.

***The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Haldane, Haddington)**: At this time last year it was my duty to lay before the House at some length a programme. Last year the House passed the legislative part of that programme into law, and sanctioned the administrative changes for which the Government asked. My duty to-day is therefore a much lighter one. I have in the main simply to lay before the House a record of progress made. Now, Sir, before I go into those details, and to make them intelligible, I will state very briefly what is the policy of the Government with regard to the Army. The Cardwell system is one about which there has been a great deal of difference of opinion, and I am not going to argue that question, at any rate at this moment. In the memorandum attached to the Estimates I took the opportunity of going in some detail into the reasons which have convinced the Government that that policy is the most useful and, in the end, the most economical; the most economical, certainly, if you take India and other parts of the Empire into account, because departure from the Cardwell system would be to lay a heavy burden upon the finance of India. But, as I said, I am not going to restate the argument now. Suffice it to say that the Government adhere firmly to the Cardwell system, and they will carry to its completion the work the foundations of which were laid by Mr. Gladstone and Lord Cardwell in conjunction. The Cardwell system, if for a moment I may quote mathematicians instead of poets, has the advantage that it reduces the question of the size of the Army to the function of a single variable. That variable is, of course, the number of troops which it is essential at any given time to keep abroad, in the Colonies, and India, and the Crown possessions. That is why I said on Monday night, and why I say again now, that the question of the size of the Army and of its distribution is at no time one which the War Minister can answer unaided. The answer must depend on the view of foreign policy taken by the Foreign Secretary, the Secretary for India, and the Colonial Secretary, and it is one that must be determined by the Government as a whole. But the Cardwell system has the advantage that when you have determined the size of the variable you at once determine the size and character of the Army which you will require to support it. It has this further advantage, that it precludes sudden changing and chopping; it gets rid of obscurities, and it gives you a clear principle according to which you can lop off what is unnecessary or build up what is essential. That is why the Government maintain the Cardwell system. Quite apart from India, it is a system which apparently makes for both economy and efficiency. Now, we are about to reap one advantage in connection with the Cardwell system which we have not had, just because the size of the force which we are maintaining abroad is one which varies, and because the happier circumstances of South Africa admit of the withdrawal of a certain proportion of the garrison. We have it in view, at the end of the summer or in the autumn, to establish a Cardwellian balance of units by bringing home four battalions of infantry and one cavalry regiment from South Africa. That will give us, instead of seventy-eight battalions abroad and seventy at home, seventy-four at home and seventy-four abroad; fourteen regiments of cavalry at home and fourteen abroad. The artillery and other services do not require any alteration, because at the present time the number that we have at home is in excess of what we have abroad. I shall be sorry if in my time anything is done to disturb that balance. The position, therefore, is that if the Cardwell system is adhered to, and if the changing necessities of the distribution of troops abroad are met by men from units abroad rather than by sending units from home—a thing which I think can be done much more than it has been done—you get this good result, that you are freed from the necessity of having the costly machinery of provisional battalions and depots, to my mind a most wasteful way of training soldiers and providing for drafts, and you have the simple principle that every unit at home serves two purposes. In peace it is a training school, not a fighting unit at all; in war it is mobilised with its Reserve into a fighting unit. That is why we say you get both economy and efficiency. That is why an almost unbroken succession of military opinion has pronounced for maintaining the Cardwell system. There is another advantage that the system gives you. You have to keep a certain number of troops—whether you keep them in depots or in units—to provide drafts for the forces abroad. But if, according to the Cardwell system, you keep them in units—units which in time of peace have a very small establishment, but in war would be mobilised to their full fighting strength—then you are in a position to organise a very much better and more efficient expeditionary force than you would otherwise possess. I mean by an expeditionary force, not the small Striking Force which is used for emergencies, and which is specially provided for in the organisation of our Reserves, but a force which on mobilisation you can produce in an organised form, and which would be in a position to take the field abroad and to operate with the Navy without the necessity of improvising an organisation for it. The second part of the Government policy has been to organise such an expeditionary force within the limits of the troops which it is necessary to maintain at home under any system for the purpose of feeding the units abroad. I draw attention to this because there has been a certain amount of misunderstanding about it. People have asked why we should have an expeditionary force of 160,000 men. The answer is this. You have to have the men for the expeditionary force, and a good many more. At any rate, the 160,000 men are not all men with the colours. On the contrary, a great proportion of them are Reservists and men not serving with the colours. Of the 160,000 men of the expeditionary force 61,000 are actively serving with the colours, 70,000 are serving with the Reserve, and 24,000 are engaged in the ancillary services and trained on the Militia basis. Therefore your expeditionary force, which consists of only 61,000 men serving with the colours, is really a small force compared with the number that it is necessary to keep at home for the purpose of providing for your units abroad. This expeditionary force will be organised far within the limits of the home establishment that you possess at the present time. If there are seventy-four battalions at home and sixty-six are required for the expeditionary force, there will be eight battalions surplus besides the extra battalions of guards. The same is true of the cavalry —you have got surplus regiments there— and the same is true of the artillery. Therefore the expeditionary force is not eating up a single man whom you would not otherwise require to keep up, and the only cost involved is the comparatively small cost of putting it into organised form. The Government believe that the organisation of the expeditionary force in this fashion is a truly economical procedure, and one that does not add to your burdens. The third principle that the Government has had in view is the substitution of two lines for the old arrangement, under which there were three or four lines according to how you looked at them. We had the Regular force. We had the Regular first line of which we have made the old Militia an organic part. And we have the second line, which is the old Volunteer-Yeomanry organisation, brought up to a true Militia organisation, and organised and equipped as nearly as possible on the model of the first or Regular line. These are the four elements in the policy which I described last year. Our first object was to get a force with some kind of scientific organisation, in which we could see by looking at it whether any unit was in excess or deficient. We have been trying to bring that better state of things about. I am far from underrating the difficulties of the task; there is an enormous amount to be done. When I produce presently the record of what we have accomplished, I hope the House will take it from me that it is in no spirit of boasting, but really with a desire to show the House that we have done something tangible towards the accomplishment of a piece of work which will extend over many years and take, not one, but several Governments to bring to perfection. All we have been able to do is comparatively little compared with what remains to be done to complete the plan. But at least we have organised this force in divisions which can co-operate with the Navy, for a Navy without an Army is hardly less useless than an Army without a Navy. The effect of lopping off a surplus organisation has been to bring the numbers down to what they were just before the war of 1899. I think there is an excess of some 7,000 or 8,000 men. There are people who are not there in the main for combatant purposes—medical units, ancillary services, and to some extent artillery. The artillery certainly were in a very unsatisfactory position at that time, and the Government of the day did absolutely right in increasing the artillery force. But if you compare the figures of what the Army stood at just before the war, and what it is now you will find there is a difference of only 5,000 or 6,000 men, and these extras were due, not to the combatants, but to what I might call the ancillary services. The combatant element is not larger but it is organised in a fashion it never was before.

Let me say a word about the progress made with the expeditionary force. The House will remember that the Army Order organising it into six divisions was dated 1st January last year, and the organisation of the six divisions and the four brigades of cavalry which accompanies them are complete. The artillery consists of fifty-four field batteries, ten horse, twelve howitzers, and six heavy batteries, and we are engaged on the perfecting of the artillery organisation. The next step was that while the force was organised it was not effective until the mobilisation tables were complete. We set to work and they were completed in May last year. The next step was to get the equipment complete, and the equipment is all complete except certain small items for which provision is made in the present Estimates. But there is something which is not perfect, and that is the provision for wastage in the ancillary services, including the ammunition columns. The position of things at present is this—that only forty-two out of the requisite fifty-four field batteries can be mobilised for want of ammunition columns, and we have set ourselves to work to convert the Garrison Militia Artillery and to introduce machinery for further producing the requisite men trained on a Militia basis, for the purpose of mobilising these ammunition columns. I will tell the House presently how far we have proceeded with that. Meantime, it is sufficient to say that the Army Order of 23rd December, organised the whole of the Special Reserve for the purpose of infantry and artillery, and the scheme as it was explained to the House last year is in course of being carried out. The right hon. Gentleman will remember this well, because he and I came to a kind of covenant about the Infantry Special Reserve, and I have endeavoured to adhere to that in spirit and in letter. We have organised 101 battalions of the Infantry Special Reserve, which will ultimately be 580 strong. These are distributed—seventy-four to the depots and twenty-seven elsewhere. The depot battalions take the place of the old depots, but we save the cost of the regular infantry depots in that fashion and they train drafts for the Regular Army, and also drafts for their own establishments. We have set these training battalions to work, and presently I shall be able to give some account of how they are progressing in the way of getting their recruits. But I want to point out that we gave an undertaking to the Militia —it was, I think, given in the other House—that we would not disband any of them until after the next training. In order to carry out that promise I shall have to make the cost of the Special Reserve somewhat larger this year than it will be in future years, because I have to provide for that Militia training and for a number of Militiamen. Moreover, we do not discharge any man from the Militia—we absorb him into these new battalions, 101 in place of 124—therefore some of these Special Reserve battalions will be much larger in numbers than their ultimate establishment will be. Some of them will have a very large strength of Militia battalions. So much for the Special Reserve.

Now I come to the fifth item with which we have been dealing this year, and that is the Reserve of Officers. The question of officers is a very serious one, and I shall have something to say about it later on. We have set the machinery I described last year to work, and the Reserve of Officers is—I will not call it a going concern—at any rate, actually in its infancy. The last thing I have to mention is the very comprehensive topic of the Territorial Army, to which I will come in its turn. I am able to pass over the first four of these items—the expeditionary force, mobilisation, equipment, and general structure of the expeditionary force—because these have been gone into at other times, and I come at once to the Special Reserve. As I have said, the 101 infantry battalions have all been organised, and recruiting has commenced for the Special Reserve as from 16th January. The House knows what the plan of the Special Reserve is. We are anxious to get to a larger class to recruit for the Special Reserve than the Militia could reach. The Militia used to train for two periods in the year; there was the recruit training and the regular Militia training. We have made the recruit training longer and the annual training shorter. The annual training will be only some twenty-one days, as against six months' recruit training. We are so organising the new battalions that we hope to appeal to a considerable class who have not hitherto come into the Militia to come in and take six months' training, with good pay and good food and good healthy exercise, at these new battalions' head-quarters. So far there is every indication at present that the process is one that is likely to succeed, and recruits are coming in very well. Possibly that is due to the fact that we have increased the pay of the recruit by 3d. a day from the commencement, in order that he may have a better messing allowance. We lay a good deal of stress on the food during the first six months. Whereas formerly he had to wait to get this, he now gets this 3d. a day during his first six months. But, whatever the reason, the Special Reserve, although only open some six weeks, is recruiting very well. The Special Reservist will have 308 days initial training as against the old Militia training of 207 days. I hope it may be possible to arrange that a good deal of the initial training may be in winter, so that whenever possible any young man who finds himself out of a job at the end of the summer can come in and get six months' good food and good exercise, and be turned out at the end of the six months at a period of the year when he can seek a fresh job, and his chance of employment be not interfered with by having had too long a training. Elasticity in this is everything. Of course, we are now in the experimental stage, and it is impossible to predict how this is going to turn out, but the first indications are good.

I will now say something about the artillery training brigades. As the House knows, we had the other day ninty-nine batteries of field artillery and we only wanted for the expeditionary force fifty-four batteries of field artillery, and this is an illustration of the advantage of the Cardwell system. We know exactly how many batteries of artillery we want for the expeditionary force. We may require some batteries, of course, for other troops who do not leave this country with the expeditionary force, but we have a large surplus that we could not use for any expedition. The House need not be nervous about this. We have not abolished a single man. We have taken thirty-three of these batteries and organised them into training brigades.

Mr. WYNDHAM (Dover): But have you organised them?

*Mr. HALDANE: Yes, we have organised them into eleven training brigades, and they are actually at work training men. The result of that is that these eleven training brigades, carrying out the policy I announced last year, are now training Special Reservists to form the ammunition columns of the artillery and will get a training which will enable them as individuals to work up into the brigade columns, ammunition columns, and ultimately the best of them into the battery lines. We have saved 2,400 Regulars who are not necessary for the establishment of the thirty-three batteries, which are on a training brigade footing. These 2,400 Regulars we have kept, and propose to keep, until we can replace each man by four or five trained Militiamen for the same money, and with the advantage of having converted the money that used to go to Garrison Militia Artillery to this purpose. Assuming that this plan succeeds, we shall be able to equip the Artillery with its requisite am unition columns, and not only put fifty-four field batteries with the Expeditionary Force, mobilised with their ammunition columns, but also make large provision for the wastage of war. With the eleven training brigades we estimate we shall be able to produce 15,000 men, who will ultimately take the place of the 2,400, of whom I have spoken. In that case we shall be able, not only completely to mobilise with the Regulars, the batteries, and the brigade ammunition columns, but we shall have a large Reserve for wastage in time of war behind. So much for the Artillery plans. To show how impossible it is to predict how anything will work out, I will instance one curious thing. I made up my mind when we abolished, or, rather, converted, the Garrison Artillery into a Reserve of Field Artillery, that, as horsemanship would be wanted, and drivers would be asked to come forward, in Ireland, where everybody is good at a horse, we should find plenty of people; whereas in my native country, Scotland, where I will not say nobody, but few, people are good at a horse as compared with Ireland ["Oh"]—I speak for myself—I thought artillerymen would not have come forward. But there has actually been a tremendous influx of people who wish to become artillery drivers in Edinburgh, Glasgow, and the north, while Ireland is rather hanging back. But, on the whole, the recruiting for this new branch of the Special Reserve is doing very well. The men of the disbanded infantry Militia battalions are coming in very well, some 60 per cent. of them have already come over straight to the new Special Reserve. The Special Reserve also includes a minor part, which I may call B, as distinguished from the two Regular branches of Infantry and Artillery, the men of which we hope to get through the Territorial Force. We want medical assistants, extra engineers, Army Service Corps, transport, and so on. That will be a much smaller element in the force, but still it will be considerable. As this Special Reserve is very large and a novelty in the Army, the House will be anxious to know how much it is going to cost. To begin with, we have the advantage that the depôts are already there, and their cost charged to the Regulars, so that you have the machinery ready to hand. The result is that the total cost of the Special Reserve compares very favourably with the cost of the old Militia. There are fewer units, fewer headquarters, and a considerably smaller establishment of strength. The old Militia system cost the country £1,986,000; the new Special Reserve in its normal form will cost £1,955,000 so that it will cost £31,000 less than the old Militia system. This year, however, the Special Reseve, inasmuch as we have got to keep the two systems going for a time, will cost £2,119,000, which is £164,000 above what it will normally cost. That will be saved in the future. When the enormous advantage is considered that the Special Reserve presents over the Militia system, since you have got it ready to go abroad, and since it enables you to mobilise your expeditionary force, and makes that effective in a fashion that could not formerly be contemplated, one sees that we have got in it an element that was absolutely requisite to give a perfectly scientific organisation for the British Army. The Special Reserve is in its infancy, and all I can say yet is that its early days promise well.

I spoke last year of the very formidable deficiency of officers in the Army, and pointed out that we were deficient in the quantity and also in the quality, because the training we give them is not in all respects a satisfactory training. On that topic I will speak with reference to the policy of the Government. It is absolutely essential that, with an intricate machine such as the British Army, you should have highly trained minds to direct it. The more the science of war advances the greater are the calls upon the intelligence and science of your officers. Those calls are growing year by year, and every nation is feeling the burden more and more. You cannot get that supply altogether, or even to a large extent, by promotion from the ranks. The Army Council encourages such promotion, we think it good, and we promote those recommended to us from the Regulars. But you cannot get any large number of officers so, and the reasons are plain. First, the want of previous training stands in the way, and then there are other difficulties. You can get some, but you cannot in that way count on a substantial contribution of sufficiently highly trained minds to make your machine work effectively and swiftly. Education and promotion for ability are the two things to which one must look. The figures of the deficiency of officers are, and have been for many years past, rather formidable. At the most difficult time of the South African war the wonder was that the nation got through as well as it did. We are over 5,000 short for mobilisation for the British and Colonial establishments, and we are besides that over 3,000 short for India, a total of over 8,000 short. For mobilisation, exclusive of India, we want a total of 13,000 odd, and we have over 8,000 if you include about 1,500 officers who belong to the old Reserve, and are on retired pay, and who have to come out to serve the country in the case of war. The result is that for home alone we have a deficiency of over 5,000. It was my duty to put before the House a plan for getting a new Reserve of officers. We estimate that if that new machinery works satisfactorily it will give us, when it becomes effective, the requisite number. We have called certain principles to our aid, one is the analogy of the reserve officer on the Continent, the basis of whose training is that theoretically to qualify in the requisite knowledge a man serve a year *à la suite* with a unit. Then he is qualified to become a reserve officer. We calculate on getting a certain number of young men who are going into the professions, or who are likely to succeed to property, and whose parents may be glad for their sons to have a year of military training, which might be taken at home, but better still might be taken in India. At any rate the year's service with a battalion would give the first category of those we hope to get, and we think that probably a considerable number of those who have gone into the Militia up to now will join the new Reserve of Officers, and that will be a benefit to the Regular Army just as much as the Militia has been in the past. The second source is the Universities and public schools. I entered into a covenant with the House, which I intend to keep, in spirit and letter, when the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act was under consideration, not to bring the military element into the State-aided schools. But there are other schools which are on quite a different footing, the great public schools, which have their cadet corps at the present time. The headmasters of these public schools have been very keen to work with us in introducing this second branch of the Reserve of Officers. We have been in communication with over 130 of them, and, carrying out the principles which the House sanctioned last year, we are now setting up training corps, one branch of which will be in these schools and the other in the Universities. We are in communication, I think, with fourteen universities at this moment, with regard to converting their Volunteer corps into training corps. The General Staff has taken over the management of this matter, and has organised a special department for these duties, for which provision will be made in the Estimates. It will be the duty of three or four officers to superintend the work of these training corps. We have also established two specially selected officers at Oxford and Cambridge whose duty it is to superintend the organisation of the corps on the spot. We propose to organise in the schools Officers' Training Corps which will correspond to and absorb the old cadet battalions of the schools, where a young man who hopes to take some part in the military life of his country will get two years training, at the end of which he may pass for certificate A, which will be very much the equivalent of what is necessary to qualify him to be a lieutenant, and will, at any rate, enable him to go into the Territorial Force with a lieutenant's commission. But if he chooses to go on and take Certificate B, he will have to get that at the University, and do two years with the University branch of the Officers' Training Corps. If he does that he will then have the qualification and knowledge that will approach very near to a captain's. Anybody who has a certificate A, only will be able to go to the unit and serve there for only eight months, getting four months off. Anybody in the second year at the university training corps will get another four months off, so that we have eight months off altogether, but no candidate will be qualified for a commission in the Reserve of Officers unless his commanding officer approves and certifies him. The General Staff has carefully elaborated the training for this corps, and in a few days an Army order will appear giving the full details. In the schools there is a very large cadet corps. We hope to get some 12,500 boys from the cadet corps to work with, and from the Universities we should be able to get 2,000 or 3,000. From these we might hope to get, in course of time, if the scheme were working at full strength, over 800 officers a year for the Special Reserve. Here again I wish to guard myself. We are setting this machinery going, but I do not wish to be taken at all as confidently predicting the success of the scheme. It is an experiment, but it is only by experiment that it is possible to make any progress. And yet the great problem of the deficiency of officers has got to be faced and cannot be shelved. We have taken £2,000 in the Estimate this year for this purpose and we took the same last year, and that will cover us for some time. The increased cost, which will be about £150,000 a year, will be covered by automatic reductions which will be in operation long before we get to that time. If the scheme succeeds in producing officers for the Reserve to the strength we hope, I think it will be a cheap scheme. Such an officer in the Special Reserve will get £40 outfit allowance, and £20 a year as a retaining fee and his pay while he is out. We hope the career is one which will prove attractive to the class of young man who is going into the educational professions, the schoolmaster — schoolmasters are very keen about it—the doctor, the lawyer, or many other professions where probably in the early years he will have a good deal more leisure than at a later period, and in which, moreover, he will wish to have a second string to his bow in case law or medicine does not smile upon him.

I now come to the question of quality, and what I am now going to say applies to all officers and particularly to the Regular officers. The problem of the education of our officers and their training is a serious one. Great progress has been made, but there is still a great deal to be done. Before 1902 the system in vogue was a system of book knowledge, which lent opportunities for cramming to an undue degree. Then there came the Report of the Committee presided over by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the St. Augustine's Division of Kent —a very valuable Report because it grappled with the difficulty; and I think great credit is due to those who devised it, to Lord Midleton, who initiated the proposal, and to the right hon. Gentleman who worked out the changes made at that time. They superseded the old-fashioned garrison instructor, and the system they adopted was one which aimed at producing a practically trained officer. In appreciating what they did and what they were not able to do it is necessary to bear in mind that the professional life of an officer has four stages. There is, first of all, his general education, altogether outside the Army. The next stage is that spent at Sandhurst or Woolwich before he gets his commission. That is followed by the third step, which is of a much longer character. When the young officer gets his commission he has a period from his early twenties till he reaches the age of, say, thirty-five, in which there is no adequate provision for his instruction at all. That is the most serious period, and it is one for which we have to provide. It is the period during which the officer has no opportunity—of which many of them would avail themselves if they had—for making himself efficient in the science of war. The fourth stage comes only to those who seek the highest branches of the military profession, and that is the training for the General Staff and the higher commands, which is required from those who aim at being masters of the science of war and war organisation. About the first two stages I say nothing; they are tolerably satisfactory, except that Sandhurst is a great deal too small. We are adding to it very largely—practically doubling the accommodation. Coming to the intermediate stage, the Akers-Douglas Report, abolishing the old garrison instructor, entrusted the practical training and examination of officers to local examining boards, organised by the general officers commanding and the staff under them. They are a great improvement upon what used to obtain, but still they are not up to the modern level, and the reason is this. The general officer commanding and the battalion commander have a great deal to do. Very often they are men of a practical rather than an educational mind, and it is imposing a great additional burden to call on them to do educational work for which they may not be naturally qualified, and the result is that there is great unevenness in the kind of instruction and examination. The examination board consists of men who necessarily, according to the Army system, are chosen with some reference to their rank, and you may not be able to get a good examining officer of the proper rank. Anyhow, the result is, we feel, that the system is unsatisfactory and must be reconsidered. When I come to the fourth head, the General Staff, the system of education is admirable. I cannot speak too highly of it. But there again we have not enough trained men for the Staff College. We have accommodation at Camberley for seventy and at Quetta for fifty. They work in close communication, but they are not identical. We take their people and they take ours. But the Staff College is too small for our requirements; we have not enough instructors. The staff is very good, but the strain on it is too great. In the last eighteen months we have set to work another body which is training, not for staff work, but for administrative work—the London School of Economics. That has been a great success and it has created a great deal of interest, and already the officers who have attended that school are beginning to find the fruit of their studies recognised by promotion. That has been a help to us, but it does not touch the General Staff work properly so called. We have got to do something to raise the level of the instruction and training of the officer during the period from twenty-two to thirty-five. The reason why we want to do more is twofold. In the first place the standard of education in the Army is rising rapidly. The divisional organisation is rising. The training of troops has been modified in such a fashion that you want more skill and more knowledge in the officer than formerly, and, moreover, the General Staff is of a higher standard of education all round. It is a great mistake to suppose you have made a General Staff when you have brought the officers together and labelled them General Staff officers. That is not a General Staff at all. In order to get a General Staff you want a long time; a tradition must grow up, a corps must form itself—a corps of men actuated by a common purpose, of divergent mind, it may be, but still concentrated on the accomplishment of a common purpose and permeated by certain central ideas relating to military thought. Such a body must take time to grow, and although we have at the War Office an organisation which is improving month by month, and the effect of which has been already very great in the organisation of the Army, still we all feel that two years time will make a very great difference in what the General Staff is. But a true General Staff is a body which does not remain concentrated at the War Office. A General Staff is a body which is becoming more and more important in its influence, not merely at headquarters, but out in the commands and in the training centres, and for that matter all over the Empire. The result is that the General Staff is asking, and properly asking, for higher military knowledge in the regimental officers. We want to assist the regimental officer in a way we have not been able to assist him hitherto. We want to give him more chance of instruction, not the old garrison instruction, but instruction that is not merely practical instruction, given by men whose minds have been permeated by General Staff teaching, and who will go down to the command and work with the general officer commanding and his staff on the spot for the purpose of providing facilities for acquiring knowledge and for study which do not exist at the present time. We want to control the spirit of the promotions examination in the same fashion. We want to provide chances of higher appointments, not necessarily to the General Staff, but to the large and growing class of intermediate staff appointments, which is constantly coming more into existence in connection with the Territorial Force. By throwing open the chance of appointment to these new positions we hope to do something to stimulate the regimental officer. Just now he has far too little chance, his life is too restricted. He has a feeling that he has entered a costly profession without obtaining any adequate opening. We want to make the position of the officer in this respect a little more attractive than it has been. We shall give a chance after a little while of specialising. One man may have one talent and another man another talent. We must see their work and give them opportunities of showing how they will shape. Therefore, the examinations should allow for a certain amount of selection and the record should be taken into account. A thorough grounding in regimental work is necessary before there can be any specialisation, but after specialisation you may possibly open the field of selection to the Staff College and open it to some of those other appointments of which I have spoken. How are we going to do that? It is extremely difficult because it is extremely vague. You have a good system working in the Akers-Douglas system if only certain modifications are made to bring it up to date—to bring it up with the rapid changes made between 1902 and the present year, and the equally rapid changes which are, I am sure, in front of us. We ought to be very cautious about rushing in advance of experience. We want experience to guide us; and it is, therefore, well to proceed tentatively, making experiments in certain commands to begin with. I beg the House to consider me as merely thinking aloud about the very difficult problem which we are trying to solve. I think we should do wisely at present to concentrate ourselves on experimenting carefully and to select commands which are most fit for the purpose. In the second place, we should have to select in detail more instructors than at the present time, and these instructors must be persons who are in accord with the spirit of the General Staff. It is evolution rather than revolution which is wanted in this case. It is essential that the proceeding should be very deliberate. In the course of the summer I hope we may make a tentative beginning. At present the General Staff is considering the best means by which the new departure may be made. Although we are looking ahead, we have not been idle during the past year. One matter in which our officers were very hardly treated was the want of opportunities for studying foreign languages. We have established this year classes in French and German at the chief military centres. When we have found officers who are willing to devote their leave to going abroad to study we have given them a contribution towards their expenses. I am speaking of all the countries where there are better known European and Oriental languages. In the case of the most difficult languages we have detailed officers to go abroad at Army charges and study these languages so as to be available as interpreters and for General Staff purposes. In order to encourage the study of Oriental and other languages, the Civil Service Commission have met us very handsomely. For interpreterships they hold their examinations in foreign languages abroad at the military stations. They are examining just now in Arabic at Cairo, for instance, where there are officers with the battalions which we have sent to Egypt who are taking the opportunity of acquiring an Oriental language. Last year forty officers spent their leave abroad. A sum of £2,500 appeared in the Estimates last year for this purpose, and it has served its purpose very well.

*Mr. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): Is there any other Oriental language being studied in this way and under these conditions, besides Arabic?

*Mr. HALDANE: Not at Cairo, but the principle has been established and the Civil Service Commissioners will examine wherever they have examinations. I have finished what I have to say on this big and very difficult subject of officers. It is the most difficult subject which the War Office has in hand at the present time, and it will require much time. I have no hope of solving this problem rapidly. We must proceed tentatively, and I have indicated certain lines on which we hope to proceed. With thoroughness, patience, and continuity of policy I think a good deal may be done. But not till then can it be said that the British Army is properly equipped and organised.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): Will the right hon. Gentleman explain if there is any difference as to the mode of taking officers into the Special Reserve and into the Militia, except in the special case of getting regular officers into the Special Reserve?

*Mr. HALDANE: The mode of access to the Special Reserve is three-fold. At present officers may come into the Special Reserve through the Universities and Public Schools, but there are two other entrances by which they can come in.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER: In place of the old one.

*Mr. HALDANE: Yes. The old one is not very much liked. There are two general observations which I wish to make before I sit down. Since last November we have been giving 3d. extra to the recruit. The recruit is at the growing stage, and there is nothing on which attention has been more concentrated than the improvement of his spiritual, mental, and bodily condition. The pay of the Army is one of the items which strike people as being more costly than they used to be. There is a growth in pay of £2,000,000. I want to justify that, and I hope I may be able to convince hon. Members that one of the best things that has been done with this big body of 250,000 men has been to spend money on feeding them better and improving their pay and general social conditions. The result of our policy is that the class of recruits is undoubtedly improving. The consensus of reports from the districts is to this effect. The pay, the additional comforts, and the prospects of the soldier are having a marked effect. There are many indications to prove this, but perhaps the most satisfactory is the decrease of wastage. Wastage may be comprised under the following heads: Invaliding, men discharged within three months of their enlistment as not likely to make efficient soldiers, and men discharged for misconduct. In 1903–4, the number of invalids was 4,973; in 1904–5, owing to the efforts of my predecessor, who gave great attention to this subject of wastage, the number fell to 4,226; in 1905–6 it was 3,234; last year it dropped to 2,928; and I have no doubt that this year it is again falling. I now come to those who are not likely to become efficient. We now select more carefully the men whom we take. Recruits are coming in owing to the improved conditions in such a way that we can pick and choose. The number of those rejected as not likely to become efficient was in 1903–4, 1,373; in 1904–5, 1,822; in 1905–6, 1,248; and in 1906–7, 928. In 1903–4 there were 3,656 cases of men discharged for misconduct; in 1904–5, 3,090; in 1905–6, 2,121; in 1906–7, 2,119. This is a tremendous drop. Under all the heads wastage has diminished from 10,002 in 1903–4 to 5,975 in 1906–7, a decrease of 4,000. I think that is a most satisfactory result, on which the country may congratulate itself.

We are taking other steps to improve the condition of the soldier, to enable him to realise the advantage of saving money, and to show him how even small sums may amount to a considerable total in a number of years. Instructions have been given that the schoolmasters and inspectors are to draw attention to this matter. I was struck two years ago with this—that there was a disease in the Army, of which I had not become cognisant elsewhere, but of which the evidences were unmistakeable and that is what is known as "soldier's heart." It appeared that the heart of the soldier became more easily affected than the heart of any other class. We therefore appointed a highly qualified committee of very distinguished medical men, physiologists, together with practical officers, to sit under the Director-General of the Army Medical Service and to inquire into the whole system of the physical training of the soldier. This committee traced "soldier's heart" to the old-fashioned system of doing exercises, and we have substituted for it the Danish system of training. The great advantage under the new conditions is that physical exercises are based not only on military requirements, but on medical expert advice as to their effect. The Report states that the new exercises tend to develop the intelligence of the men, that they are capable of being performed without undue distress to them and are more interesting in their nature, and they will undoubtedly diminish admission to hospital for disordered action of the heart. So much for physical exercises.

I am glad to say that under other heads things are improving very much. The Director-General of the Army Medical Service reports to me for the purposes of this statement that improvements have already begun to accrue from the steps which have been taken towards the prevention of disease and consequent inefficiency of the Army. For instance, whereas the average yearly number of cases of Malta fever was for the years 1896 to 1905 over 150 in every 1,000 men of the garrison, in 1907 the number had fallen to two in every 1,000 men. This represents a saving of about 40,000 days pay in a year to the British Government, taking into account only the days spent in hospital, and not the loss and expense entailed by death and invaliding. That is, I think, a remarkable tribute to the achievements of science. This improvement, the Report states, may be directly attributed to scientific discoveries lately made, in large part, by officers of the department. As a result of the steps which have been taken in consequence of these discoveries the disease may be regarded as practically stamped out. I think

I ought here to acknowledge how much we owe to this Committee and also to the Royal Society for the deep interest it has taken in this matter. The Committee also say—

> "We can also report for the year 1907 a considerable improvement in the health of the British Army in India in respect of three important diseases—enteric fever, venereal disease, and malarial fever. We regard this satisfactory state of affairs as a direct result of the increased attention paid by all the authorities concerned, both military and medical, to sanitation in cantonments. The improvement in venereal disease may be attributed to an increase in temperance and an improvement in general moral tone throughout the ranks of the Army."

I may say in connection with the Army Medical Service that we have this year opened a new medical college in London which will, we hope, greatly facilitate the education of these most valuable officers of the Army—the officers of the Army Medical Service. As regards temperance, I have given instruction that, wherever it is possible, an Army tent may be placed at the disposal of the temperance organisation of the battalion, and we have taken every step we can to encourage the cause. The growth of temperance in the Army is marked and satisfactory. We have improved dining arrangements, and done many other things which conduce to the well-being of the men. Another thing I would mention is this. Two years ago we abolished flogging in the Army. We have had no reason to regret it, and we have been able to follow it up with an Army Order which has made considerable changes in regard to punishment. Under the new regulations only the graver offences, dealt with by entry in regimental conduct sheets, are taken into account in assessing a soldier's character, while minor entries, dealt with by entry in company sheets, are wiped out by subsequent good conduct, the company sheets being destroyed on discharge. Provision is being made for the abolition of company conduct sheets for non-commissioned officers of the rank of colour-sergeant or upwards, and the wearing of plain clothes under certain conditions has been extended to colour-sergeants. All that seems to me to show that progress is being made in the solution of the social question and the well-being of the great mass of the people. You cannot separate the social condition of the Army from that of the rest of the population. Mixing as they do with the general population, your soldiers ought to be of the highest class, and, whatever view may be taken about other questions of economy, I hope I have convinced the House that the £2,000,000 spent in improving the conditions and pay in the Army have been well spent.

In the case of the infantry we have put them on a seven and five years service, which will give us an adequate Reserve. The Reserve is now enormous —135,000.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover): The effective strength of the Reserve on 1st January was, I think, about 129,000. Is this 6,000 an accumulation since 1st January?

*MR. HALDANE: It has been growing up very fast. We do not, of course, estimate the Reserve at that figure. I gave the figures last year as something like 115,000. The effective strength at this moment is 135,000, and it is still rising. As regards the cavalry, I wish to say this. We have got now a complete infantry organisation and a complete artillery organisation, but we have not a complete cavalry organisation, because the cavalry has not got depots. At one time it was thought that you could train the men without depots, but we believe they require depots, and what we propose is to establish tentatively, say, half-a-dozen small depots for the cavalry. We have determined this in principle, but we have taken no active steps yet in determining what the particular places shall be. One reason for that is that we want to bring the Regular cavalry into relations with the Yeomanry. We think it would be a great pity if we did not succeed in bringing the cavalry and groups of Yeomanry regiments into relations with one another. It is an excellent thing for the Yeomanry regiments that there should be a sort of centre of instruction. What we hope to establish is depots which will be the centres for groups of Regular cavalry and Yeomanry regiments. Last year I expressed my hope that the Yeomanry were going to give us fourteen squadrons for service abroad, who would take six months training for service abroad with the Special Reserve. It has been found, however, that that is not possible, as they cannot do the amount of training required. The result is we have had to modify somewhat our cavalry organisation. The new war organisation of the cavalry consists of this—first, there is the strategic cavalry division, which consists of four brigades of twelve regiments with four batteries. Then there comes the protective screen between the main force and the adversary, and that consisted last year of something a little different from what it consists of to-day. To-day it consists of four regiments of Regular cavalry and two battalions of mounted infantry. That is what I think we shall settle. We intended to have more mounted infantry, but being unable to get the fourteen squadrons from the Yeomanry, we have been compelled to put in more Regular cavalry. Then there are the divisional mounted troops, and these will consist of mounted infantry and the Irish Yeomanry and any other regiment of Yeomanry which will volunteer to serve. The Irish Yeomanry forming part of the Special Reserve will be able to render the service asked of them. That is the modification of our cavalry proposals. It may not be the final form, but it is the form we are now working on.

Now I pass to the Territorial Force. I am not going to dwell on that, as I shall, no doubt, have to answer a great many questions as to it in the course of the discussion. All I have got to say is that the arrangements are nearly complete, that the reason why there has been so much pulling about of the Volunteers is that the whole disposition of the force has been made on a General Staff basis with a view to coast defence. The purpose has been so to arrange the force as to ensure points where invasion would be likely, so that an enemy would be obliged to bring large bodies of troops in transports, and consequently to have many transports. If you can force up the number of transports, then you have the objective which has always been the historical objective of the British Navy when dealing with an invading force. We should not go for the battleships, but for the transports. The very essence of our traditions has been to strike at the transports. If the force with which your enemy makes his invasion is great, then in his transports he presents targets for the Fleet to aim at. Knowing this, he will send smaller forces for making raids, for which we organise. I have taken an Estimate for 315,000 men of the Territorial Force, and I want to make it clear to Members of the House, for I know there have been local complaints of pulling about of existing organisations, that there is a deep reason at the bottom of the whole matter; the organisation of the Territorial Force is for the country as a whole, so that the various possibilities of invasion may be adequately provided for and dealt with. If everybody comes up after 31st March, I shall have 315,000 men to provide for, and the cost will be a matter of interest to the House. The hon. and gallant Member for Sheffield has said that I have departed from my original proposals, but that is not so. The cost of the Auxiliary Forces under the old system was £4,400,000, and the original Estimate of the new Territorial Force was £2,890,000; that was at the time excluding the Militia. Since then, however, the Militia have come over, and in my then Budget I pointed out the saving from the formation of the Special Reserve. Taking out for this £2,000,000, that left the cost at about £2,500,000. But what will the Territorial Force cost? At first we began with £2,890,000. Now the House is in favour of economy in the abstract; but when we come to close quarters the platonic love for economy sometimes disappears. So in this case; and the various additions made to figures in the original Estimate brought up the cost to £3,579,000.

Mr. WYNDHAM asked whether the right hon. Gentleman had included expenditure under every Vote, and was the Estimate made upon the total number or on the basis of the number likely to come in.

*Mr. HALDANE: I will make it perfectly clear. The figure is £3,579,000, that being with the additions made by the House, for 315,000 men maintained at a war strength, as a going concern with 126,000 horses. But that is supposing every man cames out for fifteen days' training, and during a time of peace we do not want that number of horses. We have calculated what the Force will cost upon the enlarged figures and on a peace strength for 315,000 men, but with much fewer horses. With the saving that will accrue from diminishing the number of horses by some 70,000 and from the saving by estimating that 80 per cent. of the men will camp for eight days or over, the estimated cost of the force is £3,000,000. This is what I have to budget for as the cost of the Territorial Army on a peace footing from year to year. How do I budget this year? I have to bear in mind that it is impossible to expect that all the Volunteers and Yeomanry will have to come; they will fall very short; and we cannot blind our eyes to the fact that many things are going on. I have asked myself the question what money shall I want for the Territorial Force? If I take the full cost, and do not get the full number of men next year, then I lay myself under reproach for taking more money from the taxpayers than I am able to spend. If, on the other hand, I take too little, I bear in mind that the House does not like Supplementary Estimates. I am in a peculiarly difficult position, for I cannot tell how many men will come in—nobody can tell. In the result I prefer in making my calculation to take a little less, even at the risk of having to ask for a Supplementary Estimate, rather than take an amount I may not be able to spend. I have made a very close calculation, and I think I ought to take five-sixths of the money, calculating that not all the men will come to camp. I have calculated what is likely to happen, and if I am wrong I must come to the House with a Supplementary Estimate, but I do not think I shall have to do that when I take a little over £2,500,000.

Mr. WYNDHAM said there were £2,000,000 for pay and allowances. He supposed the other £500,000 would come under other Votes, clothing, transport, and so on.

*Mr. HALDANE: That is so. If the right hon. Gentleman will do a little arithmetical sum he will find that £2,510,000 includes all the charges and compares with £3,000,000, which is the full cost. But, as I have pointed out, there will be a saving of £160,000 on account of the Special Reserve, and there are other savings which will take off the remainder. I have provided this year at the outset £300,000 for the expenditure on clothing, and next year there will still be that item, but smaller in amount for new recruits. The new Territorial Force is going to cost a great deal more per man than the old forces of Volunteers and Yeomanry. Where we paid £6 10s. per man we are going to pay £9 for a more efficient man. It is, therefore, £3,000,000 as against £2,500,000, but there are the Special Reserve savings and the droppings out of the initial costs. That is all, I think, I need say about the Territorial Force, except that we provided in the initial cost for getting rid of debts on halls and personal debts. Therefore, I think we have done pretty well financially without increasing the Estimates, providing out of savings and—I will not quarrel about the word "savings," but money not spent, though at any rate we put it on the Estimates—£800,000 *plus* £300,000 *plus* £150,000, for the initial starting and non-recurrent expenditure not adding a penny for the purpose to the Estimate. I think it reflects great credit—not on myself, I am merely the mouthpiece—but on the financial authorities at the War Office, my hon. friend who sits near me and his staff, who have worked this out and have allayed the terrors about enormous expenditure of which we have heard so much. Of course, for the additions made to the original Estimate I am not responsible; the House accepted them, and the equipment on an adequate footing for £3,000,000 is the result at which I have arrived after careful minute investigation with the best expert advice I could get.

There are one or two other matters I have to mention. The right hon. Gentleman opposite takes a great interest in manœuvres. We had a large programme of manœuvres last year. The Eastern and Southern Commands had combined manœuvres in Wiltshire; the Aldershot Command had manœuvres in

Buckinghamshire and the Irish Command in Leinster; the Scottish Command had mounted manœuvres in Perthshire, in which the Scottish Yeomanry regiments took part; the Northern Command had cyclist manœuvres in Yorkshire; the Eastern Command had siege manœuvres at Chatham, and the 1st Cavalry Brigade and the Household Cavalry Brigade were exercised in combined operations on the Marlborough Downs by General Sir John French. The new organisation of the expeditionary force into divisions was thoroughly tested with satisfactory results. There will be considerable manœuvres in the coming autumn. I do not wish to go into details, but certainly they will not be less than last year; in fact, I have taken a little more money under this head. We think it inadvisable to economise in this expenditure, for we think it is most fruitful when judiciously applied. The General Staff has been making its influence felt in the new formations. For instance, during the past year new units of the Royal Engineers have been raised, and, with the exception of the bridging trains and the line of communication telegraph companies, can now be mobilised to full war establishment as regards *personnel*. The bridging trains require more drivers, and the line of communication telegraph companies more telegraphists before they can be fully mobilised; no difficulty is anticipated in producing this *personnel* from Reserves when the normal has been reached. The new units are as follows—two field troops, two air line telegraph companies, two cable telegraph companies, two wireless telegraph companies, four divisional telegraph companies, three divisional telegraph companies, two bridging trains, two line of communication telegraph companies. In other words, we have had to recast the whole of the engineer organisation on account of the new organisation and improvements in science

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): Is the net result a reduction of the total engineering force?

*MR. HALDANE: There is a small reduction, but, on the other hand, we are producing a reserve of engineers through the Special Reserve which will more than compensate for that. There has hitherto been too much of getting civilian services from Regular soldiers which can be rendered more adequately by men who have been trained all their lives for these particular services; and the footing on which we are proceeding is that of getting more men—more Regulars I admit—but more men. There is another important feature of the year, and that is the work done in the Colonial Conference. The General Staff was in evidence at the Colonial Conference, and a general agreement was arrived at, the feeling being very harmonious, about the organisation of what one may call the whole of the forces of the Empire on a general pattern. We agreed that each self-governing Colony should provide, as far as possible, for its local security; and that there should be the duty recognised of arranging for mutual assistance on definite lines in case of need; and we agreed that as far as possible the pattern of organisation should be made the same throughout the Empire, and that there should be co-operation. The way in which we thought we could best bring that about, without interference with the liberty of self-governing countries, was to make the General Staff Imperial; that was not only organising the General Staff at home but so organising it that we could send officers out to the Colonies, and could take officers from the Colonies upon our General Staff for training at home. That is being done. We have got two staff officers now from Canada, and one from New Zealand at the Staff College; and the authorities are taking every step they can to make the forces of the Empire feel themselves a single force so far as possible. The principle is that in addition to the expeditionary force to act at a distance in case of necessity, there should be a far-flung line of local defence extending all over the rest of the world, managed by each country within the Empire, organised as far as possible on one pattern, and by one school of thought in the shape of a General Staff. We are endeavouring not only to make the General Staff, for instance, in Canada and at home work together and exchanging officers, but we are throwing open General Staff appointments here for Colonial officers.

Of course, these things can only be done on a very small scale at first; for the Colonies are only beginning to organise on the ideas that we have agreed upon, but we have made a beginning, and I am glad to say that the Selection Board have lately offered the command of an infantry brigade at Aldershot to Colonel Otter, a distinguished Canadian officer. In this way throughout the Army the spirit is now beginning to prevail of regarding the forces of the Crown and the officers of the Crown as more or less interchangeable.

AN HON. MEMBER: Is he coming?

*MR. HALDANE: I do not know. The invitation has been sent to him. There is very little more that I have to trouble the House with. The whole question of reorganisation impresses itself on one's mind the more that one studies the circumstances of the Army. No Army is so difficult to manage as the British Army, because it is raised on a voluntary basis and is scattered all over the world. On the other hand, I do say that you have in the principles which I have described, which have been in large part inherited and on which we are endeavouring to carry on the work of our predecessors to its completion, a definite pattern and a definite organisation. I do feel that that has a value from every point of view, whether we take efficiency or economy into account. The great curse of our system in the past has been that its units have risen without any plan, without any definite purpose, without the question being asked of each one what is the end it is there to serve. It is better that, having adopted certain principles, we should set steadily to work and carry them out to their ultimate conclusion, looking neither to the right nor to the left, than that we should waver and hesitate. There has been much criticism about reductions; but, after all, had the country ever an organised force such as these six divisions, four cavalry brigades and artillery adjuncts? Had the country ever the prospect of such a force before it, and if such a force can be got with 21,000 fewer men and less cost, and without adding one man more than is necessary to keep at home under the influence of the Cardwell system, it is a great gain to have lopped off unnecessary units and taken the opportunity of converting others, such as the old Militia, to build up, and fill up gaps, in the Regular organisation. It seems to me that there is at least enough that is simple in the plan which is now sanctioned by Parliament, and which we are working out, to justify the hope that steady working may give us an Army of which we may be able to predict with some sort of accuracy how it will function in case it is called on. We are only at the beginning of the work. A plan is made. The foundations are laid. The building is beginning to arise. That work must take years. It must be done by successive hands. I shall achieve my ambition if I leave my part in it, without having brought into the discussions of the subject that element of party bitterness which is the worst enemy of continuity of policy. I recognise what my predecessors have done; I am grateful to them; and all I ask is that the House and the country should take, in the spirit in which I have taken their work, my work hereafter. No one knows better how small it is and how true it is that we have here—"the little done, the undone vast." We have made a beginning. If we have laid down lines of steady, of continuous policy we may justly claim that good work will have been done for the British Army.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said that if he began at the beginning of his right hon. friend's speech, the hoped the House would not think he was going to follow him at anything like a corresponding length through the whole of it. But the words in which the right hon. Gentleman ended his speech had relation, he thought, to the argument with which he had begun it. The principle upon which he hoped to have attained a permanent basis for the British Army was the principle he had explained in his opening words, and it also formed the foundation of his speech in winding up the debate on Monday night. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the Cardwell system as he called it, which he explained to mean the system of linking battalions, and now, cavalry regiments also—perhaps the whole Army—in groups of two's, one at home and one abroad, was economic, and not only efficient, especially if they brought in India, and that it reduced the Army to the mathematical function of a single variant. He would be inclined to put that statement plainly to the House in something like these words. It meant that the Army was to be divided into two equal halves of which one was always changing and therefore the other must always change correspondingly. The half which was thought to be needed abroad from time to time regulated the size of the corresponding half which they had to keep at home. That was what was meant by the phrase "function of a single variant." How far that was the case the House now knew well. The expeditionary force which was explained to stand last year at 167,000 would stand he supposed in a month or two at 172,000, because the right hon. Gentleman was bringing home four battalions from the Cape of which three were placed in the expeditionary force.

MR. HALDANE: There were seventy battalions at home and I only wanted sixty-six. These four were the surplus. They do not add to the expeditionary force.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that at all events the size of the force which they were to mobilise under the working of what was called the Cardwell system of linking in two's was a force now larger than 167,000 men. He was only giving an illustration of the effect of linking in pairs to show that the expeditionary force, which was arrived at by utilising for mobilisation an exactly equal number at home to that abroad, was a force which did not depend on their particular needs. It was a force which depended on an accidental number abroad. Therefore, if three out of the four battalions coming back from South Africa were to be retained as communication troops, he understood they were added to the force to be mobilised on that system. He would like to examine the statement that the system was an economic one, especially if they included India. In recent debates upon finance his friends on that side who had objected to the enormous cost of our military and naval defence did not state their case at its full strength, because they did not include anything except the shown cost of the Army paid for out of the funds of the United Kingdom, and ignored certain military charges which appeared on the Civil Service Estimates. They did not include such expenditure as that upon the Canadian Army, nor the £22,000,000 which was spent on the Indian Army. It was impossible to consider his right hon. friend's proposals and principles without including India in their purview. The cost of our land forces was upon such a gigantic scale that no comparison with any foreign country presented them with any element for arriving at anything like the cost per head. The British Empire, was spending upon its land forces £53,750,000 a year, a sum which exceeded enormously the expenditure upon the Fleet. The Secretary for War had already seen the difficulty of justifying such a gigantic expenditure and such a waste of energy in the creation of his new Territorial Army, and he had admitted in the House the predominance of the Fleet in our scheme of defence. But in the last speech he made to his constituency the right hon. Gentleman threw some doubt upon that admirable doctrine, and his Under-Secretary the Earl of Portsmouth also made a speech a day or two ago in which he said —

> "He sympathised with those who felt that to sink enormous sums on ships whose efficiency might be superseded at any time was a costly experiment. If the force of the Navy was to be materially lessened they were bound to increase the cost of the Army."

It was impossible for them to overlook words like those. At the Colonial Conference the Secretary for War said—

> "There is the other part which exists not for local defence, but for the service of the Empire as a whole, the expeditionary force which, in a country like ours, must be naval as well as military—and I go further and say primarily naval. There is the Fleet, which in order to make the defence of the Empire what we all hope and believe it is, and are convinced that it must remain if the Empire is to hold together, must have the complete command of the sea, and must be stronger than the fleet of any other Power, or, for that matter, of any other two Powers."

That statement the right hon. Gentleman still adhered to, but it rendered foolish speeches like those of the Under-Secretary for War advocating a larger Army than that which we possessed at the present time. Under those circumstances were they to go on spending £53,750,000 a year on land forces? He did not think so. In regard to this military expenditure he felt ashamed of the burden they were throwing upon India, much of it for services with which the Government did not face the British taxpayer. Although they had been steadily increasing the mounted force in India the number of horses at home had been decreasing in spite of the enormous cost of the Army. On the 1st January this year the Cavalry of the Line in the United Kingdom had only 6,445 horses for 8,848 officers and men, and only 5,801 of those horses were fit for service. No less than one-third of the horse troops in the Army had at present to go on foot, and yet it was claimed that this Expeditionary Force was ready to be sent instantly across the sea. The French cavalry had their horses in time of peace, and there had been an increase in the number of artillery and cavalry horses in India. However, his right hon. friend hoped to develop a more economical system. If the country were to spend so much money on its Army, it was on the cavalry and artillery mainly that such expenditure must take place, because, whatever the infantry produced on a cheaper system might be worth, no one imagined that artillery and cavalry fit to face European troops could be produced on a Militia basis. His right hon. friend had admitted that the divisional cavalry which the Yeomanry was to produce was no longer in existence.

Mr. HALDANE: The Irish Yeomanry remain.

*__Sir CHARLES DILKE__ said that in regard to the Territorial Artillery there was a great deal of doubt whether the change of system was to be accompanied by an improvement in the training. In the case of one of the regiments of garrison artillery which was to be transformed under this scheme the Colonel went down on Saturday to address them, straight from the War Office where he got his instructions, and he said that—

> "He had information as to drills Sometimes they would get three drills in one day."

Then he invited questions, and in answer to one question put to him he said—

> "They would be able to put in three drills in one day."

The Adjutant, Captain Holme, R.A., also said that—

> "The drivers would get a drill if they put in an appearance."

The colonel added that—

> "Their presence at lectures would count also. There would be eight days camp from Sunday to Sunday. There would be ample time to get in the drills."

He did not think that that was a favourable sign, and at all the meetings which had been held there had been constant explanations in order to induce the men to come, and they had been assured that nothing would be changed and that everything would go on as before. If there was to be no improvement in training, why alter the system—why reject the service of willing men, and willing battalions, and destroy the whole civil character of the force? It had been said over and over again by War Office representatives that the new system would make no change at all. But there was the abolition of the word "Volunteer," the use of a military attestation form, and the use of the "enlist" instead of the old word "enrol," which in many parts of the country had a detrimental effect on recruiting. The basis of the whole of this costly Army system was what his right hon. friend called the Cardwell plan. What did the right hon. Gentleman say at the Colonial Conference? He recommended his scheme as vouched for by Sir George Clarke and the Esher Committee. That Committee had reported on a scheme for the reorganisation of the War Office and the Army, and that scheme was adopted by the late Government. The Secretary of State said that he was carrying it out. The Esher Committee was against the Cardwell system, and it reported in the strongest terms against the linking of battalion to battalion. Colonel Ellison, the secretary of the Committee, and Sir George Clarke, military member of the Committee, signed the Report against the scheme which the right hon. Gentleman said was the foundation of his whole plan.

MR. HALDANE: The Cardwell system was only referred to in a single sentence. Colonel Ellison is one of the strongest supporters of the Cardwell system.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: You named a sailor and a soldier—Sir John Fisher and Sir George Clarke—and said that you were carrying out their views.

MR. HALDANE indicated dissent.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he would read the sentence and let the House judge for itself. The report of the Esher Committee was in these words—

> "We assume that the double-battalion system as part of the organisation of the infantry will be abolished as regards the training and supply of drafts for service abroad."

They went on to discuss what would happen when the "battalions are unlinked." The Esher Committee assumed as the foundation of their argument that we were to get rid of all the system which the Secretary of State for War now said was the principle of the new organisation. The right hon Gentleman in his speech on Monday night had in the strongest terms put the defence of his principle of reorganisation on the ground of economy to India. He said that any other plan would be ruinous to Indian finance. That was a home opinion, but was that the opinion of the Government of India? He did not mean Lord Kitchener's opinion, for he did not think Lord Kitchener was representative of Indian opinion, he was a home soldier and not an Indian soldier. Whenever India had given evidence on the subject, that evidence had always been against this principle. The Secretary of State said that he had proved the opinion of India in his Memorandum this year. The right hon. Gentleman quoted the Wantage Committee Report of 1892. Was India represented on that Committee? No, it was a War Office Committee. There had been a Commission which had considered the subject, namely, the Indian Expenditure Commission. The Indian witnesses, Lord Cromer, Sir Edwin Collen, Lord Ripon, Lord Northbrook and Lord Roberts, in giving evidence before that Commission showed that the system was invented by us here, that it was not their system, and that they could do the thing much cheaper if they were allowed to do it. It had undoubtedly certain advantages, but it was a costly system. It was a compromise which was costly both to us and to India. His right hon. friend always called it the Cardwell system. He ventured to suggest that it was not the Cardwell system. Lord Cardwell never heard of the system of linked seven-year service battalions. At the present moment we had two battalions of Regulars, and a third battalion *in nubibus*. Lord Cardwell's idea of short service enlistment was that it should only be for a term sufficient to train the soldier for the Reserve. The system, right or wrong, was a very different system from that of the right hon. Gentleman. It was a system of real short service. Lord Cardwell's words were that the term should be "as short as would make an effective soldier." Moreover Lord Cardwell contemplated compulsory service of the Militia. He had indicated this view to the Secretary of State on previous occasions in the way of interruption, but the right hon. Gentleman never took the matter up at all. The right hon. Gentleman had named the opinion of "distinguished officers" who had always held his view, but in the Memorandum of 9th April last year he used a very different phrase. He said—

> "Cardwellian principles are not concerned so much with linked battalions or with particular terms of service as with the relations which should exist between the Regular and the Territorial soldier."

He denied altogether the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that no distinguished soldier was against his view, and that all were on his side. The whole idea of the Reserve under the Cardwell system was different from that of his right hon. friend. In a lecture delivered by General Miles at a conference held by the Chief of the General Staff on 4th January, 1906, and "sent round with the permission of the Army Council," that experienced adviser of the Secretary of State said—

> "As regards the conditions of service, Lord Cardwell introduced short service, and he linked battalions in pairs; at least he did not link battalions, he affiliated them."

The Wantage Committee was not the only authority on which his right hon. friend had relied for support of his view;

he said that he had been supported by every soldier of note. He himself had always been inclined to think that it had been opposed by every soldier of note. He was beginning to think that the necessity for economy and the pressure of the cost of the Army might enable them to arrive in the course of three or four years at some reasonable accommodation. General Miles also said—

> "All the highest officers . . . saw the advantages of a wider link . . . instead of a link of two battalions . . . the group system . . . an enormous advantage . . . The change is an important one, and I think it very likely it will come."

That seemed to contradict the statement made by the Secretary of State in the Memorandum of this year.

MR. HALDANE: If the right hon. Gentleman will read the lecture again, he will find that he considers affiliated groups more suitable for producing drafts.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said the quotation he had read disposed of the statement of his right hon. friend that every distinguished soldier had been on his side. General Miles had made exactly the opposite statement. He would not go into the wide subject of the Territorial Army, which was dealt with in the discussions on the Supplementary Estimates. He had already said that the Territorial Army was now explained away into a series of changes which might have been made without any legislation. No reason had been given for those violent and revolutionary changes which had involved so many difficulties in regard to Vote IV. His right hon. friend had left to the last moment the announcement that any new changes which dealt with military law or explanation regarding them would appear in a new edition of the King's Regulations. Did he mean the edition of last year, or an edition yet to come? The matter might be in part discussed on the morrow; he meant as to the employment of troops in police service. This was an important question, and he had given attention to it with the advice of a skilled lawyer. It became, in his opinion, increasingly necessary that some explanation should be given as to what was really the condition at present of military law. Last year there was sent to the library a document containing some explanation of the changes which had been made in military law in 1906, but for twenty-two months he had not seen another document on the subject, and it was only two years after the right hon. Gentleman had been warned of the necessity of understanding the nature of his military code, and implored to produce and explain it, that it had now been referred to by the right hon. Gentleman. The pressure on the subject had been increased from the fact that it now applied at any time to the infantry of the Territorial Army when called out for training and exercise. Being there, these men would not be forced to act as any civilian would, but under pressure of military law they might be called upon, if necessary, to shoot civilians.

MR. HALDANE was understood to say that civilians could not be shot under the regulations.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that that might be the opinion of the War Office, but that was not the opinion of those to whom he would go for advice. What he appealed to his right hon. friend to do was in the name of his Territorial Army and for the purpose of obtaining for him recruits who might otherwise be frightened to join unless the matter was made clear to them. It had always been said that it was almost impossible to explain to the ordinary recruit for the Regular Army what he was liable to under military law; but it was the more necessary that the recruit for the Territorial Army should know what were his liabilities under military law. He would not further detain the House and had only risen because of the challenge of his right hon. friend. There was a settled opinion on that side of the House that certainly the right hon. Gentleman's views would continue to prevail. Looking forward to the expenditure of next year and the year after on the Navy, and to the gigantic character of the increase of the Indian military expenditure, which, excluding Military Police and the Imperial Service Troops, now amounted to £21,000,000, and looking to the extent of the expenditure we threw on India which we ought to bear ourselves, economy would be demanded. Such a grouping system as that recommended by General Miles would at least be cheaper and as effective as that proposed by the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. WYNDHAM: Those who remember the crowded benches some years back when the Motion that you, "Mr. Speaker, do now leave the Chair," was moved, and those who remember even the numbers who attended to hear the right hon. the Secretary of State for War on a similar occasion two years ago and who look at the empty spaces this afternoon must agree in the conclusion that the whole country represented by every section of opinion acquiesce, however unwillingly, in the belief that it lies in the power of no Secretary for War by some wave of a wand to do any thing largely and seriously to diminish the cost of the Army that we need. We have often hunted the will-o'-the-wisp, but to-day the right hon. Baronet who last spoke and the hon. Member for Abercromby Division are the only two Members of the House who have the courage to get up and say that they have a plan which would give the Army what the country and the Empire require for something less than £27,500,000 sterling. We unwillingly acquiesce in the fact that the Navy costs us £33,000,000, and that we have to pay for the Army £27,500,000.

Sir CHARLES DILKE: That is without counting the Indian expenditure.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The right hon. Baronet always brings this Indian money into account, but it is surely enough to discuss this question in the terms of the figures that appear in the Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War declares that he adheres to—I hardly call it the Cardwell system—to the plan which people call the Cardwell system—the plan which consists in saying that the number of Regular regimental troops which we maintain abroad practically dictates the number of Regular regimental troops at home, and that that being so, it is real good economy, even if it costs more money, to organise the regimental troops at home and to utilise and train them in order to become efficient fighting units. "A little more and how much it is; and a little less and how many miles away!" It is said that it is economical to spend a rather larger sum of money in this way because you train the men and officers, and have a school of preparation for war, as well as raising a reserve from which we can feed our Army abroad. The right hon. Baronet challenges all that. He may be right or he may be wrong, but I think it is somewhat academic at the present moment to put before the House any alternative scheme. After all, so far as we know, the Secretary for War enjoys the confidence of his colleagues, and they command an enormous majority in the House. If they believe, as I myself believe, that great emendations may be made in the present system, they need not abandon the hope of economy in the future. The real question is whether, if we have this system, we are making the best of it. It is somewhat unreal to say, "is it the right thing; we may have another system that may cost less." But what we have to consider is whether that which is new in the system proposed by the right hon. Gentleman is valuable, and whether it is going to cost more or less, and by that I mean the right hon. Gentleman's Territorial Force. I think it could be shown that whether you adhere to the Cardwell system or abandon it, or whether you treat it well or ill, the Territorial Force of the right hon. Gentleman is not going to cost less but more money. The right hon. Gentleman naturally takes a somewhat sanguine view of that Force, with respect to which a good deal has been thought and said, but nothing has been achieved. The Volunteers and the Yeomanry have been renamed, but not everyone has the same lively faith as the right hon. Gentleman in the saving grace of baptismal regeneration. I think there is great virtue in personal effort, because the right hon Gentleman has elicited from all parts of the country, and from all conditions of men, a very remarkable support and they are determined to give the right hon. Gentleman's scheme a chance. There are a very few elements left for criticisms of his Territorial Force. If you go into details on this occasion it is impossible to debate the major question of policy. When the tree has only just been planted it is perfectly impossible for anyone to see the fruit, or to judge of its value in the future. But we still doubt altogether the right hon. Gentleman's plan of converting the garrison artillery into field artillery. You cannot have field artillery trained in a fortnight; it would be a waste of time and money. What is the Territorial Force to prevent? The right hon. Gentleman hinted more explicitly than I have yet heard him that he looks to this Territorial Force as a formidable force at points where invasion may be expected. Therefore, in the light of that statement, we must judge of the efficiency and cost of the force. The right hon. Gentleman says that it is to be a formidable force where invasion is expected, and that it is to cost £3,000,000. But I maintain that it will not merely cost the sum now budgetted for, but a sum three or four times as great, because the training must be three or four times longer. If you take into account the necessity of equipping by means of wagons and ranges and much more that comes into the book, that will certainly be so. But I do think it proper, in view of the debate of the day before yesterday and yesterday, to ask the House to consider the question whether or not we need an army, what we want it for, and whether it should cost as much as it will cost when the Territorial Force is made adequate for the purpose which my right hon. friend thinks it may some day have to fulfil. There is a danger, if I may say so, in devoting the whole of this afternoon's debate to a question of detail. For the whole of yesterday a considerable number of Members in this House pressed for a large reduction in the Navy, and on what was practically a two days' debate it seemed to be acknowledged that there was no prospect of a large reduction of force in the Navy. We had a very remarkable speech yesterday from the hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent and he, speaking for the Labour Members, practically footed the Bill for the Naval Estimates, and said they were prepared in the near future to vote for the further millions which were required. But he accompanied that, as I think notable statement, by a very extreme and extravagant form of opinion, which I think widely prevails in this country—the opinion that if you pay £33,000,000, or £37,000,000 or £38,000,000 for the Navy, then you ought to get a large reduction of five, six, seven, or eight millions from the cost of the Army, or that, as he put it, you ought not to have an Army at all. The right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary of State for War, practical always has taken it for granted that he is safe for his twenty-seven or twenty-eight millions, and thinks he will get the additional millions he requires if his Territorial Force is to be anything but a paper force; but I am not at all sure that he can convince some sections of this House that we need an Army as well as a Navy, and that we need an Army practically equipped for war. What we really want to know, or rather what we really want the people of this country to know, is that we have got an Army of about the right size and about the right establishment. If we had only to think about defending these islands we should need a considerable Army, and those who look at the Navy and say, "Why, if we spend all that on a Navy should we need an Army?" forget that you cannot conduct a naval war without an Army. You cannot protect the bases of your Navy, you cannot prevent raids, and you cannot finish a naval war without a large and rather effective Army. You cannot produce an effective Army in a few months, and therefore if you think that by paying for the Navy you absolve yourselves from paying for an Army, you will court disaster if you cut it too fine, and in the event of war, which you rather invite by cutting down your Army, you court the prolongation of war, which is almost as great a national disaster as defeat. There is a case as it stands for maintaining an Army of sufficiently large size even if we had only to defend these islands, but these islands are not the country which we have to defend; we have to defend the British Empire. The British Empire is a great deal larger than these islands. I think it embraces about 13,000,000 square miles, and a population of 400,000,000, and that is one-fifth of the surface of the earth and one-fourth of the population of the world. In addition to the defence of these islands and the Empire, supplemental to that work, you have a great deal of police work on your hands. Then let us consider the shape and the conformation of the country which we have to defend. In addition to these islands we have India. I believe that the people who live in India regard these islands as an appendage of the Indian Empire. That is not our view, but it certainly is our duty to be ready to defend India against any possible contingency. In India we have a long land frontier. It has been argued, it was argued only the day before yesterday, that because our relations with

Russia are—and I am glad to think they are—far better than they used to be, therefore it is possible for us to reduce the garrison of India. Does any country in Europe diminish its garrison because it is at peace with another country which has a long land frontier? If Russia remains long our friend we have precisely the same duty as a European country has in regard to another country with which its borders march. I put this in a very hesitating manner, but there are some who say that Russia is not only friendly but she is not so strong as she was. I do not believe that, but if it were true the necessity that we should uphold the garrison of India would not be less but greater. If it were true that we were the principal powerful European people in Asia the necessity for maintaining European prestige would be so great that instead of being able to reduce the garrison in India we should have to increase it. That being so, the facts are that far from being able to do without an Army, and far from being able to do with an insignificant Army—an Army for parade purposes at home—we in this country — we alone of all the nations of the world—have to have two Armies, an Army abroad as well as an Army at home, and the real question we have to consider is how we can provide economically for the double obligation in view of the great cost of the Navy, and by providing economically for the double obligation I mean the fact that we get a sound relation between the amount of money which we spend and the degree of preparation which we get for the money spent. If we could agree upon a principle—if we could, as my right hon. friend expressed it the day before yesterday, arrive at some standard for the Army comparable with the two-Power standard for the Navy—it would be very desirable. Supposing that for every £5 worth of money you spend you get £2 worth of preparation it would be better to spend £6 to get £5 worth of preparation; it would be better to have an Army which would cost one-fifth more to prevent war happening, and in the event of war happening it is an insurance against an undue prolongation of war. Therefore if we could come to some arrangement, some rule of thumb agreement as to the numbers of the Army that we need for our foreign Army and the reservoir from which it is fed at home—if we could agree that that reservoir shall be properly trained in order that it may be effective, then I think we could come to some sort of an agreement on the force of the Army, as I think has been attained in the last few days in regard to the force of the Navy. Is it possible to arrive at any agreement on the numbers? I think it is. Nobody seriously suggests that you can largely diminish the garrison in India, and I doubt if anyone seriously suggests that you can diminish the garrisons at our naval bases, or at our coaling stations. It follows that the only places you can find for the reduction of troops are to be found in our self-governing colonies. I think it can be shown that even if the right hon. Gentleman gets back the number which he wishes to get back from South Africa—I think it is a fantastical idea that he can get all of the troops—it follows that you will always have a number of troops abroad, and if you brought these home then you would have to spend more money upon the Home Army as practically your Imperial Reserve. That is the question raised by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean. At the present moment we have 130,000 men at home and 126,000 men abroad. Balance the figures if you can quite equally, and your army—your Regular Army—is not going to cost any less than it does now. It will indeed cost more. You will still need your Territorial Force. Now let me take the hypothesis of the right hon. Baronet that you can lessen the cost, partly by reducing the number of troops abroad. That is his point.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I will not interrupt, but I think my right hon. friend really knows what I meant.

MR. WYNDHAM: I know that the right hon. Gentleman wishes to reduce the number by reducing troops abroad in our Colonies.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Everyone would bring back troops from South Africa to this country.

MR. WYNDHAM: And I know that he believes that with the Regular Army you can have a reservoir at home.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Of infantry.

MR. WYNDHAM: By having a long service Army for our foreign obligations you can have three men abroad and one man at home instead of having two abroad and two at home. I believe that nobody has proposed a plan of that character which when fully examined showed any great saving of money. It has been my duty to examine several of these plans. I believe that no one has been able to show any great saving of money, if you adopt any substitute for this balance system. But supposing you can show a saving of money, though not a great saving, I am perfectly certain if you adopt such a plan you will have to spend a great deal more money on your short service Home Army than the right hon. Gentleman is going to spend on the Territorial Force, and the right hon. Gentleman will have to spend a great deal more on his Territorial Force. So that there is no El Dorado on which we can roam by changing our present system. I think some improvements are possible on it, but even if improvements are possible on what is called the Cardwell system those improvements are not going to save a great deal of money, and if they are going to save a substantial sum then the cost of your Home Army is going to be a great deal higher than anybody has contemplated. I think it is well that we should face these facts, but has anyone faced them? Has the right hon. Gentleman faced them? He keeps the Cardwell system, and if you keep that system you must try to treat it fairly; if you keep it you must keep the exact balance between infantry, seventy-four battalions abroad and seventy-four at home. The right hon. Gentleman says he can do it. How many Secretaries of State for War have I heard make that announcement? He told us last year that that was his object; we turn to the Estimates and we find that there is one more battalion abroad than at home and I shall not be surprised if next year there are two more battalions abroad than there are at home. This is always what has happened in the past. But supposing he succeeds, as nobody has who has treated the Cardwell system fairly, in keeping the balance at home and abroad, he must do something which has not been done—he must maintain the balance at home; for the great claim made for the Cardwell system is that under it you can train the men at home who are to feed the battalion abroad better than under any other system. You can train them better in units than in depots, and you can also train the officers and the staff. That is true if you have enough men in the Home battalions to admit of progressive training; it ceases to be true if you have not enough. When you cut down the establishment of a Home battalion to a certain limit the number of men engaged on fatigue and other duties is so great that the battalion ceases to be a proper training school, and you lose the whole benefit of the Cardwell system.

*MR. HALDANE: Does the right hon. Gentleman reproach me for having cut down those establishments? I have only reduced them because I cannot get the men. The three years system has now culminated in its full effects, but assuming that we can get the men and they are not swept away by drafts, we intend to raise the establishment of the Home battalions. It is absolutely academic.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am making no reproaches against the right hon. Gentleman; I am stating the fact. If it is the fact that the Home battalions do not contain a sufficient number of men to admit of progressive training, then it is the fact that at the present moment we are not deriving the great benefit which is claimed for the Cardwell system. If that be the fact, it is still more necessary that the Territorial Force should be properly trained, properly equipped, and properly organised. I do not indulge in speculations at any length as to what will happen if we abandon the Cardwell system, but I will tell the right hon. Baronet that if you do abandon it the necessity for training the Territorial Force, and for spending money upon it, will become very much greater. In fact, nobody, I suppose, who ever considered this question asked for less than one year's training; most people ask for two years training. The right hon. Gentleman is giving two weeks training, and says it will cost £2,000,000 a year. What an Army with two years training would cost I leave to those who are ready to perform a sum in mental arithmetic to state. We do not hold for a moment that two weeks training is adequate. For artillery, it is laughable; or for Yeomanry also. The right hon. Gentleman says in regard to the Territorial Force that so far he has reduced the period of training for Yeomanry. He has spoken of the necessity of linking up the Yeomanry with the cavalry, and providing horses for both. If you discourage the Yeomany service throughout this country you discourage horse-breeding, horse-riding, and horse-mastership; you deplete the natural nursery, so to speak, of horses, and men who understand horses, which you had not only with the Yeomanry, but with the Cavalry also, and you do that at a time when the advent of the motor car is making the horse a rarer and rarer animal in this country. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will take full advantage of the period of law which we have deliberately given him. We told him last year that his scheme must have a fair chance. I suppose in politics two years is a somewhat generous period by which to describe a fair chance. But we shall expect something more than these speculative details and rosy hopes as to the future of the Territorial Force. We shall wish to know how he is going to deal with the Artillery. We shall deny his right to convert the Artillery into training schools until he has found a solution for that question. We shall assert that he must not cut down the Yeomanry. We shall declare that his rechristened Volunteers must come up to the standard which we had not to impose upon the old Volunteers. And we shall abide by our own opinion that he has made a mistake in reducing the Regular Army; that he has made a mistake in creating this great gap between the Territorial Force and the Regular Army; and that if your system is to be voluntary it must be various, and by making it uniform you are tending either towards inefficiency or towards compulsion.

*MR. McCRAE (Edinburgh, E.) said that his right hon. friend the Secretary for War could make no complaint of the tone of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, who always intervened in Army debates with that knowlege and courtesy for which he was so distinguished. In reply to some observations of the Secretary for War, the right hon. Gentleman had said that the Territorial Army was required to be of such a nature as to be formidable at points where invasion was expected. It had another duty to perform which his right hon. friend had always maintained. It was a reserve to the Regular Army in case of war. That ought not to be lost sight of in considering the utility and the cost of the force. He entirely agreed with the view of the right hon. Member for Dover with regard to the Cardwell system. He did not suppose that his right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean claimed that his scheme, if it were given effect to, would result in any great economy.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he had now no scheme. Many years ago he had a definite scheme, but as there was not the slightest chance of its being adopted, it could not now be spoken of as his scheme. He only said this, that he preferred any of the modifications to battalions in links of two.

*MR. McCRAE said he did not think if his right hon. friend pressed the point that his proposal would result in any great economy. But the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Abercromby Division had gone so far as to tell them on Monday that unless they discarded the Cardwell system they would get no economy in the Army. That struck him as a false assumption. Before the war the cost of the Army was £7,500,000 less than it was to-day. They increased their expenditure while the Cardwell system was still in existence. They had reduced their expenditure, and they still had the Cardwell system. The question of economy did not so much depend upon the Cardwell system; it depended really on the policy, first of all, of their military advisers, and also largely upon the question of the pay of the Army, as would be seen by comparing 1898–9, when Vote 1 amounted to £5,900,000 as against £9,400,000 in the Estimates for the coming year. If they were to have a reduction of the expenditure on the Army it must be by a different policy from that of abolishing the Cardwell system, which the right hon. Member for Dover had very well shown was a most economical system. He congratulated his right hon. friend on the steady reductions he had made in the expenditure on the Army, and he thought they did not quite realise what those reductions amounted to. If they took the Estimates for 1905–6, which were the last Estimates prepared by the late Administration after they had made up their minds to reduce expenditure, it would be found that they amounted to £34,148,000. If they compared that with the Estimates for the coming year, £30,569,000, they got a reduction of £3,500,000. If they went one year further back, and took the actual expenditure of 1904–5, when the expenditure on the Army amounted to £36,250,000, they had a reduction of £5,750,000. If they took the actual expenditure on the two Services for 1904–5, it amounted to £77,700,000 as against £64,500,000 for the coming year — a reduction of £13,000,000. He thought these figures ought to be kept in view when they were discussing the scheme of his right hon. friend, and the actual reduction of expenditure on armaments. The amount for which the present Administration was responsible, in a short period, was £8,750,000. But he thought that further reductions were still possible and even probable in the Army. He thought the bringing home of the Colonial garrisons afforded practical evidence of how economies could be effected. They must look to considerable reductions of the Regular Forces if they were to provide the money necessary for the complete equipment and training of the Territorial Army. It stood to reason that if they had an efficient Reserve they could do with a smaller active regular force. There was one point which he did not think his right hon. friend had made quite clear in his opening speech, and that was as regarded the cost of the Territorial Army. The right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War had estimated the cost of the Territorial Army for the coming year at £2,500,000, and his estimate for the ultimate cost was £3,500,000.

MR. HALDANE: That is on a war footing. It is £3,000,000 on the full strength.

*MR. McCRAE said he had criticised the financial arrangements of his right hon. friend when he introduced his scheme, and soon afterwards £650,000 was added to the Estimates. He must say, looking at the matter closely, that he thought the equipment and training of 315,000 men for £3,000,000 was a very conservative estimate.

MR. HALDANE: If my hon. friend will look he will see I have allowed for the horses which would not be required, and for the fact that only 80 per cent. of the men may be expected to come out to camp. That gives a big saving.

*MR. McCRAE said he had no doubt his right hon. friend was accurate. He thought the Estimates had been very conservative, and he held it would cost more, though the Army would be worth the money after they had considerably increased the Estimates. The Volunteers and Yeomanry together at present cost in round figures £2,000,000, and he was sure it would cost at least £1,500,000 more to give the new force fourteen days training and all the additional equipment with regard to artillery and Army Service Corps which was absolutely necessary. The cost of the new Territorial Army worked out at £11 4s. per man as against £7 15s. 4d. per man taking the present expenditure on the Imperial Yeomanry and the Volunteers combined. That showed, of course, a considerable increase, but they ought not to grudge it. If this Army was properly organised and trained it would be worth the money. He regretted that his right hon. friend had not had a fair chance in creating this new Territorial Army. He had had every encouragement from both sides of the House, but he did not think his military advisers had dealt very fairly with him in the way they had launched the scheme, and speaking as a Volunteer officer he said it was a matter of regret that the organisation had been brought about in a way which had placed almost insuperable and unnecessary difficulties in the way of the creation of the new force. He could not understand the muddling and blundering there had been. The attestation form was a most maladroit document. There was nothing in it which was not sanctioned by last year's Act, but it was not altogether a document likely to be useful for recruiting purposes. In Scotland they had not worried very much about it. They were accustomed to the methods of the War Office, and looked beneath the surface at the actual facts, and they found there was nothing in the document that any man wishing to join the Territorial Force need be at all afraid of. But why was it presented in such a form? To ask a recruit if he was married, the name of his wife, the officiating clergyman, and the number of children was rather unnecessary seeing that the average age when a Territorial soldier joined was 17. There was, of course, a basis of reason for the questions, because non-commissioned officers were to receive a separate allowance for their wives and families on going into training, but that was a matter that ought to be kept out of the attestation form altogether, and to ask the questions of the whole battalion, when, as far as peace training was concerned, the information was only required with regard to non-commissioned officers, was a little unfortunate. If the force was embodied, in the event of war every Territorial soldier would be entitled to allowance, and they would then require the particulars; but that was a matter that ought to have been arranged as pure administration, and not put in a form which terrified a good many of his fellow Volunteers in the South. A much more serious grievance, however, was the delay in issuing the conditions of service. He could see nothing to prevent the Army Council considering the necessary conditions, and having them ready for presentation to the new Territorial soldier at the beginning of the Volunteer year. It was, however, only the other day that they had had the complete form of conditions when the recruiting period was almost over. January and February were the two best recruiting months of the year. The right hon. Gentleman, therefore, had had unnecessary difficulties placed in his way by this delay, and he saw no reason for it. At the request of his officers he had called a meeting of his men in November to explain what the conditions were likely to be, and now that they had them they were hardly anything different from what he had explained, going merely on the Act of Parliament. Surely they had sufficient time in the War Office to have got these forms ready so that commanding officers might know what to say to their men when the recruiting season began? He was rather disappointed at the answer the right hon. Gentleman had given to a question with regard to a circular issued by the Warwickshire County Association asking employers to give preference to men who were willing to join the Territorial Army. There was nothing that would be more disastrous to the success of the new force than that there should be any form of coercion of this kind. After all, those who enlisted did so voluntarily. It was a voluntary organisation, and he deprecated any such methods. He regretted also that a noble Lord in another place had accused his right hon. friend of starting a scheme and giving it to his political opponents to work. Observations of that kind were very much to be deprecated. They ought to keep party politics altogether out of this organisation. It was matter for congratulation that when the scheme was going through the House both sides while criticising it kept the party point of view out of it altogether. He hoped those who had to do with the new Territorial scheme would make a point of keeping it apart from party politics. He mentioned it because other observations similar to that to which he had referred had been made in Scotland at public meetings. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on appointing the advisory committee which would deal with questions affecting the Territorial Army. That was good, but something more was wanted, and he joined with those who had pressed repeatedly on the Secretary of State the necessity of having direct representation of the force on the Army Council. When they considered the probable cost, three and a half millions, and the number of men to be trained, it was absolutely essential that they should be directly represented. He was quite sure that if they had been, the attestation form would never have gone out in the form that it did, and the conditions of service would have been got out earlier. He hoped it was not yet too late to press on the right hon. Gentleman the absolute necessity, if the scheme was to be a success, of having on the Army Council direct representation of the new Territorial Army.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said he felt that he ought to apologise for venturing to suggest that there was any other portion of the Army than the Territorial Forces, but he must ask the House to recollect, however willing they were to forget it, that there was a force called the Regular Army, and it would be well that a little attention should be paid to its needs and the conditions imposed upon it. He differed absolutely from the right hon. Gentleman in his idea that the reduction of Regular trained soldiers could be adequately or reasonably made up for by the introduction of untrained men. He held that to be an extreme fallacy, and it would be found some day to be a source of extreme danger. The right hon. Gentleman took some credit for having reduced the Army by 21,000 men. Just before the battle of Waterloo the Duke of Wellington was asked what he thought were the prospects of being able to check Napoleon. The Duke, pointing to a soldier, said—

> "It depends entirely upon that article yonder. Give me plenty of him and I am safe."

The right hon. Gentleman had reduced the number, and in that proportion he had reduced them from safety to want of safety. Again, acting under he did not know what mistaken influence, the right hon. Gentleman now would tell them that untrained men, who were cheap, were a good substitute for trained men, who were dear. What was going to happen when such batteries went into action if they had to rely upon untrained men behind the guns? Not being trained or disciplined they would be liable to panic and confusion; and if such a thing did arise, that might have the effect of destroying the efficiency and the power of the units in the fighting-line. The result of all this would probably be defeat. He agreed that if they were to calculate these things on the assumption that the men were never to fight, this policy of economy might be a wise one—but if they were really intended to meet an enemy in the field, then he could not agree with the right hon. Gentleman. He congratulated the Secretary for War upon the broad way in which he was looking at this subject. There was some difficulty, he was aware, in obtaining a sufficient number of officers for the Regular Army, and he would venture to suggest that he should bring into play upon this question his knowledge of human nature, and recollect that although it was of the highest importance that a large number of officers should be trained to the highest degree possible, it was not necessary that every officer should be equally well trained. It should be remembered that at the present time they were able to command the services of a certain type of officer, who, although not particularly ambitious, was nevertheless willing to offer services which were intensely valuable during his regimental career, and that kind of officer made the best troop-leader in action. Such officers commanded in a remarkable degree the affection of the men they led into action, and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman to bear in mind the importance of retaining that kind of man in their regiments, and not over-examine him out of the regiment, and so lose a most valuable kind of regimental service. He was not arguing that such men should go to the higher grades without giving some evidence of professional attainments, but he hoped it would not be made impossible to join as officers men who were ready and willing to give ten or twenty of the best years of their life simply for the love of the service. With regard to officers, he thought that of all the classes in the service of the Crown, none were so badly paid. When it was remembered that they look their lives in their hands, and had to spend a good deal of time in unhealthy places and got only about £100 a year, he thought it was time for the economists to pause before demanding all these services from officers. As regarded the Militia, which were now to be called the Special Reserve, he thought he was right in assuming that at the present moment they were in a state of pulp, in a soft and flabby condition. While that force remained in its present condition no-one could possibly say that the scheme was cohesive, or capable of being put into force. He thoroughly agreed with other speakers who had stated that it was the bounden duty of them all, however much they might differ in detail, or in their estimates of the future, loyally and heartily to support the scheme which had been adopted by the House of Commons. The Secretary for War had invited the country to support his Territorial Army Scheme on the ground that it would effectively improve the military strength of this country, and safeguard all those points which, from a military point of view, might be considered in danger. There was one point, however, which was in reality the whole question—and it was whether it was proposed to train the Territorial Army to be efficient and reliable. He would like to know if any body of men, however intellectual individually, and however capable, could be made efficient and reliable on the system laid down for the Territorial Army. The right hon. Gentleman himself had not had personal experience of military affairs, but he himself had, although it was a long time ago. He did not, however, think that he was far from right when he said that no soldier of any experience would for a moment admit that a Territorial Force, trained and drilled on the system laid down by the right hon. Gentleman, could be fairly called either reliable or effective. It was a matter of absolute impossibility that such a force could be effective. He agreed that under the present system less drill was required than used to be thought necessary, and possibly the improved individual intelligence in the type of man they hoped to get by recruiting would compensate for the old soldier upon whom they used to set so much store. Nevertheless, he ventured to say that a possible maximum of fourteen days, which was more likely to be nearer eight days on the average, was not an effective or reliable training for a soldier; and men so trained ought not to be put before the country as constituting a reliable force. The leading soldiers of every foreign country would scorn the idea that such troops would be considered reliable. It was not until they had added to those men that discipline and self-reliance which an adequate training alone could give that they would get a soldier who would be taken seriously by those whom he would have to meet in the field. He knew it was extremely difficult to get men of that type from their occupations into camp for any long period of time, in order to subject them to military discipline. He could, however, see one direction in which much could be done to provide, at all events, self-reliance under the present system. Just in proportion as every man in the Territorial Force became a master of the weapon he had in hand, they would make him more of an effective soldier. If it was impossible for them to increase the actual time of training, at least they should insist upon a much higher average of individual shooting capacity and power with the rifle, because if men went into action conscious of their ability with the rifle, that feeling in itself gave the self-reliance and steadiness which was after all what they wanted to get out of training and discipline. He trusted that the efforts of those who had to conduct the new Territorial Army would largely be thrown into elaborating the system of rifle shooting, which would make each man a first-rate rifle shot, if they were unable to undertake longer camp training. The hon. Member opposite had talked about the Territorial Force being able to reinforce the Regular Army, but he appeared to forget that not one member of that force undertook to go abroad. The very first thing they would have to consider in the event of an expeditionary force leaving this country was, how were they going to reinforce it and keep it up to strength, after some great disaster?

MR. McCRAE: They can always volunteer.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY: Yes, but they could not reckon upon them. He wished to judge the Territorial Force generously, and at its full value, and he fully recognised that it contained probably the best fighting material in the world. There was no better stuff than that which, in the past, had composed their Auxiliary Forces, and which would in the future compose the Territorial Force. But because it was so excellent, they should not run away with the idea that it was efficient for fighting purposes unless it was properly trained. Therefore it was not wise for them to live in a fool's paradise, and bring upon themselves the possibility of disaster through not recognising the facts and the realities of the situation. He believed that, in fairness to the force and to the country, the right hon. Gentleman should state what were its possibilities and impossibilities, its limitations and powers of expansion. He would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to say to the country boldly and straightforwardly: "Under this scheme we believe we provide an adequate expeditionary force; under this scheme we believe we supply sufficient reinforcements for India; under this scheme we believe we supply through the Special Reserve an arrangement under which we can reinforce the expeditionary force in the field; and under this scheme we also create the very best Territorial Army that the limitations which the country puts upon us enables us to create." If in saying that the right hon. Gentleman would also say honestly fairly and squarely that within the limitations upon which the War Office had to work this Territorial Army could not be reliable or effective for the purpose of meeting at short notice anything like a well-drilled and well-disciplined Army, then he would have told in a candid and fair way the realities of the situation, and he would be relieved of the accusation to which he was at present open of representing that in the Territorial Force the country had something superior to what it really had. More than that, he would stimulate the force to make itself really efficient and reliable by taking all the advantage it could of its opportunities of training, and, above all things, of perfecting itself to the highest possible degree in rifle-shooting, which would very largely make it an effective and reliable force. If the right hon. Gentleman would do that, he would be doing that which would be patriotic and fair to the country, and in the best interest of the Army.

*Mr. SEDDON (Lancashire, Newton) said he did not think that anyone who listened to the speech of the Secretary of State for War would charge him with lack of lucidity. So far as the reductions were concerned he was afraid they were more illusory than permanent. He desired to call attention to the *personnel* of the Army and also to refer to the Territorial Force. The Secretary for War had said they were attempting to provide a better training for officers between twenty-one and thirty-five years of age. He thought there was to-day a higher appreciation among officers of their duties than in the past. When he visited Aldershot last year, he met several officers who looked on their duties very seriously. But he had an uneasy suspicion that all officers were not like minded. The evidence in the case of Lieutenant Wood had left a suspicion in his mind that there were some officers in the Army who still looked more to pleasure than duty. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would be well advised in trying to somewhat further democratise the higher ranks of the Army. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that the class of recruits was improving. Speaking from the working-class point of view, he thought there was a new conception of the Army. It was not now regarded as the dumping ground of wastrels. Many young men went into the Army as an occupation and pursuit. He was one of those who objected wholly to the three years system. Under that system the soldier never became inured to Army conditions. When he left the Army he was unfit for civil life. There ought to be something further done to induce the intelligent members of the democracy to rise to the higher ranks as officers. He was glad to hear that wastage was decreasing under present conditions, and that temperance was on the increase in the Army. The right hon. Gentleman had also referred to the decrease of venereal diseases in the Army, but unless he was wrongly informed—and he had private information which he would be glad to give to the right hon. Gentleman—that was not so in fact, and he thought it would be a wise thing if the medical inspection of soldiers was much more minute than at present. As regarded the Territorial Army, he was afraid it was the parent of the child so far as the expectations of the right hon. Gentleman were concerned. The lords-lieutenant had already given evidence that this child was going to die by neglect. Many volunteers who had served for long years objected to the provisions laid down under this new scheme up to the present time. Personally, he was all in favour of the Territorial Force, and he believed the day had not yet come when they could beat their swords into plough shares and their spears into pruning hooks. They must make provision for every contingency, but the conditions laid down under this new scheme were somewhat harsh on those called on to serve. Lancashire was reckoned a leader in commerce and patriotism, and their county instinct was very strong, and if anything were done to destroy the county character of the Territorial Army, much more harm would be done than the right hon. Gentleman thought. If the Territorial Army failed they would have to look forward to conscription, and he objected to conscription on all grounds. There was much in the Swiss system which he appreciated, and if the economic conditions there and here were more similar, he would be still more a supporter of that system. But if the Territorial scheme broke down they would be in danger of being confronted with conscription pure and simple. He believed, however, that the patriotism of the democracy of this country was quite enough to meet all requirements, if only a clear statement were made, fairly and squarely. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would be well advised to revise the instructions to commanding officers and to see that they were made as clear as possible. There would then be a prospect of his anticipation of an effective Territorial Force being realised.

*MR. BYLES (Salford, N.) said that in his opinion this had been a discouraging debate, for no one had said a word about economy or retrenchment. [AN HON. MEMBER: Yes, the hon. Member for Edinburgh.] The hon. Member for Edinburgh, like others who had addressed the House, had spoken from the military point of view. He supposed that none of them were surprised at demands from the Tory benches whenever there was any spending to do on military and naval affairs, but the observations that fell from the Minister of War were somewhat disturbing. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that he was not responsible for the size of the Army. The right hon. Gentleman, as a Minister and a Member of the Cabinet, had, he thought, his own individual responsibility for the policy of the Government. The right hon. Gentleman told them that the enormous Expeditionary Force was truly economic. The right hon. Baronet had replied to that statement. To be asked in the House for an expeditionary force of such magnitude was certainly depressing to the friends of peace. The right hon. Gentleman had advanced the view that the Navy was of no use without the Army. He had thought that the advocates of the Blue-water school, as it was called, were accustomed to say that the more efficient the Navy was the more they would be able to save on the Army. The right hon. Member for Dover had stated that we wanted not only one Army but two Armies. [AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!] He dared say that the right hon. Gentleman would like three or four, but he never could maintain his claim that the Army was the greatest insurance against war. He combated that idea and held that with a large force in which the interests of a great number of men and officers were involved, they were far more likely to go to war than if the advice he would give to the House were followed. He approached the question from a totally different point of view from that expressed that day. He thought that these large Votes for naval and military expenditure were contrary to Liberal traditions and Liberal principles, and were not desired by the nation. Certainly they were contrary to the expressions which were made by hon. Members before the last general election, and by Members of the present Government profusely when they condemned the extravagant expenditure, naval and military, of their predecessors. It was to change all that that they came into power. Their supporters echoed their professions—he confessed that he did at any rate—and thereby they won their seats.

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London): Hear, hear!

*MR. BYLES said that that was assented to by the hon. Baronet, and therefore they had a right to suppose that those who sent them there with a big majority took the view to some extent which he was expressing. He would quote a sentence from a speech made in the House by the Prime Minister, not in view of the general election, but on 9th March, 1904, on a precisely similar occasion to the present. The Prime Minister then said—

> "The scale of military expenditure cannot be maintained. That is what the House of Commons has in its mind and what it must

impress upon any government. The great expenditure which has been so rapidly incurred can only be reduced by decreasing the number of men in the Army."

He thought that that was a pretty high authority, and what the right hon. Gentleman said then, he thought now. Compared with ten years ago we were spending on the Army half as much again. Granting the necessity of a big Navy we ought surely to be able to save something on the Army. He regarded a standing Army always as a menace to the liberties of the people. The use of troops in civil disturbances had been referred to, and that was a point of view he specially commended to his Labour friends. They believed, as he did, that the greater the Army the greater the menace. It might be asked why he, a mere civilian, and not a military expert, advanced the view that the Army was too big. Well, he was not able to judge for himself, but he would quote from a speech made by Mr. Gibson Bowles, whose name he was sure would be received with mixed feelings on the benches opposite. But he did not think that anybody would deny that Mr. Gibson Bowles was an authority on naval matters and on matters of public finance. That Gentleman said—

> "Without in the least impairing efficiency very great reductions might be made. I have come to the conclusion after the expert advice I have taken that on the Navy £8,000,000 might be saved, and on the Army £15,000,000.

SIR F. BANBURY: When was that ?

*MR. BYLES: A few months ago, and he would give the right hon. Baronet the reference with pleasure. He would quote a still higher authority than Mr. Gibson Bowles—the present Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The speech was also made in a debate in this House, and the right hon. Gentleman suggested that—

> "Instead of an expeditionary force of 120,000—not 160,000 as was at present proposed—there was a *prima facie* case to show that this country would be better off with a small force of 80,000 if not 40,000 men."

He did not know if anybody had on Monday ventured on such a small number as 40,000 men for our expeditionary force. The speech was made on a Motion moved in 1903 to reduce the Army by 27,000 men and the Motion came from a Member of the Party opposite. who took with him thirty Unionists into the Lobby in support of it, and obtained a minority vote for it of 154.

SIR F. BANBURY: Most of these Unionists have become Radicals since then.

*MR. BYLES said that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs voted for that reduction, but now instead of talking of a reduction of 27,000 men, the right hon. Gentleman acquiesced in a proposal to put on 40,000 men! He would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman how he reconciled the vote he gave then with the demand which he now allowed the Secretary of State for War to make on the House. He was glad to believe—and he gave the right hon. Gentleman every credit for it—that in his high position he was exercising and practising the arts of a wise and peaceful foreign policy and promoting to the best of his great powers friendly relations with the nations of the world. But he confessed that it was impossible for him to reconcile the demand now made upon the House with a speech such as he had quoted and a vote such as he had mentioned. There was another point he wished to urge. He believed that this country would never be truly great as long as its greatness rested on these demonstrations of brute force; and he did not believe that the nation was with the House in this enormous expenditure upon the Army and the Navy. Let him put this case to hon. Members. Supposing he was in a position to offer to his constituents to take off £5,000,000 from the Army expenditure and £5,000,000 from the Navy expenditure and to leave that money in their pockets to fructify, or to spend as they liked.

SIR F. BANBURY: It would not fructify.

*MR. BYLES: Let us see how. It would enable them to increase the consumption of commodities, thereby increasing the production of commodities and thereby increasing the employment of men; and thereby to raise wages; and thereby to swallow up the unemployed and thereby to enable themselves to improve their own house accommodation. What would they say? Would they say: "No, no; don't leave this money in our pockets; let us remain unemployed; let us go on living in squalid slums, We eat meagre food and wear poor clothing. We have no old-age pensions and can scarcely keep body and soul together, but never mind, go on spending our taxes on buying costly ships, on feeding and clothing a quarter of a million soldiers and sailors." He did not believe that they would say that while they were in the depths of poverty and on the verge of starvation. If he was correct in that, what right had Parliament to spend the money it took from them in the shape of taxes in such directions? He put it to every hon. Member present whether it was not wrong to spend their money so taken from the poor people in taxes for purposes which were against their wishes. He knew in his own constituency many men, who had as much as they could do to keep themselves, who at the last General Election asked for old-age pensions, and they had been given Dreadnoughts; who asked for bread, and had been given a stone.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) asked why the hon. Gentleman who was an extremely militant member of the extreme peace party was not supported by more than seventy members, when he and his friends pressed the Government for further reductions in military and naval expenditure on Monday night before they knew what the Government proposals were? How, if he represented the party, did he make so poor a show in the lobby? The answer was that there was no such waste as that perpetrated by spasmodic reductions, and subsequent and hasty increases. He, however, wished to refer to the Indian question which had been raised by the right hon. Member for Forest of Dean, who, anticipating that he was going to catch him out in regard to one of his facts had taken the precaution to be absent. The right hon. Baronet quoted General Sir Edward Collen, as against the Cardwell linked battalion system, and as having quarrelled with Lord Kitchener in regard to this question. The right hon. Baronet had certainly made a mistake there for General Collen had never sat with Lord Kitchener; and he had also perhaps attributed to General Collen, whose colleague he was for years, views which that distinguished soldier did not hold. He was quite sure that the right hon. Baronet would hardly contend that all authorities connected with India condemned the Cardwell system. What they did know about the Cardwell system was that for many years it had supplied India with the drafts she wanted. It had given her the best men, indeed the flower of the British Army. He did not say that it was not expensive, but nobody had provided a better system although in many respects it was no doubt open to criticism. If they wanted to see a British regiment in its full strength and efficiency they must go to India, because there they had the best men, and if a man failed in his health and strength he was sent back to England and a sound man went out to replace him. When hon. Members criticised this system they should in his judgment have something to put in its place, but he had never heard anything suggested, not even by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, or by the Member for the Abercromby division of Liverpool who faithfully represented the right hon. Baronet's views, and often went one better. In their agreement they were like twin stars one of which differed from the other in glory. The right hon. Baronet said of this system that under it we not only did not get what we wanted here, but what we had was determined by the needs elsewhere. It was quite true that what we had here was determined by the needs elsewhere, but that must be so in any case, for the needs of India were our needs, and it was not possible to separate India from England, so far as problems of defence were concerned. India paid one quarter of the whole expenditure for the defence of the Empire, and in spite of what the hon. Gentleman who spoke on his right hand said, he thought the Cardwell system was mutually beneficial to this country and India, more so perhaps to India because it gave her the flower of the British Army and she got the best of everything. But having got the best, India paid the best price for getting it, while any failure or loss fell upon Great Britain. His right hon. friend was mistaken in supposing that General Collen or Lord Kitchener had any dispute on this matter. The attitude of Lord Kitchener had been discounted, on the ground that he was not an Indian soldier, and did not represent Indian ideas? But still he was Commander-in-Chief, and it would be dangerous to put aside his opinion, and while he was there they must assume that the noble Lord represented the views of the Indian Army. There was no proof that a locally raised long service Army was now possible or that its cost would not be prohibitive. It had been urged that the Indian Army could be reduced on account of the Anglo-Russian Convention, but that was altogether a fallacious argument. The numbers of that Army in India were fixed without any reference to the Russian menace. They were fixed after the Mutiny, though they had never been maintained at their proper strength; still they were fixed in order to secure the safety of our countrymen and countrywomen in India, and to safeguard the hundreds of millions which we had invested in that country and to preserve our position as the Imperial power. So far from this being a large provision it was a small provision, and the native Army which was originally in the proportion of five to one European, had since been reduced to three to one European. The proportion of soldiers to the population was very small, he thought ·07 of the population as against ·3 in Britain, and nobody who had any knowledge of the conditions of the case could argue that it would be safe to make any reduction in the Indian Army because of the Anglo-Russian Convention. It was altogether out of the question, and he was sure that no such proposal would be made by anybody who had been at the pains to study the matter. It was said that Russia was weaker than she was before. That might be so in one sense, but in another sense her defeat in the Far East made her stronger in the Middle East by enabling her to concentrate her energies and arms in that direction, and right through her troublous times she never relaxed her grip on Persia or Central Asia, but everything was in those quarters maintained up to concert pitch during the struggle. Besides, they all knew now, since the war in Manchuria, that Russia could place a large Army in the field by means of one single line of rail. Russia, if she ever was a menace, was still a menace and the Indian Army was still a very small provision for our Indian Empire. He hoped he would not hear anyone who had an elementary knowledge of the case contend that on account of the Anglo-Russian Convention or on any other account the British troops in India should be reduced in numbers, nor was so mad a measure rendered less insane by being proposed at a time, when difficulties we had to a large extent prepared for ourselves had come to a head, and sedition hatched in Bengal and encouraged in England, was scotched but not killed. He would not say more upon that subject, but there was one other matter mentioned in which he was much interested, and that was the examination of officers in languages. He could not in passing, help referring to what the hon. Member in front of him had said about a certain case which was extremely relevant to what the right hon. Member for Shropshire had stated about the difficulty of getting officers for the Army. If there was one thing more than another that increased that difficulty, it was that the officers were afraid, not of their superiors, not of the enemy and not of their work, but of the inquisition they were subjected to in case of a little horse play or high spirits in the regiment being displayed, and a ragging scandal, as it were called, being brought against the corps. They were then brought before Parliament and held up in the Press as malefactors, and this sort of irregular and sentimental inquisition made the Army a far less popular place for the men we wanted to get into it than it should be. But returning to the point about the examination of officers in languages, he was extremely glad to hear the Secretary for War say that arrangements had been made by the Civil Service Commissioners for conducting their examinations in the country where the language in which the officer was to be examined was spoken. If that system could be extended and developed he was sure that it would have a good effect. He knew that the present Government was anxious to provide facilities for the study of Oriental languages and had appointed a Treasury Committee to consider this very important subject before which he had the honour recently of giving evidence. He had to remark that after very considerable experience in this matter he believed that the officers in our Army were improving every day in this respect. In India our officers were devoted to their profession, and took the greatest pains to learn the languages of the country. He believed that the British officer was a man who took the greatest pains to master the details of his profession, and he had found him a better linguist as a rule than civilians who had to qualify themselves in this respect. He did not know whether he would be rightly making use of the opportunity he now had of addressing the House if he went away from these general questions. He was not going to bring up the question of Welsh patriotism in regard to the Territorial Force which he had no doubt would be maintained upon the lines already settled, so far as Wales was concerned, but he wanted the Secretary of State to consider the question of separation allowances. In his county it was regarded as a grievance that privates should not have separation allowances as well as the non-commissioned officers. He would also ask the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether regimental sergeant-majors and bandmasters should not be given the rank of warrant officers, as in the case of similar officers in the regular Army. There was also another matter in regard to which there was a good deal of feeling in Montgomeryshire, which county had always done its best to provide men for the Army. If the right hon. Gentleman would give such consideration as he could to these little matters to which he was drawing attention, it would tend to make the Territorial Army far more likely to be a success in the county than it otherwise would be. What they wanted was to keep the Cardiganshire Company in Montgomeryshire. There was some idea of turning it into a University company, but the members of it were all men belonging to their county or coming from close by and if the company were taken away it would diminish the interest which existed in the scheme in Montgomeryshire. He ventured to mention these matters as he had an opportunity of addressing the House, but he really got up with a view of speaking of the Cardwell system, which he thought was of great benefit to the Indian Army and of the suggested reduction of the Indian Army in view of the Anglo-Russian Convention, which he thought was out of the question, and would find no support in any responsible quarter.

MR. LAMBTON (Durham, S.E.) said that the statement made by the Secretary for War in regard to short service in the Army raised a question of serious importance. The right hon. Gentleman had suggested a scheme which he (Mr. Lambton) regarded as unsatisfactory and which, before it was carried out, required further consideration on the part of the House. The right hon. Gentleman had also talked very much about the highly-trained minds of officers, but if he put before the young men of this country who were desirous of entering the Army the proposition that their minds must be so exceedingly highly trained he would place one more obstacle in the way of obtaining those officers which he required.

And, it being a quarter-past Eight of the Clock, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 4.

THE PRICE OF BREAD.

*SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington), in moving "That this House is of opinion that the recent high price of bread in this country is due to natural causes alone, and that any import duty on wheat would tend to raise the price still higher and aggravate the suffering caused by dear bread," said that, as some of his right hon. and hon. friends might recollect, by the fortune of the ballot, he had charge of a very similar Motion in the last session of the last Parliament, and they were able to register a vote on the records of the House of Commons *nem. con.* It might be said to him, "Why bring forward this Motion again," and that he was showing a great want of originality in raising the question of taxes on bread. Let him try to justify his action in bringing it forward. In the House of Commons of late there had been little or no discussion on the fiscal question, at any rate very little as compared with the vigorous campaign which was being carried on in the country by the Tariff Reform

League. The free traders had been comparatively silent, not so much for want of zeal and full faith in free trade as from lack of opportunity and lack of occasion. Moreover, they found themselves in that position whilst a great war was going on outside in which some Members of that House were advancing opinions which they did not attempt to repeat or re-echo within the walls of that Chamber. His Motion would afford an opportunity to those Gentlemen to repeat with emphasis their outside opinions; and would give to the Liberal Party an opportunity to express its undying allegiance to the principles of free trade and its consequent cheap bread. Might he further preface his justification by a statement of what was now a simple historical fact? A cardinal principle of the Tariff Reform League was the taxation of wheat. Further, the Tariff Reform League had captured the Tory Party, its organisation, its money, its social and political influence, and last, but by no means least, its Leader. It had also captured the Chief Tory Whip, late Patronage Secretary to the Conservative Government. Under these circumstances the great political aspirations of the Tariff Reform League were now the political aspirations of the Tory Party. Therefore, the Tory Party would tax the people's food if it got the chance. If that was the situation in which Liberals and free traders found themselves, was there not full justification for his Motion? He had said that the Tariff Reform League had captured the Tory Party—he had almost said lock, stock, and barrel, but perhaps not quite. Whilst the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Lord James of Hereford, Lord Avebury, Lord George Hamilton, Mr. Arthur Elliot, Lord Hugh Cecil, and many others stood outside this food-taxing party, it could not be said to have captured the highest intelligence amongst the Unionists. Again, did not some confusion arise when the persistent question of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to the captured Leader, as to whether he would agree to this tax on food, remained unanswered? This uncertainty on the part of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, the late Prime Minister, as to whether he would put a tax on food, must be cleared up. His Motion was justified if only because he was giving an opportunity to the right hon. Gentleman of saying whether he would put a tax on food and how much that tax was to be. His opinion, clearly expressed, was a matter of deep public concern. If the right hon. Gentleman said that a tax on food was unnecessary to carry out the policy and the important requirements of the Tariff Reform League, would he tell them how the policy of the League, which was the policy of the Tory Party, was to be carried out without such a tax? However dangerous the principles of the Tariff Reform League might appear to Liberals, and to the best intelligence of the Unionist Party, it was impossible to be blind to its activity. Its methods, by reason of the amalgamation alone, had naturally become the methods of the Tory Party. One of the most trusted Members of the Conservative Party and of the Tariff Reform League was his hon. and gallant friend the Member for Central Sheffield. His efforts for the propaganda of Tariff Reform League principles were therefore efforts for the propaganda of Tory principles. He did not know, but he had been given to understand that the hon. and gallant Gentleman had been given charge of certain vans and gramophones. At any rate, he was Chairman of the Literature Committee of the National Union of Conservative Associations. He did not know whether the hon. and gallant Gentleman had anything to do with the vans and gramophones, or whether it was his special duty to fill the vans with scrupulously truthful statements, to tune the gramophones to the same high key, and see that, so laden, those vans were turned loose upon an innocent and unsuspecting public. But whether or not he was responsible for the vans and gramophones, he certainly was for the National Union leaflets. Almost without looking at them one could guess what the burden of their song was likely to be. He found in the Order Book of the House of Commons a Notice down in the name of the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Central Sheffield as follows—

> "Cost of living. To call attention to the increased cost of living in Great Britain and Ireland during the administration of the present Government, and particularly to the increased cost of bread, tea, bacon, butter, jam, cheese, cocoa, rice and coal, and the effect of such increase upon the welfare of the masses of the people in the augmentation of pauperism and suffering, and to move a Resolution."

There was no doubt what the meaning of that was. It was that the Liberal Government was responsible for the recent high price of bread. But the Liberal Party stood for free trade just as the Tory Party stood for protection. Therefore, free trade must be found responsible for the recent high price of bread. [OPPOSITION cheers.] He was glad he got so much acquiescence from hon. Gentlemen opposite. But they knew and admired and made allowances for the hon. and gallant Gentleman the Member for Central Sheffield and his political eccentricities, and he did not think that if the hon. and gallant Gentleman stood alone that the Liberal Party, the Liberal Government, and free traders would be very much perturbed. But he did not stand alone. Here was a choice quotation from his right hon. friend sitting opposite to him, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer. It was from a speech made in Birmingham in his own constituency on the 15th November, reported in the *Birmingham Post* on the 16th of November. This was what the right hon. Gentleman said—

> "Now I see my friend, Sir Alexander Acland-Hood. I make him a suggestion. Let him go to the Secretary of the Liberal Publication Department, and let him make an offer for their stock of big and little loaf cartoons. He will have to make a little alteration in the text. The big loaf will represent the taxed loaf of the Unionist Government, and the little loaf will symbolise, more accurately than it has symbolised anything hitherto, what a Radical Government in two short years has made it. Yes, gentlemen, your food is costing you more, and it is not an accident."

The meaning of that was clear. It was that the Liberal Government in two years had done this mischief, and he could well understand that people would assume that it also meant that they were to turn the Liberal Government out and take, instead, the right hon. Gentleman opposite and his friends, who proposed to cheapen the loaf and make it bigger by putting an import duty on wheat. But again, these two champions did not stand alone. He did not say how they might treat the situation if they did—he assumed that it would be with great respect. The hon. Member for Dulwich, who in this matter was supposed to carry great guns, which he did, had also made a speech, at Aberdeen, a short time ago, and this was what the London *Times* reported him to have said—

> "He maintained that the Liberal Party were responsible for some part of the rise in the price of bread, because it was the result of a shortage of supply which would have been obviated had this country years ago given a preference to the wheat-growing portions of the Empire. The preference would have stimulated and increased the supply and widened the area from which the supply came."

The hon. Gentleman said that the Liberal Party were responsible for some part of the rise in the price of bread. He would like to know how much blame was to be attributed to the Liberal Party, and who was to bear the other portion of the blame because this Government did not give preference to the wheat-growing portions of the Empire years ago. Did he mean five, ten, or twenty years? If he meant ten, up to 1906, the ten years were passed entirely in the hands of the Party opposite. If he meant twenty years, with the exception of 1892 to 1895 a Conservative Government was entirely in power. Did he mean a generation? If so, what had he got to say for the high priest of tariff reform who in those days was as keen on free trade as any of them? Was he to be blamed because he chose to live in the darkness of free trade rather than in the light of protection? That statement by the hon. Member for Dulwich was hardly a fair statement, and was intended to suggest something which he did not say straightforwardly. He took one more example. This time it was a leaflet issued by the authority of the chairman of the literature committee of the National Union of Conservative Associations. He believed it was also a poster. It represented the Prime Minister in the dowdy garment of a greengrocer about to go out to wait. In his hand he held a platter on which was a loaf and on the loaf was written "a 4½d. loaf for 6d.," and above were the words "Radicalism means dearer living," and under the drawing, which at best was a vulgar and malicious libel about which he did not think his right hon. friend would trouble himself very much, was printed the name of the Prime Minister and then, all honour to the poetic genius of the hon. and gallant Gentleman who issued it, there were these classic lines—

> "When this you see,
> Remember me."

This meant beyond all doubt that there had been a deliberate attempt on the part of the Conservative Party to try to fix on the Liberal Government the responsibility for the recent high price of bread, by any means legitimate or otherwise. He had in his hand a charming election address with the name "E. A. Goulding" in a prominent place, and in it he found the words "Radical Government" in large red letters, and there followed this—

> "The country has had two years experience of the rule of a Radical Government, with this result, food, fuel and clothing are dearer to-day."

Having sufficiently illustrated the issue which his Resolution raised he had now to fulfil the more serious part of his obligation which was to prove, as he hoped he might be able to do, that the recent high price of bread was due to natural causes alone, and if the House would bear with him he would shortly point them out. The advance in the price of wheat began to make itself felt last June when the wet and unfavourable weather in Europe and the late spring in America and Canada indicated that the world's crops of 1907–8 would be seriously deficient. The anticipations of a short crop of wheat throughout the world, which began to affect the price of wheat in June, 1907, were unfortunately realised. The crops of Germany, Roumania, Hungary, and Bulgaria in 1907 were the smallest for many years. The Russian crop was also a comparatively small one, and unfortunately the crops of America and Canada were also seriously deficient. To summarise, the world's production in 1906 was 441,000,000 quarters, and in 1907 it was 394,000,000 quarters, showing a falling off of 47,000,000 quarters, or nearly one and a half times the amount of Great Britain's annual consumption. Roughly speaking, we imported one half of all the wheat we required from foreign countries and one fourth we grew ourselves, while the remaining fourth came from our Colonies. Thus, if a 2s. import duty were put on for the benefit of our Colonies we should be taxing the British consumer and benefit those who only sent us one fourth of all we required. It was inconceivable that if they taxed a half of the whole supply so as to give a preference to the Colonies and protection to our own growers that they would not raise the cost all round. But not only had the world's production fallen off, but in the present year the crops had been especially bad in nearly every one of our wheat producing Colonies. The Canadian crop was a virtual failure because of the lateness and coldness of the spring, but on the other hand the Australian and Indian crops, which at one time promised so well had failed for lack of rain, so that in Canada there was too little sunshine, and in Australia and India too much. The crop of wheat in Canada in the past year was only 10,500,000 quarters, in comparison with 15,400,000 quarters in the previous year. Of this crop, about 30 per cent. was not millable, so the net crop available for food supply was only about 7,350,000 quarters. Of this, 6,000,000 quarters were required for the home consumption of Canada. So Canada this year had only 1,350,000 quarters available for export. There were, however, about 1,500,000 quarters of old wheat unsold, and so the total amount of wheat which Canada had for shipment was only about 2,850,000 quarters. In 1907, Canada's shipment of wheat and flour amounted to 6,500,000 quarters. Again, the crop of Australasia was deficient in consequence of drought. The estimated yield was only 6,000,000 quarters in comparison with 10,000,000 quarters last year, and Australasia would apparently require the greater portion, if not the whole, of this 6,000,000 quarters for her own consumption, whereas last year, her shipments of wheat and flour amounted to 4,500,000 quarters. In October last it became apparent that the Indian harvest would be short, and this fact was largely responsible for the advance in wheat which took place then. Fortunately, good rains had since fallen, and the outlook was much more promising than it was in November and December. Nevertheless, the absence of rain in India last autumn prevented the farmers of India from getting seed into the ground, and the average devoted to wheat this year showed a decrease of no less than 10,000,000 acres, or 33 per cent. of the usual quantity. Given favourable conditions of harvest, the Indian wheat crop of the current year would probably not exceed about 25,000,000 quarters in comparison with 39,000,000 quarters last year, and after satisfying her own requirments apparently India would have only about 5½ million quarters of wheat for export, and most of that was of last year's crop. Thus the combined crops of India, Australasia, and Canada in the present crop season of 1907-8 would probably be about 41,000,000 quarters in comparison with 64,000,0000 quarters last year.

Under these circumstances could there be any doubt what the real cause of the rise in prices was? The price of bread in all probability would have been higher still, but for one fortunate circumstance and that was that in Argentina there had been a good crop. This year, it was estimated to reach 24,000,000 quarters in comparison with 19,000,000 quarters last year, and the amount of wheat which Argentina would be able to ship was 17,000,000 quarters in comparison with about 13,000,000 quarters last year. The policy of Great Britain in keeping her markets open freely to the produce of all countries had undoubtedly encouraged Argentina and other countries to produce wheat, and had consequently been the direct means of providing British consumers with bread at a reasonable price even in years in which the harvests had failed throughout the British Empire and the world. He firmly believed that, but for these open ports, this country would have been exposed to the same famine conditions from time to time as it was prior to the introduction of the "open door" policy in the hungry days of the forties. It seemed almost unnecessary to prove that if a great raw material went up in price the manufactured article would of course become dearer. But it was a very consistent rule that bad crops forced wheat up in price and that high priced wheat was followed by high priced bread. Thus one had only to find a year of high average price for wheat to be quite certain that bad crops preceded it and that dear bread came after. Let him give some illustrations. In 1891 the average price of wheat in the United Kingdom was 37s.—a very high price for wheat. The mean price for household bread, the 4lb. loaf, in London was 6·21d.—also a very high price. In 1893 the price of wheat fell to 30s. 3d., and bread to 5¾d. Why was wheat so dear in 1891 and 1892? Because in 1890 the world produced 20,000,000 quarters too little for its wants. In 1891 there was a further deficiency of 8,000,000 quarters. But in 1893 the world began to produce more than it required by 11,000,000 quarters, and the price went down to 30s. and was followed by the price of bread to 5¾d. He took the year 1897. In that year the Indian, Australian and Canadian crops and in fact the crops all over the world were very bad.

From 1896 to 1906 the Conservative Government was in power; but no sane Liberal ever thought of charging them with responsibility for the dear bread of those years. On 1st February last, the price of the 4lb. household loaf was 5½d., an increase of from a half-penny to a penny over its price on the same day last year. This was a case of history repeating itself. He had shown how they had bad weather, bad crops, dear wheat, and dear bread in 1907, and the Liberal Government had no more to do with that rise in price than the man in the moon. Where would they be if on the top of this high price of bread they had an import duty of 2s. or more? They were liable to these recurring bad seasons—they would always come. Surely no sane economists would deny now that an import duty would add to price, if not always to the full extent, yet nearly always to a very large degree. France and Germany offered very conclusive illustrations of this. According to an answer given by the President of the Board of Trade the other day the average price of wheat in Great Britain in 1907 was 30s. 7d. In France it was 40s. 7d., and in Germany 43s. But the duty on wheat in France was 12s., and in Germany also 12s. In Germany the price, therefore, was the world's price, namely the English market price free from all duties, plus rather more than the duty. In France where the duty was 12s. the difference between the world's price and the average price was only 10s. This was accounted for by the abnormally good crop of wheat in France in 1907, whereby she found herself in possession of large stocks, and could now export wheat if she so desired, and if prices in other countries were sufficiently attractive. But there was an even better illustration. As they all knew Hamburg was a free city. He was told on most excellent authority that allowing for differences in quality, cost of transit inland, and other technical points, wheat in Berlin was dearer by the amount of the German import duty than it was at Hamburg. So far as the Government and the Liberal Party were concerned, they knew what they had to expect and they could take care of themselves. It was obvious that the great "constructive policy" of the Unionist Party known as fiscal reform was to be run on any lines, fair or unfair, if only it could be made to win. It was the horse on which the Unionist Party hoped to ride back into power. That any party should govern in this country the chief item of whose political programme was to make bread dearer by import duties was in his view a great danger to the State, and must entail misery and suffering on the very poorest of our poor people, and it was time for those who held those views to defend them in the House of Commons. He had raised the question with the hope of preventing the insidious creeping into their political industrial and economic systems of those dangerous heresies promulgated by the Unionist Party, and he respectfully asked the House of Commons to accept his Resolution.

COLONEL SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) seconded the Resolution. He said the first thing that occurred to his mind was a sense of poignant regret that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, whose name was bound up with what he believed to be the right and just cause of tariff reform, was not present with his clear mind and pregnant phrase to illuminate the debate. It was well that hon. Gentlemen opposite had thought fit to meet, fairly and squarely, this question as one not to be talked out, but divided upon. Perhaps it would be well, at the outset, for both sides to go as far as they could go in agreement. He thought they were all agreed upon this general proposition, that the imposition of a tax upon any commodity—in this case, wheat—could not conceivably tend to increase the world's production, but must, on the contrary, tend in some degree to reduce the production and to increase scarcity of that commodity. [OPPOSITION cries of "No."] Surely it was inconceivable that the imposition of a tax on any commodity could increase the world's production of that commodity. No doubt the reply of the Opposition to the Motion would be two-fold. First, they would say that, since taxes or tolls were necessary, there was no more harm in taxing bread than in taxing tea, sugar, or alcohol. To that assertion the Liberal Party advanced this frank denial—all taxes were bad, but a bread tax was the worst, because it bore most hardly upon those least able to bear it, the poor, to whom bread—being the cheapest of all commodities—was the main article of food. The second answer of the Opposition would probably be that, in point of fact, no toll would be levied upon bread; in other words, the British Empire was self-sufficient to provide supplies for the requirements of these islands. Would the right hon. Member for East Worcestershire tell the House how long he thought it would take for a quarter of the home supply to become the whole under 2s. or any other tax on corn? It was obvious that any tax which the right hon. Gentleman dared to name would take twenty or thirty years before the whole supply of the British Empire was produced in the Empire itself in good and bad years. Last year had been a bad year in certain parts of the globe as well as in the United Kingdom. The total amount of wheat available for export from British Possessions last year was 15,000,000 quarters, and that amount reached these shores. In the year that the House was now considering the amount to be expected was between 3,000,000 quarters and 4,000,000 quarters only. The Tariff Reform League in 1904 bought the *Sun* newspaper, but he suggested to them with great respect that they could not make the sun shine at their will. They could not avoid the kind of disaster which had befallen our Colonies and possessions oversea this year and reduced the amount of wheat we imported from our possessions from 15,000,000 quarters to between 3,000,000 and 4,000,000 quarters. How did the right hon. Gentleman propose to multiply the amount by five so as to keep bread at its normal price and prevent scarcity? The thing was unthinkable, and it could not be done. In order that the right hon. Gentleman and his friends should prove their case they would require not twenty but a hundred years; but whatever they did, however great the tax they put on imported wheat from foreign countries, they never could deal with the kind of disaster which had this year befallen the British Empire. By a fortunate Providence in other parts of the planet the sun had shone, and rain had fallen, or refrained from falling when not wanted, and so they saw that the alteration in the price of wheat and bread had been small and insignificant. He could state on the authority of the largest shipper of wheat in Liverpool that, had it not been for the importation of Argentine wheat, the price of wheat must have risen 12s. and the price of bread another 2d. Hon. Gentlemen opposite would impose this corn tax to bind our Colonies to us. But if dear bread caused suffering to the poor, who were five-sixths of the people of these islands, did it not follow that whenever a tax on wheat was imposed so as to increase the price of bread, whenever the Colonial supply failed, every poor man would curse the Empire, would hate the Colonies, and would raise a clamour which few Ministers would be able to resist to have the preferential duty abolished which had caused the scarcity? Had this tax been imposed, as he understood that some would have wished, twenty or thirty years ago, they would at that very moment, instead of debating the question raised by his hon. friend, have been debating the question whether they should take off the preferential duty in order to relieve the suffering of the poor. It should be observed, for the point was not often realised, that the suffering would not only be in this country, but also in the self-governing Colonies which provided us with wheat. The thing would be double in its disaster. At the present moment in Canada, owing to the failure of the wheat crop, the Government was distributing seed wheat in order to enable the farmers to sow their crops, but were the Empire founded on a wheat tax, there would be at the same time, as hon. Members could see, an agitation here for the abolition of the tax which was causing the scarcity of bread, and there would be an agitation in the Colonies to maintain or increase the preference in order to enable them still to earn a living. Therefore, both here and in the Colonies, the moment the world's supply of wheat failed, a violent agitation would be produced in this country to abolish the preference which at that moment was most needed in our self-governing Colonies. He did not quite agree with hon. Members opposite that the omens were so favourable as they thought for their return to power. He realised that some of them might think that recent elections had shown that they might shortly have the power to impose a bread tax. He did not agree with them. He thought the indications were somewhat vague. The Opposition thought that Hastings was an omen favourable to them. But not for the first time in our history a principle which England held dear had been defeated at Hastings. It was true that free trade could not stand without support, and he seconded this resolution because he believed that a tax on wheat was wrong in its conception, unjust in its incidence, and would be fatal to the well-being of the Empire.

Motion proposed, "That this House is of opinion that the recent high price of bread in this country is due to natural causes alone, and that any import duty on wheat would tend to raise the price still higher and aggravate the suffering caused by dear bread."—(*Sir Joseph Leese.*)

MR. GOULDING (Worcester) moved "to leave out all the words after the word 'causes,' and add the words 'and neglect of British resources, and that great advantage to the consumers in the United Kingdom would follow such a rearrangement of duties on food products as will encourage agriculture in the United Kingdom, give a preference to the Colonies, stimulate the productive power of the Empire as a whole, and so lessen our dependence on foreign countries for the necessaries of life." He said that he was glad all were now agreed that natural causes must play a part in regard to prices, but he would remind the House that the Radical Party in 1904 unanimously disputed that theory in regard to the rise in the price of sugar, though the shortage in sugar then was about 10 per cent., while that of wheat was now about 3 per cent. One of the great objects of free importation was to secure that the shortage in one part of the world should be compensated by abundance in another. This theory had clearly broken down, and was likely to do so even more frequently in the future. In the past we had depended on the United States for a large portion of our wheat supply, but any man who knew what had happened in regard to the continuous and steady reduction in the import of corn to this country from the United States must realise that that source of supply could not be relied upon for ever. Further than that, we were becoming increasingly dependent for our corn supplies on countries situated near the Equator, where the chances of drought were more frequent. [MINISTERIAL ironical laughter.] He saw no reason for laughter; was not that true; if it was not, some hon. Gentleman opposite might explain afterwards. But if that were the case it was clear that we must exercise foresight, and endeavour to secure by policy that cheapness which could not be guaranteed by free imports. In pursuit of that policy we had at our hands within the Empire what we wanted if we cared to use it, but it clearly could not be obtained by banging, barring, and bolting doors. The policy of free imports in its very adoption was a deliberate rejection of development of Imperial resources. The early preference, especially of 1843, stimulated wheat-growing in Canada,and Mr. Gladstone in a letter to Lord Cathcart, of a little later date, admitted that this was the case, and further, in the history of his life by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for India, it was stated that he advocated that extension to other parts of the Empire. Connected also with this policy of free imports was the abandonment of the established practice of State-aided emigration, which without any cost to the British tax-payer, provided the labour necessary for the cultivation of the virgin soil in Canada. Colonial opinion was now unanimous in favour of the readoption of preference, and experts everywhere were agreed that British Imperial resources were practically inexhaustible. By a policy of preference was not meant merely a tariff advantage on wheat alone, but a general agricultural policy, of which preference would be an essential part. Such a policy required the rearrangement of import duties on food products, without adding one fraction to the proportion borne by the working classes, yet supplying the machinery, which did not exist, and which could not be invented *ad hoc*, for preventing the destruction by dumping of our national industries. As to the policy of corn preference, two objections were urged. First, that the small duties proposed could not be effective; secondly, if imposed, that they must lead to an early increase. In regard to the second objection it was the familiar argument of their old friend: "The thin edge of the wedge," which was used on every occasion and generally by those who had a bad case. It was to his mind always a poor and unconvincing argument. They might just as well say that because a man entered into the bonds of matrimony he was bound in the near future to become a bigamist, or that the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because he proposed last week in his Licensing Bill that one policeman was to have the right of visiting clubs, must of a necessity go on and impose in the near future the presence of a whole division of these estimables on a club. No, each generation would act in this matter according to their own lights, and what they deemed best for the country as the occasion arose. As a Tory democrat, he had faith in the good sense of the masses whose vote would decide the question. In regard to the first point, that a 2s. duty would not be effective, they had it in a statement of the Prime Ministers of the self-governing States of the Empire that this 2s. preference was all that they wanted, that it was sufficient, and that it would give them the turn of the market. If what he had said as regarded British resources was true, it surely came to this, that within the Empire itself they would be able to provide all that they desired in regard to wheat, and therefore one of the chief objections fell to the ground. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Where?" and "How?"] Because with unexhausted resources the Empire would be able to send such a quantity of wheat into this country as practically to decide the price, and the foreigner who sent corn into the country and paid the import duty necessary for its admission—[MINISTERIAL cries of "He would not, according to your own argument"]—could not impose a price which would increase the cost in this country, but the tendency of his corn would be to decrease the price of that coming from the Empire. He preferred to deal with an example of what existed to-day rather than enter the realms of prophecy. He would take the case of France, which practically produced all the corn which she required for the needs of her people. There was a duty of 12s. 2d. in France on all corn not produced in that country, but, as the hon. Gentleman who opened the debate admitted, the price of wheat in France was practically the same as it was here. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."]

*SIR JOSEPH LEESE: I am sorry to interrupt, but what I said was that the average price of wheat in this country in 1907 was 30s. 7d., while the average price of a similar quality of wheat in France was 40s.

AN HON. MEMBER: It is the price of to-day we want. [Ironical MINISTERIAL cheers.]

MR. GOULDING said he regretted to have misrepresented the hon. Gentleman, but he would take his own statement that the price of wheat to-day—the wheat used by the French people for the manufacture of their bread—was exactly the same as the price paid in this country. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No," and interruption.] Was it fair-play on the part of the vast majority on the Ministerial Benches to interrupt him so? They had challenged those on that side of the House again and again to bring forward this question, and now when they did so they interrupted him in debate. [MINISTERIAL cries of "What is the price of bread in France?"] The price of bread in France to-day was practically the same as it was here. [An HON. MEMBER on the MINISTERIAL Benches: He does not know it.] In some places it was a fraction above, in other places it was a fraction less. Now let him ask how would this proposal benefit home agriculture. That was a fair question. [Interruption.] He must say that it was desirable to examine the whole policy as expounded by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham and the Tariff Commission of Professor Hewins. That was, however, so large that it would take another night to discuss it. What he desired to point out to the House was the deplorable dependence upon foreigners we in this country were in for the necessities of life. That had been stated by both hon. Gentlemen, and he took their facts. But what he argued was that surely every effort should be made to make this country more self-sufficient as regarded the necessaries of life, and that it must be to our advantage to strengthen those who were for us rather than those who were against us. He was very grateful to the House for the indulgence that they had extended to him, but he could not resume his seat without a protest against the unscrupulous falsehoods made in regard to the character of the tariff reform movement and in regard to those engaged in it. Here were two recent examples—the flagrant poster: "A vote for Clive is a slice out of your loaf"; and at Leeds, the Free Trade Union: "One hundred babies have starved to death in Toronto since New Year's Day—therefore tariff reform means starvation." He also protested against the unworthy suggestions that because tariff reformers pointed out that they believed bad trade was coming and that grave disaster would follow persistence in our present policy, they were gloating over the inevitable hard times which even the President of the Board of Trade himself admitted were coming. Surely a cause must indeed be making progress when implements of this kind had to be used to try to prejudice its success amongst the very poor. In considering this question that night the minds of many hon. Members on those benches were turned to the author of this movement, and he did not think there was a man in any part of the House who did not regret the cause of the absence of the right hon. Gentleman. He ventured to say that when the history of the tariff movement came to be written it would reveal no such heroic figure as that of the man well on in years, and already with the crown of success on his achievements, who undertook this gigantic task, well knowing the difficulties before him, but deriving his strength from his faith in our Imperial destiny, the urgency of the question, and the danger of delay. What wonder if after the sacrifices that he had made our countrymen throughout the universe blessed him as the great Englishman of the age, and, inspired by his example, were determined to carry this movement for the consolidation of the

Empire to a triumphant issue! He begged to move the Amendment which stood in his name.

EARL WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham), in seconding the Amendment, said that the point which struck one most prominently on first looking at the Resolution was the great love of body-snatching which existed among hon. Gentlemen opposite, because they were told, not once, but on many occasions after the last general election, that tariff reform was dead and buried for ever. And yet hardly a month went by without some fresh attempt being made by hon. or right hon. Gentlemen to dig up the corpse. Sometimes it was dug up apparently with a trowel by the President of the Board of Trade and sometimes in a more rough-and-ready fashion with the homely agricultural spade as in the case of the hon. Gentleman who proposed this Resolution. At any rate, it was constantly being dug up, and it certainly was a great compliment to the advance which had been made by tariff reform in the country. But there was the second point which struck one about the Resolution, and that was the gradual shifting which had been going on now for some time—the gradual shifting of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite from the rather insecure boggy ground on which they stood at the general election on the question of food to what they now thought was firmer territory. They remembered that at the last election not merely were attacks made upon them as tariff reformers for their policy, but it was said that under free trade it could be practically guaranteed that bread would be cheaper. [Loud MINISTERIAL cries of "Quote."] He was going to do so. He had in his hands a number of leaflets and pamphlets issued by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite in regard to the price of food, which documents he would not sell for their weight in gold. He had therefore plenty of quotations from every grade of Liberal opinions, from the hon. Member for North Hackney to the ultra-respectable First Commissioner of Works. The constituents of the right hon. Gentleman the First Commissioner of Works were asked to "Vote for Harcourt and a big loaf for our little children." History would tell whether the right hon. Gentleman's relative made the same boast at Hastings, where he had been somewhat unsuccessful. It would not be desirable for him to quote the whole of these leaflets or pamphlets at length, but he would like to refer to the specially priceless example of this kind of leaflet issued at the last election by the hon. Member for Brentford, who invited the electors to "Vote for Dr. Rutherford and free trade all round, thus freeing your table of existing taxes on food. Vote for the big loaf and the cheap one." Another example, perhaps the best of all, was a leaflet issued by a Member for one of the divisions of Oxfordshire: "Remember every vote given for Sir Robert Hermon-Hodge is a vote given for the little loaf. Surely your loaf is little enough now! Look at these pictures of the loaf now and the loaf which Sir Robert Hermon-Hodge would give you." But the most amazing thing of all was hon. Gentlemen on the Ministerial side now pretending that at the general election they did not guarantee that food would remain cheap. For every leaflet published officially there were hundreds of similar statements made from Liberal platforms and privately to the electors in all the smaller parishes of England. He could give a case in his own division where a Liberal speaker said that it was likely that whenever the Liberal Government came into power everything would be cheaper because the Government would carry on a less ruinous system of finance than that of its predecessors. [Cheers, and ironical MINISTERIAL cheers and laughter.] He could not congratulate hon. Gentlemen opposite on the standard of conduct which they seemed to have adopted on this occasion. It was not necessary for him to continue to quote the leaflets which were issued at the last general election, but there was evidence that at the last elections these methods were still in vogue. Many of them on that side of the House would remember pamphlets, leaflets, and posters issued at the Mid-Devon election. They remembered in particular one of the Liberal candidates' leaflets, which ran: "The children's prayer: Give us this day our daily bread and vote for Buxton." Hon. Gentlemen opposite had pretended that they had never guaranteed that the price of food would remain cheap. He therefore wanted to deal with that view for a few moments, but he did not want to continue to refer to the question of the leaflets, more especially as it would appear from something he saw in a local paper at Hastings that hon. Gentlemen opposite had adopted a fresh method of appealing to the electorate. He saw that the hon. Member for East Denbigh, speaking two nights ago, said he would not care to go to Parliament over the bodies of men and women lying drunk in public-houses. Let them go on to consider, with rather less heat if possible on the opposite side of the House, the fresh standpoint which hon. Gentlemen opposite had taken up. They had deliberately abandoned—it was not denied by right hon. Gentlemen sitting on the Treasury Bench or their supporters—the standard they took up at the last election that under free trade food could not become dearer. The hon. Member who seconded the original Resolution referred in particular to the effect which a duty had in raising the cost of an article. It had, he knew, always been laid down by hon. Gentlemen opposite that any duty on wheat raised the price of bread by the amount of the duty upon it. Reference had been made to the case of France. When his hon. friend was speaking, he was called upon by hon. Gentlemen opposite very frequently to give some quotations of wheat prices in France. As hon. Gentlemen were anxious to have them he would be very glad to give the figures which he had at his disposal. They were taken from official Returns. The mean average price of wheat last year in Paris was 41s. 1d., and in London (British wheat) 31s. 6d. There were two or three facts which had to be taken into account in connection with that. The President of the Board of Trade would not dispute that those facts existed. In the first place the comparison was not a very good one, because, whereas only about 6 per cent. of the British wheat was used in bread in the London area, the wheat sold in Paris was mainly French grain. There was also the difference that London was a port and Paris an inland town with a long railway system. There was, too, another fact, and that was that the majority of the wheat used for bread-making purposes in London was imported wheat for which the price was higher than for British wheat. Probably, if they compared the prices of wheat in the London area with the prices in Paris for Australian and Argentine wheat, if the figures were available, the difference between the two quotations would be found to be considerably less. He could give the House the quotations for two months of the present year of prices in Paris, and in Mark Lane, in one case for Argentine, and in the other for Australian wheat. In Paris up to the end of February the price of Argentine wheat was 38s., and in Mark Lane 39s. 10d. In Paris Australian wheat was 41s., and in Mark Lane it was 44s. He was anxious to give the House some statistics which perhaps might be of more interest. Lately, for medical reasons, he had spent a short holiday in the South of France, and while there he took the opportunity of comparing the prices of commodities there with the prices in his own constituency. In the case of bread, the price of the kilogramme loaf for the week ending 23rd February was 35 centimes in the district round Biarritz, and the price of the 2 lb. loaf in his own constituency of Horsham during the same week was 3¼d. These figures were somewhat involved, but the actual comparison worked out at 3¼d. per 2 lb. loaf in Horsham, and 3·06d. per 2 lb. loaf in that district of France. At the same time the price of wheat there was 38s. 5d., and at Horsham 33s. 11d. A further comparison which he undertook in those two districts came out in this way. Whereas bread was practically the same, wheat, milk, and coffee were cheaper, and tea and sugar were somewhat dearer. But on the basis of the President of the Board of Trade's Budget, of the amount which an English householder would require for the household, the comparison worked out as follows: France, 212 pennies per week; Horsham, 209. If tea was eliminated for the comparison, it worked out at 10d. in favour of France. The point he thought they were entitled to make was that they had been grossly and unfairly attacked by hon. Gentlemen opposite over this question. It had been shown on many occasions that the cost of living in protectionist countries on a system far different from any that had been proposed by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Birmingham, was very slightly, if any, higher than here. They were, therefore, entitled to protest against the continued issue of pamphlets and the continued use of arguments, some of which had been used that night by hon. Gentlemen opposite, and against the attempt to introduce prejudice into the question by pretending that everybody in protectionist countries was in a state of poverty and living on black bread and horse sausages. Reference had been made by the hon. Member for Accrington to the question of the capabilities of Canada, for the supply of wheat to this country and to the Empire, and he was surprised that the mover and seconder of the Resolution should have expressed so much doubt that the Empire would be able in a comparatively short time to supply all its own needs in wheat. He thought the mover of the Resolution had stated that no one would contend that in the lifetime of anyone in this House, or for a very long time, Canada would be able to supply all our needs. It was laid down by the most competent authorities in Canada that within a period of ten to twenty years Canada alone, if she continued at her present rate of progress, would be able to supply all the wheat we required.

Colonel SEELY. With bad harvests like this year?

Earl WINTERTON said that no one would pretend that we should rely on Canada alone, but his point was that the normal wheat supply of Canada within twenty years, at the present rate of progress, would be sufficient for our needs. We should have Australia and India to fall back upon. An hon. Gentleman had asked how preference would help to bring that about. The one thing needed to make Canada the greatest wheat producing country in the world was more capital and more men. Though she was obtaining more men and more capital she was not doing so nearly as fast as the Canadians would like to see or as the country was capable of doing. There was not the slightest doubt that preference to Canada would enormously stimulate wheat growing and tempt an enormous amount of capital and men over the border of the United States. For years the process had been going on and men and money had been sent over to farm the western portion of Canada, and if it was stimulated he had not the least doubt that in twenty years Canada alone would be capable of supplying the whole of the wheat required for this country. Speaking at the Colonial Conference the Chancellor of the Exchequer said it was the policy of His Majesty's Government, as it had been of this country, to maintain unimpaired in quantity and quality and unenhanced in price the food of our people. Did he now pretend that that position was assured? Had he read the Blue-book issued three years ago by the Royal Commission which inquired into food supply in time of war? No one who had read that Blue-book or had lived through the last few months could pretend that the position the right hon. Gentleman had laid down was assured. The way to assure that position which he hoped everybody on both sides was anxious to see assured was by developing the resources within our own Empire. No one who was conversant with Canada could deny that we had there a priceless asset for carrying out that policy. The President of the Board of Trade, though opposed to preference, was strongly in favour of developing such things as transport within the British Empire. Did the House realise in what a favourable position we were as regarded the transport of wheat from Canada? We had the most magnificent transport that could possibly be imagined. The system of the Canadian Pacific Railway was if anything superior to the railways of other wheat producing countries such as America. If there was any way to assure our wheat supply in time of war it could only be done by developing the Empire and keeping a sufficiently strong Navy to protect the trade routes. The real objection which hon. Members opposite felt to preference was not so much hostility to duties, as opposition to the Colonial idea and the Colonial spirit. They knew that the whole Party, from the Prime Minister to the Member for Salford, were permeated more or less with the spirit of universal brotherhood, and cosmopolitanism, and it was because hon. Gentlemen knew that if preference was adopted, their schemes of universal brotherhood were put off for another thousand years that the Liberal Party had always shown opposition to it. The Government would find that the attitude they had taken up against preference would be as much a millstone about their necks as their subservience to Gentlemen below the Gangway had been. They, on that side of the House, rejoiced from a party point of view that their opponents had taken up this attitude, but from a national point of view they regretted that anybody should be opposed to preference and to the Imperial spirit.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 2, to leave out all the words after the word 'causes,' and add the words 'and neglect of British resources, and that great advantage to the consumers in the United Kingdom would follow such a rearrangement of duties on food products as will encourage agriculture in the United Kingdom, give a preference to the Colonies, stimulate the productive power of the Empire as a whole, and so lessen our dependence on Foreign countries for the necessaries of life'—(*Mr. Goulding*) instead thereof."

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*Mr. ESSEX (Gloucestershire, Cirencester) said he would like to ask the mover of the Amendment one or two questions. He represented thousands of men whose earnings did not exceed from 11s. to 12s. a week. He wanted to ask the hon. Member how he could encourage agriculture and yet benefit the consumer. He had followed the hon. Member as closely as he possibly could through every word of his speech. He was glad in one sense to see him there, and men like him who were the representative priests of this heresy. They wanted them on the floor of the House that they could nail them down to statements they made outside. The hon. Member did not stick at all to his Amendment and did not explain how he proposed to reconcile these two self-contradictory things. He took it that agriculture could only be encouraged by the lowering of rents or wages or by the increased price of its products. If they were going to increase the prices how were they going to benefit the consumer? He had a lot of other questions he wanted to ask, but he thought these one or two might do. He had a question to put to the hon. Member for Gravesend who suggested in his Amendment on the Paper that if the preference on Colonial wheat was excessive in amount they would find it out in the heightened price of bread. But who was going to pay it if it was a small tax? The hon. Gentleman hoped possibly that it would be disguised in the fluctuations of the market rate. If they did not get it out of the consumer they had to take it out of the pockets of the miller or the dealer in wheat or the baker. The noble Lord opposite had urged the necessity of stimulating Colonial produce. The growing of wheat was a matter of population as well as of area. If in anything like a short number of years, the whole of the wheat supply was to be grown within the British Empire without the contribution of India, nearly 74,000,000 cwt. more would have to be grown. If 11,250,000 of the white population of the British Empire to-day produced 23,000,000 quarters, how many more millions of white people would it require to produce a given proportion of the 74,000,000 cwts. required? Hon. Gentlemen did not wish them to come from foreign peoples with other national ideals and sympathies. Would they bring them from America or from Southern Europe or Scandinavia, for, if they did, what would be done for the consolidation of the British Empire? The hon. Member for Worcester had contended that the same economic generalisation which applied to corn applied with still greater force to import duties on tea, coffee, cocoa, and the rest. He would be glad to see all indirect taxes done away with, and hoped yet to hear the Chancellor of the Exchequer say that in his ideal system of taxation these would have no place; but he would point out that all these products were grown abroad and the whole amount obtained from them minus the small amount necessary for collection, passed into the Exchequer. It should not be overlooked that fifty or sixty loaves out of every 100 consumed by the Britisher were made from foreign wheat and as it had been proved by the experience of Germany and France that to tax any portion of the bread stuffs of a country was certain to bring about an all round heightening of the price of all the bread stuffs home grown and other, used in such a country, it followed that although we only levied a tax on the foreign flour and grain all our bread would cost us more. Moreover, while the Exchequer would gain the tax paid upon foreign corn and flour, the added price on the home and Colonial supplies would go from the consumer entirely into private pockets. Tariff reform was tariff robbery and nothing else. Furthermore there was a question he would like to ask the newly elected Member for South Hereford. When he said in his election address that a tax on wheat would be paid by the foreigner and help to neutralise the lessening or removal of present duties on tea and other articles, could he prove that taxes in either case did not fall on the consumers? These were points he would like to see cleared up in a debate of this kind, because he was searching after truth in this matter.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.): The hon. Member who has just sat down has engaged himself in the harmless and interesting occupation of putting questions to my hon. friends, some of whom have already spoken and cannot, therefore, rise to answer and others will be shut out by the exigencies of debate. I can assure the seconder of the Motion and others that on this side of the House we are most anxious for a full discussion. I may be permitted to say that when I rose immediately after my two hon. friends, I thought it would be for the convenience of the right hon. Gentleman opposite who would follow. On this side of the House we want not only a debate but a vote. A further word of a personal nature will not be impertinent. It is impossible to listen to the words of the hon. and gallant Member for the Abercromby Division in allusion to my relative without being touched by the general feeling of regret that one who never shrank from meeting his opponents nor hesitated to put his own views clearly forward cannot be present on the occasion. I rejoice that the hon. Gentleman has been successful in moving his Motion. His object, no doubt, is to put the Party on this side of the House into the dock and arraign them for their conduct. I do not know if the hon. Gentleman and his friends are satisfied; I can assure him that the Party whom he has sought to arraign are satisfied. It sometimes happens that unfortunate innocent persons are arraigned, but when the case comes on for investigation the parties quickly change places, and the accuser takes the position he designed for another, in the dock first and elsewhere afterwards. I cannot help thinking that it would have been better for the hon. Gentleman to have cleared the beam from his own eye before he became so much concerned with the motes which he found in ours. The terms of the Motion are divided into two parts, but practically the whole of the speech of the hon. Gentleman was devoted to one part only. The whole of his argument was addressed to the question of natural causes, and was a condemnation as severe as could be uttered of the attitude of himself and his friends who sat on the Opposition Benches a few years ago, when they accused the late Government of the responsibility for the rise in the price of sugar which was due, and which was known to everybody who cared to look at the facts to be due, to shortage of crop in Germany and elsewhere. If the hon. Gentleman and his friends wish to bring on to the floor of the House the issues tried at the by-elections in the country where verdicts have been given against them, if they wish to come to the House as to a Court of Appeal—which it is not; the country is the appellate Court from the House—why did he not frame his Resolution so as to put on the Notice Paper the contention advanced in the country at the last election? They did not say mildly in the words of the hon. Baronet that any import duty would tend to raise the price of food. They said they stood for cheap food. My noble friend who seconded the Amendment quoted a Bill which was issued by the First Commissioner of Works asking the electors to "Vote for Harcourt and a big loaf for our little children." Of course, the First Commissioner of Works did not stand alone in issuing that Bill. The hon. Member for North Paddington takes a great interest in this question. In his election address he said—

> "The issue, it should be remembered, is free trade or protection, cheap food or dear food."

MR. CHIOZZA MONEY (Paddington, N.): As the right hon. Gentleman has done me the honour to quote from my election address, I must ask him to read the whole of the part in which I referred to the taxes which he seeks to impose.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I have quoted enough for my purpose, which is to get at the expectations which the hon. Gentleman raised in the minds of his constituents. He said the question was cheap food or dear food, just as other Members said "big loaf or little loaf." Why does the Motion not say that the Liberal Government have given the big loaf or cheap food? Because it is not true. Because that which they said at election times is not only not true, but so absurdly and palpably false that the hon. Member dare not put it before the House. That is the first comment I want to make. When the hon. Member professes to bring before the House of Commons for trial here as between the two sides the statements made at elections he does not dare to put on record on the Paper of the House the statement to which hon. Members owed in large part their majority. [AN HON. MEMBER: Chinese slavery.] That does not concern the question before the House, but I am obliged for the reminder. The "terminological inexactitudes" in which hon. Gentlemen opposite indulged were not confined to one question only. They ranged over the whole political field, and what they are suffering from, and the reason why they come whining to this House to-night, is that those whom they duped by those misleading statements are now finding out the mistake they made and at every opportunity that they have are turning against hon. Gentleman opposite, and showing that they will not forget nor forgive the broken promises, the misleading statements, the false accounts of what they would do and could do, by which they won the last general election. These gentlemen come here to-night as the guardians of public morality at election times to set up a lofty standard of what may and may not be said. Are they any better to-day than they were at the general election? They cannot talk about the big loaf, because it is not here. It is gone. But they are ready to talk about it the moment that the price of bread falls. My hon. friend the Member for Worcester spoke about the Worcester election. He did not mention the Bill, "A vote for Goulding means protection; a vote for protection means horseflesh and rye bread." [Cheers.] Are hon. Members not ashamed to cheer falsehoods of that kind, and at the same moment to complain that they are unfairly treated in election literature? I do not think the hon. Baronet was any more in a position to raise a question of mis-statements at recent by-elections than the man who lives in a glass house is in a position to throw stones with safety. Were mis-statements made? What is the contention of hon. Gentlemen opposite as to the effect of these duties? My object, at any rate, is to repeat the statements I have made outside and to bring to the test here statements by which hon. Gentlemen won their seats. I am entitled to do so, and it is relevant to the Motion to repeat them. What is the view which hon. Gentlemen opposite take of their action in regard to these duties? Is it that they are really accurate and that they do not merely indulge in the display of terminological inexactitudes? Their contention, often repeated in the country, but not put into the Motion, is that a duty would raise the price of the commodity taxed by the full amount of the duty, and generally by something more. (Cheers.) There is a little hesitation in that cheer. The wiser ones shake their heads: but the Chancellor of the Exchequer will not deny that he advanced the view again and again that the tax would raise the cost of the commodity by the amount of the tax and probably a little more.

MR. ASQUITH: Yes, in the long run.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I say that as a general statement that is not true. It is based on the assumption that what is called the world's price of a commodity is one and the same the whole world over at any given time. It is a beautiful theory, but the facts are against it. The price of a commodity is not the same all the world over at the same moment. All sorts of conditions and circumstances, local and general, affect the price. I have prepared a return of the average price of wheat for the first and second six months of each year for a series of years. From that I will give one quotation. In the first half of the year 1901 the average price of wheat in Liverpool was 134s. per ton, and in the same period the average price at Antwerp was 129s., Mannheim, 139·4s., and at Hamburg was 130·6s. per ton. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Freight."] Freight will not explain the difference between Liverpool and Hamburg. It shows the untrustworthiness of the world's price upon which hon. Members opposite have so confidently based their calculations. The effect of a duty charged upon a commodity depends upon whether the whole of that commodity consumed in the country is taxed or not, and, if not, upon the proportion of the supply coming in from elsewhere. Take the tea duty. Except in unusual circumstances the whole of the cost of the tax must full upon the consumer, because no part of the commodity comes in duty free. But where a portion of the supply comes in duty free, then the whole of the cost of the duty will not fall upon the consumer, and we may safely add that the amount which is paid by the consumer will bear the same proportion to the amount of the supply that is taxed as to the amount that is free, and that destroys the whole case of hon. Gentlemen opposite. Even free traders dispute the view advanced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to the effect of duty on price. I wish they would read their own literature. The Chancellor of the Exchequer in the month of January in the House quoted certain corn figures which I venture to say were misleading. He illustrated the doctrine well known to economists that the duty not merely raised the prices to the consumer to the amount of the duty but by something more. I recommend him to read an extract from the *Free Trader*, the organ, I believe, of the Cobden Club. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] Well, Free Trade Union, which says that that is the ordinary free trade explanation, but that it is not economically sound to say that the consumer can only pay the entire duty in cases where the whole supply of a commodity is imported. The soundness of my contention that the effect of a duty on prices is governed largely by the free portion of the supply is seen in the French figures already quoted. It is not a fair test to take the *Gazette* prices of British wheat, for it is only about 10 per cent. of our whole consumption. The prices are lower than the bulk of the wheat that goes to the making of our bread, probably 1s. 6d. less, as the Minister for the Board of Agriculture has admitted. In October, November, and December the *Gazette* prices here were 35s. 3d., 36s. 6d., and 35s. 6d. for British wheat. The Liverpool prices were 39s. 6d., 38s. 5d., and 37s. 1d. The official average at Paris was 30s. 3d. and 38s. 5d. What, then, becomes of the doctrine that the consumer pays the whole of the duty? In two cases out of three, Paris is getting corn cheaper than we are getting it, despite the import duty in France. The hon. Baronet attempted to get rid of the French comparisons on the ground that the French produce nearly the whole of their wheat for themselves. Is that any answer? We are not asking what the United Kingdom can produce, we are asking what the British Empire can produce. An untaxed supply of wheat can be derived from within the British Empire; and as to the men necessary, we can keep our men under the flag, instead of sending them to the United States of America. We can keep the necessary men under the flag rather than send them to foreign countries, and we can keep our capital here rather than send it abroad, because we can get from the Empire large supplies of wheat. That brings me to the charge, if charge it is, that I have to make against the Government. I say that the rise in the price of bread is not an accident, but is due to a shortage of supply; and that the only way to guard against the recurrence of such accidents is to stimulate and increase the wheat production of the Empire. This country has it in its power to do this by preference. The complaint against the Government is not that they have produced this shortage by anything they have done, but that they have refused to do anything to protect the country against its recurrence. The hon. and gallant Member for Abercromby, by the repetition of an argument which he puts into two forms in his speech, asks me by name to assent to the proposition that the imposition of a tax must tend to reduce production, or he said the imposition of a tax could not increase production. I join issue with the hon. Member, and will give him an instance to the contrary. What about the output of steel and iron in the United States, where protective taxation has increased not only American production but the world's supply? By an extension of preference to our Colonies we may call into existence new sources of supply of wheat, and so increase the world's supply, and especially our own. That is one of the main objects of tariff reformers, and it is so clearly understood to be so, and it is so certain that the object will be obtained, that it is made a charge against tariff reform by Lord Rosebery and others. Lord Rosebery said, when he talked to farmers on this subject, that this 2s. duty would stimulate colonial production, and that wheat would not rise, but would fall. That is our case, and, in reply to the hon. Member, I will say that I have never pretended that the farmers will derive any advantage from the 2s. duty on wheat. I repudiate in the strongest possible terms the charge which hon. Gentlemen have tried to fasten upon us that we are endeavouring to raise the price of bread, or that we would raise it, and I throw back on them the accusation of dishonesty which they have chosen to introduce into the House and of which their own election literature condemns them.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): We have had a very interesting discussion, and rather a lively one, which shows that, after all, this is really a live issue. I am very glad that it should be discussed on the floor of the House, where statements can be made and either proved or disproved. The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down stated that my hon. and learned friend attempted to put him and his Party in the dock. That is not the object of the Resolution. It is, rather, to clear the Liberal Party of accusations which are made in the country, but which hon. Members opposite have not the courage to make here to our face. The charge is made against the Government that they have been responsible for the increase in the price of food, fuel, clothing. Surely that is a very serious charge to bring against a Government; and I should have thought that one of the first duties of the Party in opposition would have been to arraign the Government for a policy that has brought home such mischief to every man, woman, and child in the country. The Address was allowed to pass, and not a word about it. Tuesday and Wednesday evenings passed, and no balloting—[OPPOSITION cries of "No luck"]—and the charge is not brought even now. At any rate, I congratulate my hon. friend on one result of the discussion, and that is that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite have absolved the Government from all responsibility for the weather. Reference has been made to charges which we brought about either Chinese labour or sugar. They were all brought on the floor of this House. I was a Member of the House at the time, and I remember that we constantly exhausted every Parliamentary resource in order to get a debate on those two topics.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): Does the right hon. Gentleman say that we were responsible for the weather and sugar?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: The right hon. Gentleman has quite naturally joined his Party on this subject rather late, and he is, therefore, not quite in touch with what has been going on. I am simply answering an accusation that we have made charges about Chinese labour and sugar, and my reply is that we made those charges on the floor of the House. My only complaint is that it has been left to us to seek that opportunity to call upon hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite to justify the charges they have made on every platform in the country. There is one thing which, I think, is more interesting even than the discussion, and that is the choice made by the Opposition of the Amendment on which they are going to challenge a division. I would like the House to look at the Order Paper. The hon. Member for Gravesend, who is now an old and distinguished Parliamentary hand, and who is in the habit of addressing urban and industrial audiences, found it necessary to dwell on the fact that any duty which would be imposed upon wheat would be a small one. The hon. Member is first on the Order Paper, and therefore, in the natural course of things, would be called first. ["No, no."] He is brushed aside. ["No."]

MR. GOULDING: I handed in my notice last Friday—the very first notice.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I accept the statement fully, but I want to point out the choice that has been made of Amendments. There is a very serious difference. The hon. Member for Gravesend said—

> "Well, this duty does not matter; after all, it is only a small one."

But the Party opposite are getting bolder and would have none of it. "No," they said, "it must be a duty which will develop agriculture in this country." The right hon. Gentleman who has just spoken said it would not affect the price of wheat in this country, so that thefarmer here would not benefit by it. It was to benefit, not England, but Assiniboia; the right hon. Gentleman was thinking not of Mid Devon, but of Saskatchewan. That is the interpretation which the right hon. Gentleman places on this Amendment. It is not the development of agriculture here but in Australia, Canada, India, and elsewhere. I am glad to have that interpretation; but the right hon. Gentleman could not have read the Amendment, because the hon. Member for Worcester wants to develop agriculture in the United Kingdom. But he knows perfectly well that the growing of wheat in the United Kingdom became unprofitable from the moment that the price dropped under 40s. a quarter. I am glad to see the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wimbledon present. I see he is also satisfied that we are not responsible for the dear bread. He has found something else which is much better. He gives up bread, and now he says we are responsible for foot-and-mouth disease. According to the Tariff Reform Commission, or at any rate according to the statistics of the Board of Agriculture, the cultivation of wheat went down in this country from the moment the price fell below 40s. I would ask the right hon. Gentleman if he thinks any farmer will break up his grass lands for 2s. a quarter on corn.

*MR. CHAPLIN (Surrey, Wimbledon): The right hon. Gentleman seems to think corn only includes wheat, but it also includes barley and oats, which is chiefly grown here.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I do not forget it at all, because if we put a duty on corn we shall soon know that there are other kinds of grain included, as Germany found, for instance, that there is rye. I am sorry I cannot answer all the points raised, but there are one or two things I should like to say. One is with regard to France. France has played a great part in this discussion, especially in the arguments of hon. Gentlemen opposite. What has happened in France? There has just been a very successful harvest. The result of it has been that France is in the position of not being under the necessity of importing. Really France could export. How long has France been in that position? Can hon. Gentlemen opposite point out a single year during the last ten years when France has been in that position? That, of course, is our answer. You are dependent entirely upon the weather in France or in any particular area from which you draw your wheat if you are protectionist, and if you have bad weather there, up goes wheat. I have got the prices of wheat in France since 1885, and I cannot not find a single year in which the price of wheat in France has not been from 6s. to 10s. above the price of wheat in this country. France has not had a year like this for the last twenty years. The advantage of free trade is that we are not dependent upon a mere accident of that kind, which only occurs once in twenty years. People cannot live for nineteen years without bread in the hope that they may have a good harvest when the twentieth year arrives. Something has been said about imported wheat being cheaper in France. Hon. Members ought to know the reason. The real reason is that it is wheat for re-export; it is practically in bond. The duty is paid, but if wheat is re-exported there is a drawback. If that wheat is used for consumption in France, up goes the price by the duty. That is what hon. Members really ought to have known.

Earl WINTERTON: That does not apply to Biarritz.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: I have no time to follow the researches of the noble Lord in the south of France. Let me give one figure. The price of bread in London is 5½d. the 4 lb. loaf; it is 6½d. in Paris. That is a difference of 1d. on the 4 lb. loaf, in spite of the good harvest in France. If I had time to go into it, Germany is the best case of all. Germany is a country with a teeming population. Germany has now not merely to pay 11s. duty on all wheat that is imported but also 11s. duty on her home-grown wheat. That ought to be a sufficient warning to us. The right hon. Gentleman opposite got very angry, because in some pamphlets we said this meant starvation, and I really think I could not do better in conclusion than by quoting the words of the right hon. Gentleman's relative—

> "If you are going to tax the bread of the people, you will affect every household in the land, and you will throw back the working class of this country to the starvation wages and to the destitution from which Mr. Gladstone and Sir Robert Peel have relieved them."

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 293; Noes, 90. (Division List No. 30.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Duke
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C. R.
Agnew, George William
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo)
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Black, Arthur W.
Boulton, A. C. F.
Bowerman, C. W.
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Chas.
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S. Pancras, W
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, C. H. (Sussex, E. Gr'st'd)
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.

Cox, Harold
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Daves,M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Davies Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howel (Bristol, S.)
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.)
Dewar, Sir J.A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson,W.H. (St.Pancras,N.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Elibank, Master of
Erskine, David C.
Essex, R. W.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.HerbertJohn
Glen-Coats,Sir T.(Renfrew,W.)
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Sir Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon,Rt.HnSirW.Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth,R.L.(Caithn'ss-sh
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey,W.E. (Derbyshire,N.E.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert,Col.Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope,W.Bateman (Somerset,N
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones,Sir D.Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones,William(Carnarvonshire)
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, EdmundG.(Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese,Sir JosephF.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever,A.Levy (Essex,Harwich)
Lever, W.H. (Cheshire, Wirral)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J.M.(Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macpherson, J. T.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Middlebrook, William
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. G.
Morgan,J.Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,CharlesH.(Doncast'r
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Grady, J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pearson, W.H.M. (Suffolk,Eye)
Philipps, Col.Ivor (S'thampton
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pollard, Dr.
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price,Robert John (Norfolk,E.)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, Thomas (W.Monm'th
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Scott,A.H.(Ashton-under Lyne
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Seely, Colonel
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick B.)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanley, Hn.A.Lyulph (Chesh.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant,Sir Edward(Salisbury
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas,Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas,David Alfred (Merthyr
Thompson,J.W.H. (Somerset,E
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Wadsworth, J.
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Ward,W.Dudley (Southampt'n
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T
Wason,Rt Hn.E.(Clackmannan
Wason,John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley,John Henry (Halifax)

Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilkie, Alexander
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Llewelyn (Carmarth'n
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson, A.
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J.W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wodehouse, Lord
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Stanley
Balfour, Rt Hn. A. J. (City Lond.)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Capt. Hn. G (Winchester)
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H
Castlereagh, Viscount
Cave, George
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Clark, George Smith (Belfast, W.
Clive, Percy Archer
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Darlymple, Viscount
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Haddock, George B.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Harrison-Broadley, H. B
Heaton, John Henniker
Helmsley, Viscount
Hill, Sir Clement
Hills, J. W.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Col. W.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S)
Lowe, Sir Francis William
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Marks, H. H. (Kent)
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Starkey, John R.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson, W. Mtchell-(Lanark)
Walker, Col. W.H. (Lancashire)
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid)
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Winterton, Earl
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C.B. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

Main Question again proposed.

Debate arising.

And, if being after Eleven of the Clock, and objection being taken to further Proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned.

LICENSING ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

POLLING DISTRICTS (COUNTY COUNCILS) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).

Postponed Proceeding on Question "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair," resumed.

Question again proposed.

And, objection being taken to further Proceeding, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

SUSPENSION OF THE ELEVEN O'CLOCK RULE.

MR. GEORGE WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) gave notice to move the suspension of the Eleven o'clock Rule for to-morrow.

Adjourned at sixteen minutes after Eleven o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 5th March, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with: Bognor Gas Light and Coke Company [H.L.].

Also the Certificate that the Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with: London and Windsor Motor Roads, Tramroads and Tramways.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Herne Bay Pier Bill [H.L.]; Huddersfield Water Bill [H.L.]. Reported, with Amendments.

Bognor Gas Light and Coke Company Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order), and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection.

North British and Mercantile Insurance Company Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª, and committed.

Stratford-upon-Avon, Towcester, and Midland Junction Railway, Evesham, Redditch, and Stratford-upon-Avon Junction Railway, and East and West Junction Railway (Amalgamation) Bill [H.L.]; Alliance and other Assurance and Insurance Companies Bill [H.L.]; Leith Burgh Bill [H.L.]; West London, Barnes, and Richmond Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Croydon and Southern District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Camborne Water Bill; London and Windsor Motor Roads, Tramroads, and Tramways Bill. Examiners Certificates of non-compliance with the Standing Orders referred to the Standing Orders Committee on Thursday next.

Swansea Valley Gas Bill [H.L.]; Llanelly Gas Bill [H.L.]; Crystal Palace Company Bill [H.L.]; Rhymney Railway Bill [H.L.]; Taff Vale Railway Bill [H.L.]; Great Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [H.L.]; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill [H.L.]; Thames River Steamboat Service Act, 1904 (Amendment) Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, that the Lord Belhaven and Stenton be proposed to the House as a Member of the Select Committee on the said Bills in the place of the Earl of Graham (*D. Montrose*); read, and agreed to.

LONDON AND DISTRICT ELECTRICITY SUPPLY BILL [H.L.].

LONDON ELECTRIC SUPPLY BILL [H.L.].

LONDON (WESTMINSTER AND KENSINGTON) ELECTRIC SUPPLY COMPANIES BILL [H.L.].

*THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords, I beg to move, "That it is desirable that the London and District Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; the London Electric Supply Bill [H.L.]: and the London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies Bill [H.L.] be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament." In asking your Lordships to agree to the appointment of this Joint Committee, I trust you will forgive me if for a moment or two I remind you of the position of the question of the supply of electrical power to London. The story goes back a long way, but I shall only trouble your Lordships with the history of the matter from the year 1905. In that year one important Bill, called the Administrative County of London Bill, was introduced. That Bill was examined by two Committees, one a Committee of your Lordships' House presided over by the noble Earl, Lord Camperdown, and the other a Committee of the House of Commons, presided over by Lord Airedale, then Sir James Kitson. In 1906 the London County Council itself promoted a Bill, on the ground that the demand for electrical energy in London and certain surrounding districts comprised in the area of supply was rapidly increasing, that there was every reason to believe that the demand would continue to increase, and that in the near future the use of electrical energy would be far more general. There was also in that session a Bill promoted by the same parties, as in the previous session called the Administrative County Bill, and some dozen more. The Bill of the London County Council was referred to a Committee in the other House, and the Committee reported that in their opinion the preamble had not been proved and gave their reasons therefor. In 1907 the County Council again introduced a Bill, but before it was considered by either House of Parliament it was materially modified, great portions of it being withdrawn, and the Committee to whom it was referred finally decided that it ought to be rejected. The other Bill, the one promoted by the companies, remained until near the close of the session, when it was withdrawn. The position now is that there is no Bill promoted by the London County Council before Parliament, but there are three Bills the names of which appear on the Notice Paper—namely, the London and District Electricity Supply Bill, the London Electric Supply Bill, and the London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies Bill. The first of these is for the formation of an independent commercial company to supply electrical energy to London, the second is to form a joint committee of most of the existing electric supply companies in London for the purpose of supplying the whole of the area, and the third is for what I may call linking up a smaller number of companies in London and enabling them while maintaining their own installations and their own generating stations, to supply electricity in bulk to each other, and, of course, in detail to consumers. I think that the reasons which prompted the London County Council to promote their Bill in the year 1906 are even greater to-day than they were then. There can be no doubt whatever but that it is high time that a supply of electricity for power purposes should be given to consumers in London, and I venture even to go so far as to say that it is approaching a scandal that they should not be able to avail themselves of that supply from some source or other. It is for that reason, and in the hope that the matter may now be threshed out before what I venture to think is the most competent tribunal which Parliament can possibly appoint — namely, a Joint Committee of both Houses—that I ask your Lordships to send these Bills to such a Committee. I do not know, of course, what view will be taken of them. I know that strong views are held, on one hand, that the supply of electricity ought to be given by an ordinary commercial company, and, on the other hand, that it ought to be given by a municipality, either the smaller municipalities or the London County Council; but I certainly think the time has arrived when the whole matter ought to be most carefully considered. It may be that the Committee to which these Bills will be referred will decide that the third and the least ambitious of all the schemes—namely, the one which proposes to link up the existing companies, very much in the same way as the water companies in London were linked up very shortly before the Bill was introduced which enabled a public authority to acquire them—is the best; and, if so, that may prove to be the solution of the difficulty. But in any case I think that this is a matter which may very properly be referred to a Joint Committee, and in the hope that this question may be settled in this session of Parliament, I beg to move the Motion standing in my name.

Moved, That it is desirable that the London and District Electricity Supply Bill [H.L.]; the London Electric Supply Bill [H.L.]; and the London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies Bill [H.L.]; be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament.—(*The Earl of Onslow.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

PETITIONS.

SMALL LANDHOLDERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition for Amendment of; of the Central and Associated Chambers of Agriculture. Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Supplementary regulation for secondary schools in Wales (including Monmouthshire) 1907.

VIVISECTION (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Fourth Report, with appendix (minutes of evidence) October to December, 1907.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND).

Accounts of receipts and payments for the financial year from 1st April, 1906, to 31st March, 1907.

FERTILIZERS AND FEEDING STUFFS ACT, 1906.

Fertilizers and Feeding Stuffs Regulations No. 2, 1907, made by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION FOR IRELAND.

The American Gooseberry Mildew, and Black Currant Mite (Ireland) Order, 1908.

MILITIA ACT, 1882.

Returns of description of qualifications of deputy lieutenants lodged during 1907, as furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NEW BILL.

SUNDAY CLOSING (SHOPS) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to provide for the closing of shops and the prohibition of street trading on Sunday. Was presented by Lord Avebury; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Tuesday, the 17th instant. (No. 25.)

POISONS AND PHARMACY BILL [H.L.].

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

*THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Earl of CREWE): My Lords, in asking your Lordships to read this Bill a second time, I need only detain you a very few minutes. The subject is a familar one to your Lordships, because a very similar Bill was passed through this House in the session before last. Last year a similar Bill was introduced in another place, but I think it was only introduced and was not read a second time.

As regards the present Bill, I need only remind your Lordships that its first clause deals with some additions which are considered necessary to the schedule of poisons. The second clause, which is an important one from an agricultural and horticultural point of view, enables certain poisonous substances used for sheep dips and other purposes to be sold by dealers who are not chemists, where the need arises, owing to the absence of qualified sellers. The third clause is also an important, but not a controversial one. It provides that where a chemist carries on business at more than one shop there shall be a qualified chemist in charge of each place of business. The fourth clause deals with some amendments to the Pharmaceutical Society's examination, and the fifth clause has to do with the further safeguarding of the sale of certain poisonous substances in common use for household and other purposes.

But, my Lords, this Bill differs from the previous Bill in that it omits to touch on two subjects about which some controversy took place on the former occasion. There was some question whether or not the Bill should apply to Ireland. I do not propose to trouble your Lordships with the arguments *pro et con* on that subject, and I will state the reason in a moment. The other controversial point related to what should be the powers of limited companies trading as chemists as regards the titles which they could use—ought they to be allowed, or ought they not to be allowed, to describe themselves as chemists and druggists, and use similar titles of that kind. Considerable controversy arose on both those points and we have not included them in the Bill for this reason. There is a sharp demarcation of feeling upon both of them, exhibited, I think, even more strongly in another place than here. We therefore propose that this Bill should be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses, in order that they may take some further evidence, if they so desire, upon those two points, and make a recommendation upon them to Parliament. We think that time will certainly be saved by the adoption of that course, and I hope that the Bill will come back from the Joint Committee in sufficient time to enable those very valuable uncontroversial clauses to become part of the law of the land, with such additions on the two disputed points as Parliament may think fit to make after hearing the views of the Joint Committee.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

LORD ASHBOURNE: My Lords, the subject dealt with in this Bill is one of the greatest importance, and it involves considerations which require the most careful attention before legislation is passed. I therefore think the course suggested by the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council is a convenient one. It is possible that the matters to which the noble Earl referred in the earlier part of his remarks, though they may not be controversial, may still be open to criticism and difference of opinion, and therefore I assume that what will be referred to the Joint Committee will be the whole Bill.

THE EARL OF CREWE: Hear, hear.

LORD ASHBOURNE: And the Joint Committee, I understand, will be able to make such suggestions as they may think right in reference to the clauses in the Bill, and to new clauses which they may think it important should be introduced. The reading of the Bill indicates that, although the subject is susceptible of the clear and simple statement that has been made by the noble Earl, it is one upon which there may be certain misunderstanding. The very definition and ascertainment of what are poisons is a matter open to difference of opinion. The first clause sweeps away the schedule to the Pharmacy Act of 1868. That was in itself a long schedule in two parts, specifying the articles to be deemed poisons within the meaning of that Act. It is, however, to be repealed, and Clause 1 substitutes for it a very much longer schedule. The Act of 1868 when applied to Ireland in the year 1870 had a very substantial addition made to its schedule, and I have no doubt that at the present moment no one could off-hand, without being an expert, say exactly which schedule in reference to both countries could be regarded as at all perfect. The power of addition must always be given in such legislation. You can never stereotype a schedule of poisons at any particular moment; the growth of scientific knowledge may require additions, and I have no doubt that the schedule to the Act of 1868 has been added to by Orders just as the schedule to the Act of 1870 relating to Ireland has been added to by Orders issued by the proper authority there. It is obviously desirable to have a schedule which is intelligible. But in this Bill there are two or three methods of treatment. That may be necessary in view of the difficulty and complexity of the subject. The schedule to this Bill is divided into two parts. In reference to the first part, any chemist selling the poison must know the purchaser or have the purchaser introduced to him; but the remainder of the schedule is not open to that provision. Clause 5 enables regulations to be made in order to safeguard the sale and distribution of certain poisons commonly employed for domestic and industrial purposes, and the clause contains a brand new definition. Why these poisons are not left to be dealt with by existing schedules I do not know, but I am quite sure there is some valid reason worthy of attention. In regard to Clause 2, to which the noble Earl rightly directed attention, I think there is considerable ambiguity as to the class of poisonous substances introduced. They are not called poisons but poisonous substances, and I think it is right to treat them differently, as they are intended for agricultural purposes. But they should be marked. If a person is permitted to sell them he should be bound to put some mark to indicate that, though not exactly poisons, they are poisonous substances. It will be found, on reference to the Bill, that there is this restriction in regard to the sale of poisonous substances for the purpose of sheep dips. That is intelligible. But should not similar cautionary measures be applied to the other poisonous substances sold for agricultural purposes? That is, however, a matter of detail. I only mention it now to indicate the necessity of enabling purchasers to see that they are dealing with something which may be detrimental to health and may kill. That is a matter which should not be lost sight of in examining this Bill. The noble Earl mentioned—and I do not dissent from what he said—that it is wise and reasonable to enable local authorities to grant licences for the sale of sheep dips, weed killers, and other poisonous substances for use in connection with agriculture and horticulture in places where the reasonable requirements of the public are not now met. I think it is very desirable, indeed, that some change in this respect should be made. I have known hard cases in Ireland where highly respectable country shopkeepers have innocently sold poisonous matters for agricultural purposes, to discover afterwards that they had by so doing violated the law. Therefore I think it is desirable that this should be remedied. Towards the end of his remarks the noble Earl referred to two controversial matters, one of which affected Ireland. The question of Irish legislation cannot be left out of view here. We are fairly intelligent people in Ireland, and very advanced in our civilisation, but very few of us wish to be poisoned, and therefore we should like to see the subject of poisons dealt with in some clear and intelligible way; and if there is to be an improvement in the law in England we should like to have it extended to Ireland. I do not press the case to any extreme point. I am quite ready to recognise that there may possibly be some difference of opinion; but, if it is not found convenient or desirable to apply the whole Bill, I can see no possible objection to saying that the same schedule of poisons which science has found to be necessary for England should be extended to Ireland. We are on what should be common ground in this matter, and I do not see why there should be any difficulty in applying the revised schedule to Ireland. I am glad the Bill is to be considered by a Joint Committee, and I have no doubt that the matters to which I have referred, and other points, will receive full consideration.

On Question, Bill read 2^a.

THE EARL OF CREWE: My Lords, I now beg to move, "That it is desirable that the Poisons and Pharmacy Bill be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament."

Moved, "That it is desirable that the Poisons and Pharmacy Bill be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament."—(*The Earl of Crewe.*)

On Question, Motion agreed to.

ENGINEER MILITIA.

LORD RAGLAN: My Lords, I rise to ask the Under-Secretary of State for War some Questions with regard to the Engineer Militia of which I have given him private notice. I have spent a considerable amount of time in trying to get answers to most of these Questions, and I trust that to-day the noble Earl, after the long notice I have given him, will be able to supply definite answers to at least a certain number of them. My first Question is: Upon whom will rest the responsibility of obtaining officers for the new Special Reserve? Those of your Lordships who have been connected with the Militia, whether as lords-lieutenant or as regimental officers, will know what extreme difficulty there has been for many years, more especially of late years, in obtaining officers. It has come home particularly to myself, because I have the honour to command a Militia regiment of which the establishment of officers is larger than that of any other Militia unit in the United Kingdom. I know from my own experience that hitherto a very considerable amount of work has devolved on commanding officers of units in trying to find officers to fill vacancies. The War Office has never lifted a finger to assist us, and the matter has been left primarily to the lords-lieutenant; but practically the responsibility of obtaining officers has fallen entirely on the commanding officers of units. The War Office, I am informed, now propose to take the work on itself, but I hope not in the same light-hearted way in which it has taken up other duties connected with the changes introduced by the present Secretary of State for War, because the matter is an exceedingly difficult one, and upon the success in obtaining officers will largely, if not entirely, depend the success of the right hon. Gentleman's scheme.

My next Question is—Will a recruit officer do the six months drill with his unit and the remaining six months with the Regular Forces, or will he only do sixty-three days with his unit? The latest Order I have received is that recruit officers are only to do sixty-three days with their unit. Therefore, I presume that the remainder of the training will be done with units of the Regular Army or at the depots. I do not find any fault with the idea of sending an officer to do a course with the Regular Army after he has learnt a certain amount, but I do view with suspicion the idea that he can be trained from the very first with a unit other than his own. I think every one of your Lordships who has any knowledge of military matters will know that a young officer attached to a strange unit runs the risk of not learning very much, and I therefore trust that the noble Earl will be able to inform us that six months recruit drill at least will be done with the officer's own unit.

Then I should like to ask the noble Earl what officers will be called up for duty during the six months recruit drill in the Engineers. It would be interesting to know whether the same proportion of officers will be allowed to come up for six months, as have been allowed to come up in the past for sixty-three days or less. Another important question is that of travelling expenses. The tradition that the Militia consisted of county gentlemen who officered the regiments of their own counties has endured to this extent, that travelling expenses are allowed within the boundary of the county only; but as Parliament has successfully legislated the country gentleman out of existence, many regiments are officered by gentlemen not residing in the county, who have expensive journeys to and from training. In the past the Militia was trained for at least four weeks in the year, and in certain cases the Artillery, and in all cases the Engineers, trained for six weeks; but in future no Militia regiment, as far as I can understand, will be trained for more than three weeks, and Engineers for only fifteen days. It does seem to me that it would be a great hardship if officers who were only to be out for fifteen days were required to pay their own travelling expenses. I therefore ask whether Special Reserve officers in future will receive travelling expenses to and from their homes: (*a*) For annual training; (*b*) if called up for duty at depots, etc. I trust that the attention of the War Office has been directed to this and that some relief will be given in the desired direction. I remember pointing out to the War Office some years ago the injustice inflicted upon officers in this matter, and the answer I received was that if the expenses were paid it would involve an exceedingly large grant. My comment upon that is that it shows what a very large sum of money the country is extracting from officers who serve in the Militia.

My next Question is with regard to Regular officers. What establishment of Regular officers will be given to units of the Special Reserve Royal Engineers, and will they be Royal Engineer officers? At the present moment it is laid down that except the adjutant and the quartermaster, the officers of those particular units will consist entirely of Militia officers. I should be glad to have the noble Earl's assurance that that is not going to be altered. Again, I think it would be a gracious act on the part of the War Office if it could see its way to confer on quartermasters attached to the Special Service section the honorary rank of captain in the Army, as is at present done in the case of the adjutant. If it is important for the adjutant, I venture to think it is a great deal more important for the quartermaster. The quartermasters are a most deserving body of officers; no praise can be too high for their services, and the concession would make a considerable difference in their social position. Mr. Smith is a nobody, but Captain Smith is a somebody. The conferring of this honorary rank would cost the country nothing, but it would be very greatly appreciated by a large body of most deserving servants of the Crown.

Then I should like to call the noble Earl's attention to the question of the up-keep of the band and the mess. It must be evident that with the reduction of the period of training the band and mess will cost more in proportion than with the longer period. I have gone into the figures, and I find that the band of my regiment costs us £300 a year. With the reduced period the cost will be £180, but this the officers will have to meet out of fifteen days pay instead of £300 out of eight weeks pay. I also desire information as to the messing arrangements for the Regular officers attached to the Special Service unit. In future we are told that a certain number of Regular officers will form integral parts of these units. These Regular officers will be the only permanent part of the units except for three weeks in the year. Are those officers to have the use of the band, and of the whole of the messing property, for which they will have paid nothing, and which belong to the Militia officers? If not, what arrangements will be made in regard to the band and the mess? If they are to be handed over to the Regular officers, all I can say is that it strikes me as an exceedingly unfair arrangement. I hope these matters have been considered, and that justice will be meted out.

I now come to perhaps the most difficult question with regard to a force raised and trained as the Militia is, namely, the question of non-commissioned officers. I should like to ask what number of Special Reserve non-commissioned officers will be allowed to come up for recruit drill. In the past I have been allowed in my regiment to call up for duty with the recruits during the sixty-three days preliminary drill one-half of the non-commissioned officers. Now that the preliminary drill is to be extended to six months I should be glad to know if the same proportion of non-commissioned officers will be allowed up as before. It is a matter of great importance to get these non-commissioned officers up at this time, because the opportunity afforded at the preliminary drill is the only one we have of instructing them. I look upon the training which they get then as most valuable, the more so as the annual training follows immediately, and the non-commissioned officers fall into their places with a much better knowledge of their duties than if they had not attended the preliminary drill. It is most important that these non-commissioned officers should be encouraged to go through the various courses. I should like to know if it is proposed still to allow them to go through the railway course, the Engineer course at Chatham, and so forth, and to encourage them to do so by means of special bounties on passing the examinations.

Then I should like to ask, will separation allowances be granted to non-commissioned officers when called up for recruit drill or when doing courses? Again, will the War Office reconsider the question of allowing old soldiers to enlist in the Special Reserve as at present? The age limit of thirty will stop them. The old soldiers who join the Militia are an excellent and valuable body of men; they provide a large proportion of the non-commissioned officers, and their knowledge of military duties is of inestimable value. I should look upon it as a great misfortune if these men were prevented from joining the Special Reserve, as would be the case if the age limit remained at thirty. Then I should like to ask whether, if a retired Regular non-commissioned officer enlists in the Special Reserve, he will receive an additional bounty as at present. I trust that the additional bounty is to be continued. I believe that at the present moment something like a third of the Militia are over thirty years of age, and I should like to ask the noble Earl how many men over the age of thirty were in the Militia at the date of the last annual return, and how the loss of these valuable men will be made good.

There are other points with regard to non-commissioned officers. As the training will now be so short and the non-commissioned officers more important than ever, will an attempt be made to induce retired non-commissioned officers of the Royal Engineers to enlist in the Special Reserve units? If these units are to go straight on active service as they are in peace time it is essential that their officers and non-commissioned officers should be the very best it is possible to obtain, and I think if a few pounds a year bounty and a little judicious advertising of the advantages of the Special Reserve section would induce retired sergeants or corporals of the Royal Engineers to join the Special Service section, it would be a great advantage. At the present moment the non-commissioned officers are promoted from the ranks of the Militia on the recommendation of their company officers. A company officer in the future will see very little of his company. In the fifteen days he will hardly get to know the men by name, let alone their characters and qualifications. Therefore, I should like to ask how promotion to non-commissioned officer rank is to take place, and who will recommend for it. I am afraid these units will become what used to be called adjutant's regiments, and that the recommendation for promotion to non-commissioned officer rank will rest with the adjutant.

As to training, I should like to ask how the fifteen days annual training in engineer units will be allocated, and what degree of efficiency for war will be expected from them. I heard with great astonishment the statement by the noble Earl the other day that it was not necessary that these men should be trained in musketry, because they were only going to be used in future in siege works and on railways. I can assure the noble Earl that I had a company in South Africa, working on the railway, which was fired at every day for two months, and in my opinion to send men ignorant of musketry on advanced siege and railway works would be little short of murder. Are the Royal Engineers in future to be considered a non-combatant corps? Next, I would ask the noble Earl to state the average number of recruits enlisted for the Militia from 15th January to 15th February for the last ten years. The noble Earl took credit to the War Office that 2,531 men had enlisted in the Special Service section since 15th January. That is quite possible, but I have seen a great many Militia commanding officers who have been to the depots to see the recruits, and there is not one single man yet enlisted in the Special Service section who intends to remain in it; they all intend to go on to the Army. These men have probably joined the Special Service section to feed up to the required standard for the Line. In the future, I do not think any men will enlist direct into the Army; they will do three months at the depot, receive the bounty of 30s., and then go on to the Regular Army.

Then I have a question or two with regard to the Engineers. Why was the bridging battalion abolished? Who is to transport the material in future, and who are to make bridges if required in war? It is curious that in this country we are always copying somebody else, and I believe the bridging battalion was abolished, primarily, of course, for economy, but, secondly, because the Japanese in the war in Manchuria had no bridging battalion. As a matter of fact, the engineer work of the Japanese during the war in Manchuria was remarkably badly done, and since the war the Japanese have, I believe, devoted themselves to largely increasing the numbers of their engineers. We, on the other hand, are going to the opposite extreme. We have abolished our bridging battalion, and also reduced many other companies of Royal Engineers. In future, I understand, the pontoons will have to be dragged about by the Army Service Corps. If that is the case, it is any odds against the pontoons ever leaving the base. And, even if the pontoons could be got to the river, it is long odds against any persons being on the spot who know how to construct bridges. Those who saw the pontoon brigade bridge the Tugela, admit that it was one of the most beautiful pieces of work they ever saw, and it must obviously be a most dangerous thing to entrust this work, which is often done under fire, to partially instructed men.

The other day the noble Earl the Under-Secretary stated that I was incorrect in saying that the Submarine Miners had been disbanded. They had, said the noble Earl, been transferred to the Admiralty. Well, either the War Office does not know what it has done, which is quite possible, or else it is unable to explain to the noble Earl what it has done. The Submarine Miners were disbanded straight away, and the men were told, "Good morning; we don't want you any more." This action has produced an exceedingly bad effect on recruiting generally in those districts where the Submarine Mining Section of

Lord Raglan.

the Militia existed. If I am wrong, perhaps the noble Earl can tell me how many of the men of the late Submarine Mining Engineers have been enlisted by the Admiralty for similar duties. Then I would ask what is to happen to the officers of these disbanded units? And, finally, have any steps been taken by the Admiralty to defend any of our ports by mine fields, search-lights, or similar methods?

When the Submarine Miners were abolished the duties of defending the ports were handed over to the Admiralty. The mines, I believe, have been sold, and at the present moment I understand that no defences of a similar character exist. I believe it to be quite a matter for discussion whether the system of defending the ports by mine fields is a right or wrong one, but, whether it was efficient or not, it gave a sense of security to the people residing in those particular ports; and I am firmly of opinion that when there is again a war scare, which, naturally, in the course of events will come, there will be a clamour for the restoration of those means of defence. If not, in the event of war the Fleet will be tied to the coast in order to give that appearance of defence which the people of this country will demand. I trust that, even if these units have been disbanded, the plant, if I may so call it, has not been sold, and that the mines and electric cables are still in existence and are being preserved from deterioration by careful storage.

Many of these are very important points. I cannot think that the War Office sufficiently consider the fact that you cannot pull up by the roots an old institution, which has lasted many hundred years, without affecting men of all classes. This policy has been destructive of the efficiency of the Militia in the past; it will exercise a bad influence on the Special Service section in the future; and I do most earnestly entreat the War Office, if it cannot answer the whole of these Questions now, to make up its mind as soon as possible to let the force know what is to happen.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of PORTSMOUTH): My Lords, I have no personal grievance against my noble friend, because he gave me private notice of the whole of his Questions; but I do think the fact that the Questions are not on the Paper places your Lordships in some difficulty. I therefore rather regret that my noble friend, when I informed him at the beginning of the week that I would be ready to answer his Questions, did not put them on the Notice Paper.

LORD RAGLAN: I was actuated by a consideration for the printing bill.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: My noble friend asks me, in his first Question, upon whom will rest the responsibility of obtaining officers for the new Special Reserve. In the first instance, we have every hope that the existing Militia officers will accept the new conditions as far as they can, and that for the present at any rate they will form the backbone of the Special Reserve as far as officers are concerned. That they may do this on as large a scale as possible the Committee, under the Chairmanship of Sir W. Nicholson, to which my right hon. friend the Secretary of State referred at the recent gathering at the Militia Club, is being appointed. Secondly, as I indicated in a recent reply to Lord Hardinge, we hope to establish the "Officers Training Corps." An Army Order will shortly be issued on the subject. This corps will be specially designed to create a supply of officers for the Special Reserve. Its training, which will be under the immediate control of the Chief of the General Staff, will be devoted to fitting members of Universities and schools for such commissions.

In his second Question, the noble Lord asks whether a recruit officer will do the six months drill with his unit and the remaining six months with the Regular Forces. The question as to how an officer is to be trained during his first two years of service is still under consideration, as a great number of details have necessarily to be settled. Then my noble friend asks what officers will be called up for duty during the six months recruit drill in the Engineers? Subsequently he put to me a Question bearing on the same subject, namely, will Engineer units be allowed a sufficiency of old hands for the recruits training? I will answer Questions 3 and 17 together. Regulations will shortly be issued dealing with this matter; it is proposed that officers and old hands should be called up in much the same way as in the past under the Militia regulations.

The noble Lord, in his fourth Question asks me whether Special Reserve officers will in future receive travelling expenses, to and from their homes: (*a*) for annual training; (*b*) if called up for duty at depots, etc.? Our intention is, when officers are ordered up for military duty by a competent authority, that they should be given their travelling expenses not exceeding the cost of conveyance from and to their permanent residences. We hope shortly to publish regulations on these and similar points of detail. In reply to Question 5, in which the noble Lord asks what establishment of Regular officers will be given to units of the Special Reserve Royal Engineers and whether they will be Royal Engineer officers, I have to say that one adjutant and one quartermaster Regular Royal Engineer officers will be on the establishment of the Royal Monmouth group and on that of the Royal Anglesey group, which will be the only special reserve Engineers.

Then I come to a point on which the noble Lord laid considerable stress. He asked, can honorary rank of captain be given to quartermasters on appointment to units of the Special Reserve, as is now done in the case of adjutants of Auxiliary Forces and only lieutenants in the Army? In reply to that question I have to say that the grant of this honorary rank to quartermasters appointed to the Special Reserve will be, as in the past with the Militia, governed by Article 51 of the Royal Warrant, viz.:—

> "A quartermaster may be granted the honorary rank of lieutenant on appointment, of captain after ten years commissioned service on full pay, and major after fifteen years commissioned service on full pay."

Next I am asked what additional allowance will be given for the upkeep of the band? My answer is that the band allowance will not be increased at present. Then the noble Lord desires to know what further allowance will be given for the upkeep of (*a*) officers' mess; (*b*) non-commissioned officers' mess? No allowance is given even now for the upkeep of officers' and non-commissioned officers' messes. A daily mess allowance of 4s. will be given to each individual officer, and I may point out that this is already largely in excess of that given to the Regular officer.

LORD RAGLAN: It is the same as the Militia get now.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: Then I am asked what number of Special Reserve non-commissioned officers will be allowed to come up for recruit drill? It is not anticipated that it will be necessary in the normal to call up any Special Reserve non-commissioned officers. If and when this is found to be necessary, special instructions will be issued. In his ninth Question the noble Lord asks whether non-commissioned officers will be encouraged to go through the various courses and receive a bounty for doing them as now. The training authorities are now considering what courses of instruction will be necessary under the new arrangements. It is anticipated that they will be much the same as at present. But in any event bounties will be given as now for any courses deemed necessary by the responsible authorities.

Will separation allowance be granted to non-commissioned officers when called up for recruit drill or when doing courses, is the next question? Separation allowance will be given to non-commissioned officers when up for annual training or when attending authorised courses of instruction. They will not be given the allowance when drilling recruits, as this attendance is voluntary—*see* Paragraphs 185 and 188 Militia Regulations. Then the noble Lord asks, will the War Office re-consider the question of allowing old soldiers to enlist in the Special Reserve, as the age limit of thirty will stop them? This matter has been very fully considered, and I am unable to give my noble friend any hope that the age limit for enlistment will be extended. Then the noble Lord asks whether, if a retired regular non-commissioned officer enlists in the Special Reserve, he will receive an additional bounty as at present? Yes, an additional bounty of £3—*see* Appendix 10 of the Special Army Order of 23rd December.

I am next asked how many men over the age of thirty were in the Militia at the date of the last annual return, and how will the loss of these valuable men be made good. The total number of men (all arms) of thirty and upwards on 1st October, 1907, was 20,629. As my noble friend has already asked this question in connection with some Militia Infantry statistics which I gave, in a recent debate, the Infantry figures corresponding to the figures I then gave would be those in the last published annual return, *i.e.*, the strength on 1st October, 1906. According to the return, the number would be 14,246. As to how the loss of these men will be made good, I may point out that our proposals do not necessarily imply their immediate loss. It is laid down in the Army Order of 23rd December that existing Militiamen who are under forty-eight may transfer to the Special Reserve, and there are no grounds for believing that men over thirty will not remain by re-engaging in the Special Reserve as they have hitherto done in the Militia.

LORD RAGLAN: But no man over thirty will be able to enlist in future.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: Yes.

LORD RAGLAN: You must lose them all eventually.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: My noble friend's fourteenth Question reads as follows: As the training will now be so short and the non-commissioned officers more important than ever, will an attempt be made to induce retired non-commissioned officers of the Royal Engineers to enlist in the Special Reserve units? It is not proposed to offer any special inducements to retired non-commissioned officers of the Royal Engineers to enlist, beyond those offered in Appendix 10 of the Army Order of 23rd December, to non-commissioned officers of the Artillery, Engineers and Infantry alike. Next, the noble Lord puts this Question: Seeing the training will be so short that the company officers will hardly see, and certainly will not know, their men, how will promotion to non-commissioned officer rank be arranged, and who will recommend for it? The system which at present obtains in the Militia will be followed. We do not anticipate that the somewhat shorter period of annual training necessitates any change.

Then the noble Lord asks how the fifteen days annual training in Engineer units will be allocated, and what degree of efficiency for war will be expected from them? The fifteen days annual training of the Royal Engineer Special Reserve units will be primarily devoted to instructing them as a unit in the technical duties which they will be required to perform in war, and a syllabus of training is being drawn up. The degree of efficiency will depend on the class of men who enlist and the efforts of the officers of the corps concerned, but must, necessarily, be limited by the time available for training. If expert men enlist as Special Reservists, these companies may attain a considerable degree of efficiency. My noble friend's seventeenth Question—namely, Will Engineer units be allowed a sufficiency of old hands for the recruits training?—I have already answered in dealing with his third Question. Next I am asked, If the trained men do no musketry, how can they be expected to work under fire, certainly in siege work, and probably in railway work (as occurred continually in the South African War) practically unarmed? I have to inform my noble friend that the question as to whether the trained Royal Engineer Special Reservist is to be required to fire a course of musketry has not yet been finally decided. In reply to the next Question as to whether the Royal Engineers will, in future, be a non-combatant corps, I have to say that there is no such intention in the mind of the Army Council.

I am next asked to give the average number of recruits enlisted for the Militia from January 15th to February 15th for the last ten years. My noble friend, on a moment's reflection, will, I hope, understand that, while I can give the figures for the corresponding month in each of the ten years, it is impossible to give them for the exact dates he has indicated. The only figures available are for four weeks from Saturday to Saturday for the nearest period to the dates asked. He will understand this when I explain that the returns we get are weekly, not daily. The average number of Militia Recruits on this basis —viz., for the nearest period of four weeks — is 3,508 per annum. If he wishes, I shall be glad to let him have the numbers for each of the ten years. In taking this average figure, however, it must not be forgotten that it includes the period of the South African war, when all such statistics were obviously affected in various ways.

The noble Lord then refers to the bridging battalion. He asked, why was the bridging battalion abolished? Who is to transport the material in future, and who are to make bridges if required in war? The Engineer duties of bridging can be taught to the same individuals to whom those of (*a*) field fortification and demolition; (*b*) repair of roads; and (*c*) water supply and encampment will be taught. Under the old Army corps organisation the field companies performed all these duties, although the bridging battalion existed in addition. All bridging work could, therefore, be perfectly well carried out by the field companies, so long as a park of bridging material was kept at some convenient point ready to send up when required. On the introduction of the divisional organisation last year the two field companies allotted to each division were given in a somewhat larger *personnel*, and increased amount of bridging material to make them independent of the new bridging trains when only small rivers were in question. Two of these new bridging trains form part of Army troops attached to six divisions of the expeditionary force, each transporting the material for 200 yards of medium bridge. These will be sent forward when large rivers have to be crossed, and the actual bridging work will be carried out by the field companies with divisions.

LORD RAGLAN: Who will transport the material? Will they have their own drivers?

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: It will depend on the conditions, on whether large or small rivers will have to be crossed. Then the noble Lord asks, Is the War Office aware that other countries are increasing the number of their Engineers (especially Japan) while we have largely reduced the Royal Engineers, and the Militia Engineers are to be reduced by twenty-two officers and 500 men? The War Office is aware of changes in Engineer organisation in foreign armies. Though the establishments of our new Royal Engineer units show a reduction of strength on the whole, the proportion of Engineers to the other arms in the expeditionary force shows an increase on our former organisation. The reduction arises from the policy of handing over submarine mining to the Navy, and also to a policy based on our sea supremacy, which allows us to make a reduction in our fortress companies. In pursuance of the above policies there will be a reduction of the Militia Engineers, due to the fact that we do not require Special Reservists either for the mobilisation of Engineer units in the Expeditionary Force or to meet the wastage of war. The old Militia field and fortress companies, therefore, are not required, but new railway units and siege companies are being organised from the old Militia units.

The remaining Questions put to me by the noble Lord are—(23) How many of the men of the late Submarine Mining Engineers have been enlisted by the Admiralty for similar duties? (24) What is to happen to the officers of these disbanded units? and (25) Have any steps been taken by the Admiralty to defend any of our ports by mine fields, search-light or similar methods? These questions put by my noble friend afford me an opportunity of clearing up a misapprehension regarding the service of Submarine Mining Engineers. What I meant to convey on a recent occasion when this question was before your Lordships was that the care of defended ports, which was formerly, to the extent of submarine mining, etc., thrown upon the Army, is now altogether assigned to the Navy. Submarine mining, therefore, ceased to be one of the duties of the Regular Engineers, and, consequently, of the Militia Engineers. This fact I considered to be a likely cause why recruiting for Militia Engineers in a seafaring place like Swansea should fall off. As regards the steps taken by the Admiralty to defend our ports by submarine mining or other means, I have no doubt adequate measures have been taken, but what they precisely are would be rather a question for my noble friend who represents the Admiralty.

Lord RAGLAN: The noble Earl has not answered the Question as to what is to happen to officers of disbanded units of Submarine Miners.

The Earl of PORTSMOUTH: That is a matter the War Office are still considering.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Committee have nominated the following Lords to serve on the Standing Committee—

L. Archbp. of Canterbury.
L. Chancellor.
L. Archbp. of York.

E. Crewe. (*L. President.*)

M. Ripon. (*L. Privy Seal.*)

D. Bedford.
D. Northumberland.
M. Winchester.
M. Lansdowne.
M. Salisbury.
M. Bath.

E. Derby.
E. Denbigh.
E. Chesterfield.
E. Jersey.
E. Lauderdale.
E. Carnwath.
E. Waldegrave.
E. Portsmouth.
E. Clarendon.
E. Malmesbury.
E. Onslow.
E. Chichester.
E. Beauchamp.
E. Stradbroke.
E. Vane. (*M. Londonderry.*)
E. Cawdor.
E. Camperdown.
E. Lichfield.

E. Yarborough.
E. Russell.
E. Dartrey.
E. Feversham.
E. Lytton.
E. Ancaster.
E. Carrington.
E. Halsbury.
E. Cromer.
E. Plymouth.

V. Falkland.
V. Hutchinson. (*E. Donoughmore.*)
V. Cross.
V. Knutsford.
V. Llandaff.
V. Ridley.
V. Churchill.
V. Milner.
V. Selby.
V. St. Aldwyn.

L. Bp. London.
L. Bp. Hereford.
L. Bp. Southwark.
L. Hastings.
L. Clinton.
L. Zouche of Haryngworth.
L. Clifford of Chudleigh.
L. Barnard.
L. Saltoun.
L. Balfour.
L. Kenyon
L. Stewart of Garlies. (*E. Galloway.*)

L. Brodrick. (*V. Midleton.*)
L. Ribblesdale.
L. Granard. (*E. Granard.*)
L. Colchester.
L. Ranfurly. (*E. Ranfurly.*)
L. Rosebery. (*E. Rosebery.*)
L. Kilmarnock. (*E. Errol.*)
L. Poltimore.
L. Denman.
L. Oranmore and Browne.
L. Kintore. (*E. Kintore.*)
L. Elgin. (*E. Elgin and Kincardine.*)
L. Belper.
L. Brougham and Vaux.
L. Kinnaird.
L. Lawrence.
L. Castletown.
L. Wolverton.
L. Sandhurst.
L. Lamington.

L. Ampthill.
L. Reay.
L. Tweedmouth.
L. Monk Bretton.
L. Herries.
L. Monkswell.
L. Ashbourne.
L. Montagu of Beaulieu.
L. Macnaghten.
L. Newton.
L. Stanmore.
L. Burghclere.
L. James.
L. Heneage.
L. Ludlow.
L. Newlands.
L. Curzon.
L. Avebury.
L. Alverstone.
L. Shuttleworth.
L. Allerton.
L. Sanderson.
L. Desborough.
L. Weardale.
L. Haversham.
L. Courtney of Penwith.
L. Airedale.
L. Collins.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

COMMITTEE OF SELECTION FOR THE STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from, That the Committee have nominated the following Lords to serve as Chairman of the Standing Committee:—

E. Crewe. (*L. President.*)
E. Onslow.
E. Camperdown.
V. Cross.

V. St. Aldwyn.
L. Balfour.
L. Burghclere.

Read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING COMMITTEE.

Report from the Committee of Chairmen of the Standing Committee, That they have appointed the Viscount Cross Chairman of the Standing Committee; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Six o'clock, till Tomorrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 5th March, 1908.

The House met at quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 62 COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, that, in the case of the following Bills, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 62 has been complied with, viz.:—London Port and Docks Bill; Great Eastern Railway (Steamboats) Bill.

Ordered, That the Bills be read a second time.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDER 67 NOT COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Order 67 has not been complied with, viz.:—Sligo and Arigna Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Camborne Water Bill,—"to confer further powers on the Camborne Water Company for the raising of capital; and for other purposes," presented, and read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP C).

Mr. WHITBREAD reported from the Committee on Group C of Private Bills: That Mr. Joyce, one of the members of the said Committee, was not present during the sitting of the Committee this day.

Report to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP C).

Mr. WHITBREAD reported from the Committee on Group C of Private Bills: That the parties promoting the Swinton and Mexbrough Gas Bill had stated that the evidence of William Brock Keen, of 23, Queen Victoria Street, in the city of London, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said William Brock Keen do attend the said Committee on Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the Clock.

Ordered, That William Brock Keen do attend the Committee on Group C of Private Bills on Monday next, at half-past Eleven of the Clock.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have come to the following Resolution, viz., That it is desirable that the Poisons and Pharmacy Bill be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament.

That they have come to the following Resolution, viz., That it is desirable that the London and District Electricity Supply Bill, London Electric Supply Bill, and London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies Bill be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament.

LIVERPOOL CORPORATION (STREETS AND BUILDINGS) BILL.

MR. CORRIE GRANT (Warwickshire, Rugby) in moving that it be an instruction to the Committee of Selection to refer, if they think fit, the Liverpool Corporation (Streets and Buildings) Bill to the Police and Sanitary Committee, said the Bill was one of the nature usually dealt with by the Police and Sanitary Committee, but by a flaw in the Order it was technically excluded from it. Hence his Motion which he hoped the House would agree to.

MR. LAYLAND-BARRATT (Devonshire, Torquay) seconded.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an instruction to the Committee of Selection to refer, if they think fit, the Liverpool Corporation (Streets and Buildings) Bill to the Police and Sanitary Committee."—*(Mr. Corrie Grant.)*

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby) asked if this course was likely to delay the passage of the Bill. If he had an assurance that it would involve no serious delay he would not oppose the Motion.

MR. CORRIE GRANT said that hitherto the Police and Sanitary Committee had got through its work at a reasonable period of the session, and would, no doubt, deal with this Bill without delay when it came before them. But the date of its being before them did not depend on the Committee.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: Under these circumstances I do not object to the Motion.

Question put, and agreed to.

Ordered accordingly.

PETITIONS.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (IRELAND) BILL.

Petition from Newry, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation; From Aspley Guise, Edmonton, Fishponds, Great Wakering, Pangbourne, Runcorn, and Welburn; to lie upon the Table.

MORAY FIRTH (ILLEGAL TRAWLING).

Petition from Burghead, for prevention; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour; From Bristol; Edmonton; Ferry Hill Station; Leasingthorne; North Shields (three); and Paddington. To lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from Bolton, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MILITIA ACT, 1882 (DEPUTY LIEUTENANTS, IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return of descriptions of qualifications of Deputy-Lieutenants lodged during 1907, as furnished to the Chief Secretary for Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND) ACCOUNT.

Copy presented, of Account of Receipts into, and Payments out of, the Local Taxation (Ireland) Account, under The Probate Duties (Scotland and Ireland) Act, 1888, The Customs and Inland Revenue Act, 1890, The Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act, 1890, The Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1891, The Finance Act, 1894, The Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, and The Local Government (Ireland) Act 1902, for the year ending 31st March 1907 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS ACT, 1906.

Copy presented, of Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Regulations, No 2, 1907, made by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND TECHNICAL INSTRUCTION FOR IRELAND.

Copy presented, of the American Gooseberry Mildew and Black Currant Mite (Ireland) Order, 1908 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

EAST INDIA (TRADE).

Copy presented, of Tables relating to the Trade of British India with British Possessions and Foreign Countries for the five years 1902–3 to 1906–7 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of List of Certified Schools for Blind, Deaf, Defective, and Epileptic Children in England and Wales on the 1st August 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (MONEY ORDERS).

Copy presented, of the Money Order Amendment (No. 2) Regulations, 1908, dated 7th February 1908 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Galmoystown Lands.

MR. PATRICK WHITE (Meath, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received an application from Luke Caffrey, Diamor, Crossakeel, for an economic holding on the lands of Galmoystown; and if it will receive favourable consideration.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) An application from Luke Caffrey for a parcel of land on the Kearney estate, county Meath, was received by the Estates Commissioners on the 14th ultimo, but the applicant is not among the persons whom the Commissioners have selected as most suitable for the allotment of untenanted land on the estate in question.

Trent Trade and the Railway Conference.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will consider the advisability of asking for a representative of the fruit trade to attend the proposed railway conference for the purpose of making known from a practical point of view their difficulties and the conditions involved in the subjects to be discussed.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The representation of traders and agriculturists on the sub-committees of the railway conference is now under consideration, and I cannot at present make any statement thereon.

Potato Trade and the Railway Conference.

MR. W. F. D. SMITH (Strand, Westminster): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has received from the Fruit and Potato Trades Association a request for representation on the Railway Conference; and whether he can state if a representative of those trades will be asked to attend the Conference.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The association referred to, as well as a large number of other bodies, has asked to be represented on the Conference. The question of the representation of traders and agriculturists on the various sub-committees is at present under consideration.

Free Railway Passes for Legislators.

MR. PATRICK WHITE: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will suggest to railway companies in Great Britain and Ireland the advisability of extending to legislators, while attending at Westminster, the same facilities for returning to their homes at week ends as they now do to members of commercial travellers' organisations.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The granting of such facilities as those referred to by the hon. Member is a purely voluntary proceeding on the part of a railway company, and the Board of Trade do not think that they could usefully take action in the direction suggested.

Gambling in Futures.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that it is proposed by Congressman Hepburn to introduce legislation in the United States to prevent the evils arising from gambling in futures and options; and whether he will cause inquiries to be made with a view to take similar measures to co operate with the United States and other nations to safeguard legitimate speculations, investors and commerce generally.

(*Answered by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*) No, Sir. But, regard being had to the extreme difficulty of distinguishing for legislative purposes between illegitimate and legitimate commercial speculation, I am not of opinion that such inquiry as the hon. Member suggests would be productive of any useful result.

Trade Statistics.

MR. ERSKINE (Perthshire, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state the values of the imports and exports, merchandise only, of the United Kingdom from and to India, self-governing Colonies, other Colonial

Possessions, and foreign countries, respectively, for each of the years 1902 to 1907.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) The following statement gives the particulars asked for by my hon. friend :—

Statement showing the Value of the Imports and Exports of Merchandise into and from the United Kingdom in its trade with India, the Self-Governing Colonies, other British Possessions, and Foreign Countries, respectively, in each of the years from 1902 to 1907, inclusive, in millions of pounds sterling.

Year.	British India.	Self-Governing Colonies.	Other British Possessions.	Total British Possessions.	Foreign Countries.	Total.
	Million pounds.	Million pounds.	Million pounds.	Million pounds.	Million pounds.	Million pounds.
			(*a*) Total imports therefrom.			
1902	28·7	59·9	18·3	106·9	421·5	528·4
1903	32·3	63·6	17·8	113·7	428·9	542·6
1904	36·5	64·9	18·6	120·0	431·0	551·0
1905	36·1	72·1	19·7	127·9	437·1	565·0
1906	37·8	82·0	22·4	142·2	465·7	607·9
1907*	44·0	88·6	24·6	157·2	488·7	645·9
			(*b*) Exports of United Kingdom produce thereto.			
1902	32·7	60·4	16·0	109·1	174·3	283·4
1903	34·5	59·3	17·3	11·11	179·7	290·8
1904	40·6	52·3	19·0	111·9	188·8	300·7
1905	43·0	52.1	18·3	113·4	216·4	329·8
1906	45·2	57·1	19·0	121·3	254·3	375·6
1907*	52·1	64·0	21·3	137·4	288·8	426·2
			(*c*) Exports of Foreign and Colonial produce thereto.			
1902	0·8	6·2	1·5	8·5	57·3	65·8
1903	0·8	6·0	1·5	8·3	61·3	69·6
1904	0·9	6·3	1·6	8·8	61·5	70·3
1905	1·4	6·5	1·4	9·3	68·5	77·8
1906	1·2	6·5	1·6	9·3	75·8	85·1
1907*	1·2	7·2	1·7	10·1	81·9	92·0

* Provisional figures.

Post Office Sub-Engineers.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that in his recent circular applying the recommendations of the Hobhouse Committee the present officers of the sub-engineers' class are not specifically mentioned, it is his intention that the Committee's recommendation in respect to these officers, viz., that after three years sub-engineers' service, provided they are pronounced suitable and capable, they be promoted to second-class engineerships, is to be applied to existing sub-engineers.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I do not find that any recommendation was made by the Select Committee in respect of the present members of the sub-engineers' class. Paragraph 490 of the Report, which deals with the question of sub-engineers, applies only to sub-engineers recruited in the manner proposed. I may say, however, that existing sub-engineers will continue to be eligible, if they prove their fitness, for promotion to the class of second-class engineers.

Monaghan Post Office.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Postmaster-General what is the cause of the delay in the erection of the new post office at Monaghan on the Mill Street site, which the General Post Office Department decided on long since; if he is aware that the contract for the same was given by the Board of Works and accepted by a local man named Francis Duffy, plasterer and contractor; if the latter withdrew from the contract before the bond was signed; and if he will ascertain whether the Post Office Department will give the contract to the next lowest tender to the one mentioned, or advertise again.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The arrangements for the erection of the new post office at Monaghan are in the hands of the Board of Public Works in Dublin. I understand that difficulties occurred in regard to the contract originally placed by the Board; but that a contract has now been placed with another firm, and that building operations are about to be put in hand.

Clerks to Surveyors of Taxes.

MR. J. MACVEAGH: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has investigated the case of the clerks to the surveyors of taxes, in accordance with the promise given to the deputation of clerks received by him on 2nd May last; and if he can state when he will announce the result of his investigation.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The case of the officers referred to is receiving my careful consideration, and I hope to be able to announce my decision at an early date.

Non-Fatal Accidents in Factories.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what number or percentage of the 123,230 non-fatal accidents reported in 1907 were made the subject of special investigation by factory inspectors.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The information asked for by the hon. Member is not available, and could only be obtained by a laborious examination of the district records. I may explain, however, that all accidents due to power machinery and other special causes, about one-third of the total number, are investigated on the spot by the certifying surgeon. The surgeon reports to the inspector, who then decides whether a further inquiry on his part is necessary. A vast number of the reported accidents are of a trivial character, and even if an investigation of each were possible it could seldom, from the nature of most of them, result in any preventive measures being taken. Perhaps I may refer the hon. Member in this connection to the Report of the Departmental Committee on the Notification of Industrial Accidents which was issued in 1902 (Cd. 998).

Imprisonment of Anti-Vaccinationists.

MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): To ask the President of the Local Government Board how many persons have been received into local prisons for offences against the Vaccination Acts each year since 1873.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I beg leave to answer this Question. It is not possible to give this information exactly. From a Return laid before this House in June 1881 it appears that from 1st January 1868 to 31st July 1879, 138 persons were imprisoned for offences against the Vaccination Acts. From a similar Return published in 1890 the number imprisoned between 31st July 1879 and 8th August 1889 appears to have been 113. For further details reference should be made to these Returns: For the last eight years the figures were as follows:—

Year to 31st March,	1900	37
„	1901	44
„	1902	36
„	1903	56
„	1904	106
„	1905	80
„	1806	58
„	1907	9

Irish Office of Works Contracts.

Mr. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that the firm of Thomas R. Scott and Company, Dublin, have a contract for map-cases and library furniture for the Office of Public Works, Dublin, and that the contract is being carried out by boy labour; whether he is aware that the matter has been investigated by the officers of the Public Works Department, on a complaint lodged by the Dublin branch of the Furnishing Trades Association, and that the reply to such complaint was that the boys engaged on the contract were fully competent to execute the work given; whether he is aware that no other firm of cabinet-makers in Dublin would adopt such a system; and whether, having regard to this unfair competition affecting others firms as well as artisans, he will make representations to the Office of Public Works so that this and other contracts may be carried out under trade union conditions.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I am informed by the Board of Works that the contract referred to is being carried out by skilled men, who work at the cabinet-making machines. The firm, however, employs apprentices and no doubt this fact explains the hon. Member's statements. I understand, however, that the employment of apprentices is quite common in the trade, and that the hon. Member is mistaken in supposing that this firm stands alone in this respect. The boys, moreover, are only given the simpler kinds of work such as they are fully competent to execute and such as they must do if they are to learn their trade.

Scottish Statute Law Revision.

Mr. DUNDAS WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask the Lord Advocate whether in view of The Statute Law Revision (Scotland) Act, 1906, a revised edition of the ante-Union Statutes of Scotland is in preparation; and, if so, when it will probably be ready.

(*Answered by Mr. Thomas Shaw.*) I am informed by the Secretary to the Statute Law Committee than an edition of the Pre-Union Scots Statutes (Revised) is now in the press and will very shortly be published.

G.W. Railway and the Passenger Duty.

Mr. THORNE (West Ham, S.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Great Western Railway Company make separate returns, when claiming exemption from passenger duty, as to the amount of fares received for journeys on which they do not permit bicycles to accompany passengers as luggage, although an extra charge is paid.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The company makes a monthly return to the Board of Inland Revenue of the amount received for the conveyance of passengers. No return is made in respect of money received by the company for the carriage of bicycles.

Mr. THORNE: To ask the President of the Board of Trade, what the total amount of passenger duty paid by the Great Western Railway Company amounted to last year; and what the total amount of passenger duty amounted to in England and Wales, in Scotland, and in Ireland, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The Great Western Railway Company paid £51,033 17s. 8d. in respect of passenger duty for the last financial year. The total duty paid in England and Wales for the same period was £332,929 and in Scotland £23,713. The railway passenger duty does not extend to Ireland.

Passenger Duty Returns.

Mr. THORNE: To ask the President of the Board, what steps are taken to differentiate between receipts from passengers liable to a certificate of exemption from duty and those which do not comply with statutory requirements; and whether separate accounts are kept for season tickets and those issued for single and return journeys.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*). I am informed that the railway companies keep traffic books showing all the particulars required, to enable them to furnish returns to the Inland Revenue giving the extent of bookings liable to and exempt from passenger duty. Separate accounts are kept for season tickets where the issue is of any substantial amount, and also of the bookings for single and return journeys for each class.

Limited Partnerships Act 1907.

MR. MICKLEM (Hertfordshire, Watford): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state when the rules to be made under Section 6 (4) of The Limited Partnerships Act, 1907, which has been in force since the 1st of January last, will be issued.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The rules to be made under Section 6 (4) of The Limited Partnerships Act, 1907, are in course of preparation, and will be issued shortly.

Beri-beri.

MR. COOPER (Southwark, Bermondsey): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any scientific inquiry is being made by the Board into the cause of beri-beri; and if not, whether he will consider the advisability of making a grant either to the Royal Society or the School of Tropical Medicine, to be expended in experimental research to discover specific organism or toxin causing this disease.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The Board of Trade have been in communication with the Royal College of Physicians on the subject of beri-beri on board merchant ships, and the matter is now before a special committee of Fellows of the College. On receipt of the Committee's Report the Board of Trade will consider whether any and, if so, what further steps should be taken.

MR. COOPER: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, as deficiency of nitrogenous food, overcrowding, and defective sanitation are conditions which, if combined, have been found favourable to the development of beri-beri, he will consider the advisability, when directing inquiries into the deaths from this disease of Chinese or Indian lascars on British ships, that these conditions shall be reported upon as well as the adequacy and cost of the food supplied daily.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) Yes, Sir. The suggestion made in my hon. friend's Question shall be borne in mind.

Carlingford Petty Sessions Procedure.

MR. MOONEY (Newry): To ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether his attention has been called to a statement of Mr. Bull, resident magistrate, at the recent petty sessions court held at Carlingford, as to the anomaly existing whereby persons summoned under 34 Edw. 3, to show cause why they should not be bound over to keep the peace, are not entitled to call witnesses; whether he is aware that the late Attorney-General for Ireland prepared a Bill to remove this anomaly; and whether he will promote legislation to remove this admitted anomaly.

(*Answered by Mr. Cherry.*) My attention has been called to the statement referred to in the Question, and I quite agree that it is desirable to allow persons called upon to find sureties to keep the peace to examine witnesses on their own behalf. A Bill was introduced by the late Attorney-General for Ireland, now Lord Atkinson, in 1901 providing for this and other changes in the law on the subject, but it was opposed and failed to become law. The question of again introducing a Bill to allow such witnesses to be examined is engaging the attention of the Government.

Report of Local Authorities' Accounts.

SIR GEORGE FARDELL (Paddington, S.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has had sufficient time to consider the Report of the Departmental Committee appointed to inquire into the accounts of local authorities, dated 8th July, 1907; and, if so, whether he contemplates issuing regulations based on the recommendations of such committee, so as to ensure the preparation of accounts of all local authorities on sound and uniform principles, especially where statements of profit and loss are required.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns*) I have given consideration to the Report of the Committee referred to, and I hope to give effect to many of their recommendations. I propose, in the first instance, to deal with the accounts of rural district councils; and regulations with respect to these are in preparation.

British Sugar Refiners.

MR. MCARTHUR (Liverpool, Kirkdale): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether his attention has been called to the fact that, while British distillers, tobacco manufacturers, brewers, and other producers are compensated for the disturbance to their respective trades arising from the application of Excise regulations, British sugar refiners receive no such consideration, the Excise duty on refined sugar manufactured in the United Kingdom being the same as the Customs duty on the same class of sugar imported from foreign countries; and whether he will consider the desirability of granting a similar discrimination to that first mentioned in the case of white sugar refined in British refineries.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The cases are not parallel. There is no Excise duty on sugar, and the obligation to refine in bond was not imposed for Revenue purposes, but under The Sugar Convention Act, 1903, to carry out the requirements of the Convention, which applies to all the Convention countries, and one object of which was to protect the British refiners against still severer forms of the competition of which they now complain. In the other cases the compensation is allowed for restrictions which are imposed for the protection of the Revenue.

Curriheen Evicted Tenant.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners have received an application from Mr. John Mulcahy, of Curriheen, an evicted tenant, for reinstatement on the estate of the Duke of Devonshire, Conna, County Cork; and what has been the result of the action of the Estates Commissioners in endeavouring to effect his restoration to the holding, which is untenanted and in the possession of the landlord.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have received an application from John Mulcahy, who was evicted from a holding on the estate of the Duke of Devonshire at present in the possession of the owner. The Commissioners are in communication with the owner with a view to the reinstatement of Mulcahy, who is considered to be a suitable person to work a holding.

Castlelyons Evicted Tenant.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state whether the Estates Commissioners have investigated the claim of Mr. Austin Rice for reinstatement in Coole farm, on the Peard estate, Castlelyons, County Cork, from which his father was evicted in 1886; whether the farm has since been taken by Mr. M'Causland, who sub-lets the land on the 11 months system; and if the Estates Commissioners can take any action to bring about the reinstatement of Mr. Rice in the holding.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that an application was received from Mrs. Margaret Rice for reinstatement on a holding on the Peard estate from which her late husband had been evicted. The Commissioners consider Mrs. Rice to be a suitable person to work a farm, and they are in communication with the present owners of the holding with a view to her reinstatement. An application was recently received from her son, Austin Rice, for reinstatement on the same holding, and the application was considered with that of Mrs. Rice.

Carrickfergus Dispute—Case of T. M'Kaig.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Estates Commissioners sent a letter to a tenant called M'Kaig, of the West Division, Carrickfergus, estate, on 23rd December last, threatening to exclude his holding from being sold unless he agreed to terms which he considered unjust; if he will order in this case a special inquiry or inspection in order to have a proper price fixed; and whether he will cause in due course a final notice to be issued of the exact date when purchase moneys are to be advanced and mentioning a stated time for the tenants to sign or otherwise.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that on 23rd December, 1907, a letter was sent to T. M'Kaig, informing him that the Commissioners were prepared to make an advance for the purchase of his holding in the event of his signing an agreement for purchase at such a price as would represent a reduction of 15 per cent. in his rent, and that in the event of his declining to accept those terms the Commissioners would exclude his holding from the present sale. If at any future time M'Kaig and the other outstanding tenants on the estate mentioned in the Question should come to terms and sign purchase agreements, the Commissioners will be prepared to treat their holdings as a separate estate; but the Commissioners are not prepared to delay the completion of the sale of the portion of the estate on which tenants have agreed to purchase. The Commissioners do not consider that a new inquiry or inspection is necessary. It is not the practice, nor do the Commissioners consider it necessary, to give notice to tenants who have not agreed to purchase of the exact date when advances will be made to the purchasing tenants.

Westbourne National Schools, Belfast.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the Commissioners of National Education, on the 27th August, 1899, removed the manager and church committee from the control of the Westbourne national schools at Belfast for forcing the teachers to make illegal payments; can he say on what grounds the same manager was afterwards promoted to be patron and the most prominent member of the dismissed committee to be manager of these schools; what steps, if any, were then taken to protect the teachers from illegal exactions; if he can state on what grounds the patron recently dismissed the manager; why the board sanctioned his dismissal; and what are the qualifications of the present manager not possessed by the former one.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Commissioners of National Education inform me that it appeared from an official inquiry in 1899 that certain of the teachers of Westbourne national schools held their appointments on the condition of paying a yearly contribution towards the expenses of the school, that the committee of the Westbourne Church had been acting as a school committee and usurping the functions of the manager, and had irregularly interfered in the matter of the appointment and dismissal of teachers, and that the manager, the Reverend Mr. Witherow, had failed to maintain his position and exercise his functions as manager as defined by the Commissioners' rules. The Commissioners, by an Order of the Board dated 29th August, 1899, withdrew recognition from the committee and from the manager and, as a temporary arrangement, empowered their district inspector to act as manager. This arrangement continued till October, 1900, when the Board considered that the time had come when the school could, without danger of revival of the irregularities, be again placed under local control. Accordingly, by an Order dated the 23rd October, 1900, the Reverend Mr. Witherow was recognised as patron. The patron of a national school has the right of acting as local manager himself or of nominating a suitable local manager. The Reverend Mr. Witherow nominated A. P. B. Moore, Esq., M.D., as local manager, and the Commissioners accepted this nomination and recognised Dr. Moore in that capacity. The Commissioners have no evidence that Dr. Moore was the most prominent member of the dismissed committee, as stated in the Question. In September, 1899, the Commissioners issued a circular to all school managers warning them that to require teachers, as a condition of their appointment, to contribute to the expenses of the school was entirely contrary to the spirit of their rules, and that under no circumstances could the Board sanction the levying of money from teachers as a condition of appointment or of continuance of appointment, and the Commissioners added that they would consider whether they should not withdraw grants from schools in which such practices were permitted. On 23rd January, 1908, the patron nominated Mr. Charles Westbourne Henderson as manager, Dr. Moore having ceased to be connected with Westbourne Church. The patron stated he appointed Mr. Henderson as manager at the suggestion of Dr. Moore, and the appointment was recognised by the Commissioners in accordance with Rule 40 (*b*) of their code. The Commissioners cannot compare the qualifications of the former and present manager. The present manager is qualified for the position.

Carrickfergus Estate Purchase Scheme.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that only three or four tenants out of twenty-eight or thirty on the West Division, Carrickfergus estate, have signed purchase agreements within the zones; whether these lands form a compact block of holding; and whether, in view of the fact that the Estates Commissioners, in a letter dated 15th January last, suggested that the said lands should be declared a separate estate, he can say if the Commissioners now propose to declare the three or four scattered holdings an estate out of the West Division, and pay the bonus thereon if the majority refused to sign at the prices demanded under threat of isolation; and, if so, will he take steps, in the coming Land Bill, to protect tenants, and withhold the bonus under such circumstances.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that thirty six tenants on the land known as the West Division, Carrickfergus estate, have signed agreements to purchase, and that advances are being made to them. As already stated in reply to the hon. Member's previous Question, the Commissioners are not prepared to refuse advances to the tenants because other tenants do not wish to purchase.

Irish Local Government By-laws.

MR. MOONEY (Newry): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether any by-laws have been issued under Section 15 of The Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1902; and, if so, whether he will lay a Copy of such by-laws upon the Table of this House.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I would refer the hon. Member to page 11 of the Appendix to the Report of the Local Government Board for the year ended March 1903 (Cd. 2012 of Session 1904), which contains a copy of the by-laws made in pursuance of the section referred to in the Question.

Croagh Evicted Tenant.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether the Estates Commissioners have yet inquired into the case of John Hurley, in the parish of Croagh, evicted tenant; and, if so, what steps have they taken to have him reinstated.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have inquired into the case of John Hurley, and as a result of their inquiries have decided to take no action in the matter.

Borrigone Untenanted Lands.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether it was with the view to purchase the untenanted lands at Morgans, Borrigone, in the county of Limerick, the property of Mrs. Sands, that the inspector of the Estates Commissioners visited them recently; and, if so, whether he has succeeded in bringing about a sale.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that their inspector visited the property of Mrs. Sands, county Limerick, in connection with the application of John Houlihan for reinstatement as an evicted tenant. At Mrs. Sand's request the inspector visited certain other lands in the neighbourhood, also the property of Mrs. Sands, but the Commissioners consider them unsuitable for their purposes.

Crimean Pensions—Case of Andrew M'Cormick.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War to direct whatever gratuity Crimean veterans are entitled to be sent to Andrew M'Cormick, Bridge Street, Longford, who was present at the storming of Sebastopol during the Crimean War.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) If the hon. Member will be good enough to forward to the War Office the name of the regiment in which this man served and the date and cause of his discharge, his case shall be inquired into in order that it may be ascertained whether he is eligible for a pension.

West Kent Regiment—Daniel Harvey's Pension.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state on what grounds the pension of Daniel Harvey, No. 3732, West Kent Regiment, amounting to £2 10s., in January 1906 was stopped for alleged failure to attend ball-firing practice 120 miles away from his home in time was stopped, whereas a man named Hickey, of the Grenadier Guards, who travelled with him on the same train, and was equally late, had his pension paid to him; and will he now direct that this man's pension be paid to him.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The matter is being made the subject of inquiry, and a further communication will be addressed to the hon. Member when the result of the inquiry is known.

Private M'Auley, 1st Leinster Regiment.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that for a petty larceny charge, which was not fully proved, Thomas M'Auley, No. 5635, B Company, 1st Leinster Regiment, has been deprived of his pension of 6d. per day after serving all through the South African Campaign, including several engagements; and will he direct that M'Auley's pension be restored to him conditionally upon his never again being found charged with a like offence.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) I am aware that this man was convicted of felony, and in accordance with the regulations was discharged from the Army Reserve. Under these circumstances reserve pay is no longer issuable. The hon. Member has been misinformed as regards this man being in receipt of a pension.

Patrick Brady—2nd Oxfordshire Light Infantry.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the case of Patrick Brady, of Smear, Aghnacliffe, county Longford, who was a soldier in the 2nd Oxfordshire Light Infantry Regiment, No. 1201, and who was discharged on a pension of 6d. a day owing to ill health, which was subsequently stopped, leaving him now in a destitute state; and will he direct that this man's pension be restored to him.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This man was discharged in 1885 on account of chronic Bright's Disease, and was granted a temporary pension for six months, which was subsequently renewed for two further periods of twelve months. The Commissioners of the Chelsea Hospital have now issued instructions for his medical examination, with a view to determine whether he is eligible for the award of further pension. The result will be communicated to the hon. Member.

Temperance in the Foot Guards.

Sir GEORGE SCOTT ROBERTSON (Bradford Central): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether temperance has increased considerably in the Foot Guards during the last ten years; can he give percentage of cases of drunkenness to strength during the years 1897 and 1907 respectively, and the percentage to strength of the three classes taken together, of military certificates of education granted to non-commissioned officers and men during the same two years; and can he give the takings of the coffee bars and grocery departments of the various battalions, including the depot of the Foot Guards, as compared with the takings of the liquor bars for the years 1897 and 1907.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The figures for the number of men fined for drunkenness, number of fines inflicted, and percentage of each to average strength are as follows:—

	Men fined.	Percentage to average strength.	Fines inflicted.	Percentage to average strength.
1897 - - - - -	193	3·27	275	4·66
Year ending 1st October 1907 - - - -	382	5·20	559	7·61

The figures, however, are not really comparable, as, under Army Order 36 of 1907, a soldier became liable to a fine for the second instance of drunkenness during his service, whereas previously the first two instances were dealt with by reprimand or minor punishment instead of the first only as now. For comparison the figures for the year ending 1st October 1906 are therefore given :—

Men fined.	Percentage to average strength.	Fines inflicted.	Percentage to average strength.
255	3·23	412	5·21

As regards certificate of education, the figures for those who gained certificates during the years in question are as follow :—

1897—1,213 (including warrant officers), percentage to average strength 20·5.

Year ending 1st October 1907—1,207 (excluding warrant officers), percentage to average strength 16·4.

It must, however, be pointed out that the number of certificates gained in a year is largely influenced by the number of men not in possession of certificates at the beginning of that year and the number of recruits who joined during the year.

The figures accordingly showing the percentage of the whole number of men holding certificates in the Foot Guards to the strength should be taken for comparison ; these were 46·63 in 1897 and 62·4 in 1907.

As regards the coffee bars and grocery departments no figures are forwarded to the War Office.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

The "Speedwell" Disaster.

*MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis) : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty in reference to the loss of the steamboat of the nucleus crew ship "Speedwell," by which a number of men lost their lives, whether he is aware that a young able seaman stated at the coroner's inquest that he was in charge of the boat as coxswain ; what was the reason for such an unprecedented event as a steamboat being in charge of a young and inexperienced able seaman who is not a qualified coxswain ; and whether the Admiralty concurred in the verdict of the coroner's jury that the boat was overloaded.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee) : The Answer to the first Question is in the affirmative. In answer to the second Question, there have been many cases in which a steamboat has been placed in charge of an able seaman. The man employed in this case was considered by the commanding officer to be a qualified coxswain. The answer to the third Question is in the affirmative.

*MR. BELLAIRS : Can the hon. Member mention a single case of a ship in full commission in which an A.B. was placed in charge of a steam-boat ?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON asked for notice.

Australian Naval Contribution.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) : I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what arrangement has been made with the Australian Commonwealth in reference to naval affairs ; and when the Australian contribution of £200,000 is to cease.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON : The hon. Gentleman will find a statement on this subject in the First Lord's Memorandum. There is nothing further to add at the present time.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND : Can the right hon. Gentleman answer the latter portion of my Question ?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON : That is really the essential part of the Question. I can add nothing to what the hon.

Member will find in the Memorandum. Nothing has happened since.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Has there not been a fresh development since the Memorandum was published?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I believe not. It is not known to me.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I will repeat the Question this day fortnight.

Royal Naval Reserve Lieutenants.

*SIR GEORGE SCOTT ROBERTSON (Bradford, Central): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if there is an Order in Council, dated the 11th July, 1905, whereby a lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve was transferred to the permanent list of the Royal Navy; and, if so, has he any objection to its being published.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: An Order in Council of the 11th July, 1905, empowers the Admiralty to transfer to the active list lieutenants in the Royal Naval Reserve who particularly distinguish themselves while employed in the Fleet. I shall be happy to send a copy of the Order to the hon. Gentleman if he desires it.

Naval Engineers.

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the young officers now being trained afloat will do duty in the engine-room and will then have executive rank; if so, will the engineer commander and the other senior engine-room officers also have executive power; and, if not, how do the Admiralty propose to regulate the relations of the senior and junior engineers.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: The Answer to the first Question is in the affirmative. In answer to the second: Under existing regulations the senior engineer officer has, under the captain, all necessary authority within his own department, and is to be obeyed by his subordinates. In answer to the third Question: It will not be necessary to determine the future relations of the engineer officers of the old and new style for some time to come.

MR. WEDGWOOD: May I take it that there will be a reorganisation of the *status* of the old engineer officers before the new officers with executive rank are placed under them in the engine-room?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: It is not a question as between the new and the old.

Engineer Cadets.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether engineer cadets have opportunities similar to cadets in the military and medical branches of the naval service to revisit Greenwich College, or in any way to bring themselves up to date with modern improvements in their branch of the profession.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Engineer officers who have finished a professional course at Greenwich do not return to that establishment; but opportunities are given them of attending courses of instruction so as to bring them up to date with modern improvements in their profession.

Armstrong, Whitworth, and Company, and the Fair Wages Clause.

MR. HUDSON (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if his attention has been called to the wages paid to the electrical wire workers by Messrs. Armstrong, Whitworth, and Company, Elswick, and can he say why this firm paid 36s. per week, the standard wages, on H.M.S. "Lord Nelson," at Jarrow, and only 34s. and 35s. per week for the same class of men and work on H.M.S. "Invincible" at the Elswick works; and whether this firm is required to observe the fair wages clause.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: My attention has not been called to this matter, but I will have the statement referred to in the second part of the Question inquired into. The firm, of course, is required to observe the fair wages clause.

Volunteer Surgeons.

SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if Volunteer surgeons on enlistment in the new Territorial Forces will cease to be attached to their present regiments;

will they be gazetted to a Royal Territorial Medical Corps and be required to wear the uniform of such corps; will the compound title or rank be abolished; will the senior medical officer, if efficient, be appointed brigade surgeon; and, if so, while holding the appointment will he be seconded from his regiment.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): Medical officers of the Volunteers will have the option of transferring to the Royal Territorial Medical Corps or of remaining regimental officers. Those who transfer will be permitted to retain the uniform of their former unit until worn out. The compound title will be abolished in the case of those who join the Territorial Medical Corps. The appointment of brigade surgeon in the Territorial Force will lapse, as the Territorial Force will be organised on the same basis as the Regular Army, in which such appointment does not exist.

Distribution of Cavalry.

EARL WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the system of distribution of the cavalry, commenced in 1906, has been altered.

MR. HALDANE: No change has been made in the system of distribution of the cavalry. As I stated in the House yesterday, the organisation of the cavalry depots is under consideration.

EARL WINTERTON asked whether it was not a fact that the right hon. Gentleman stated in debate in 1906 that in the new cavalry distribution Brighton and other stations would be abolished, but that now it was again proposed to use Brighton as a cavalry station?

MR. HALDANE said it was true there were cavalry stationed at Brighton. Did the noble Lord wish them withdrawn?

EARL WINTERTON: Oh no, I wanted to know if, it having been stated that certain cavalry stations—among them Brighton—were to be abolished, that decision had been changed.

MR. HALDANE: The cavalry barracks at Brighton are not very satisfactory, though they are sufficient for temporary use.

Colour Sergeants.

EARL WINTERTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if it is intended to abolish the rank of colour-sergeant in the new Territorial Army.

MR. HALDANE: No, Sir; there is no such intention.

Queen Victoria School, Edinburgh.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many boys will the Queen Victoria School at Edinburgh accommodate; and when will it accommodate the full number.

MR. HALDANE: The school, when completed, will accommodate 275 boys. It is hoped that it will be ready for occupation this autumn, and it is proposed to open the school with 150 boys, and to complete the establishment of 275 in 1909.

Cordite.

VISCOUNT HELMSLEY (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether an expert Committee was appointed to investigate the whole question of the use of mercury in the manufacture of cordite; and, if so, whether the Army Council intended to be bound by their decision.

I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for War whether the expert Committee on cordite has sat; whether it has arrived at a conclusion; and, if so, whether he will state the conclusion arrived at by the Committee.

MR. HALDANE: A conference of experts under the presidency of Lord Rayleigh was asked to consider and advise as to certain questions regarding condemned cordite. The investigation of the whole question of the use of mercury in the manufacture of cordite was not referred to the conference. No addition of mercury is or will be allowed to cordite manufactured for the Government. The Reports of the conference were fully considered in the action subsequently taken by the Army Council. It is not in the interests of the public to publish those Reports.

Army Leave Regulations.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if it will be necessary that applications for leave of absence for officers, non commissioned officers, and men from the annual training in camp of the Territorial Forces must in all cases be addressed to the General Officer Commanding, Territorial Division.

MR. HALDANE: The regulations dealing with the mode of granting leave to officers, non-commissioned officers, and men from the annual training are under consideration.

Army Clothing Department Inspectorate.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the *Glasgow Herald* and other papers throughout the country, of 27th July last, contained an advertisement for an assistant inspector in the Army Clothing Department, Grosvenor Road; that there were 250 applicants for that position; that on 22nd of October these 250 applications had not been dealt with; whether an appointment has yet been made, and, if so, at what date; and if he will ensure that in future appointments such delays are avoided.

MR. HALDANE: In July an advertisement inviting application for this post was duly inserted in various newspapers. From a large number of candidates a few were selected and interviewed by the Departmental authorities. The two first selected proved medically unfit, and some delay was thereby involved. On the 31st October Mr. Fitton was appointed on probation, but on the 19th December he resigned his appointment. On the 28th January Mr. West was appointed, and he joined for duty on the 20th February. I do not think that under the circumstances there was any unavoidable delay.

British Factories in the Congo State.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether, in addition to the repeated rejection of applications of British traders to be allowed to establish factories in the large portion of the Congo State ruled by concessionaire companies noted by Acting Vice-Consul Beak in his Report at page 35 of Africa (No. 1), the special attention of His Majesty's Government has been called to discrimination against British subjects by the Congo Government in punishment for alleged offences; and whether any steps have been taken to ask for explanations from the Government of the Congo Free State in the matter of the refusal of permission to communicate with the British Consul in the case of a British subject named by Vice Consul Michell in his despatch to Consul Nightingale, printed at page 8 of Africa (No. 1).

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the negative. As regards the second part, no specific case has yet been brought to the notice of the Foreign Office, but inquiries are being made into the matter through the local British Colonial authorities, and in the event of the statements alluded to being confirmed steps will be taken to uphold the rights of British subjects to equal opportunities of trade.

Papers on the Congo.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs when the Congo further Papers will be circulated.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The further Congo Papers referred to by the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean will be laid as soon as possible, but no precise date can be fixed.

Congo—Case of James Koffie.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the British subject, James Koffie, of Elmina, who was reported by Vice-Consul Michell, on the 23rd March, 1907, as detailed on page 8 of Africa (No. 1, of 1908), to have been condemned, though not a soldier, by a court-martial at Lusambo, in the Congo, on the 15th July, 1905, and sentenced to a term of imprisonment, has yet been released; and whether, in consequence of statements made by him to the Vice-Consul and communicated by the latter to His Majesty's Government, in his despatch of the 23rd March, 1907, to the effect that no opportunity was afforded to him after condemnation, either of communicating with the British Consul or of appealing to Boma, any representations were made by His Majesty's Government to the Government of the Congo.

SIR EDWARD GREY: It is believed that Koffie was released towards the end of 1907. It is understood that the attention of the Vice-Consul in whose district the incident occurred was drawn to it at the time. A Report has now been called for from him in regard to it.

Great Britain and Siam.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any negotiations are in progress between His Majesty's Government and the Government of Siam for the cession by Great Britain of certain extra-territorial rights; and, if so, whether he is in a position to make any statement regarding this.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Negotiations on the subject have been taking place at Bangkok, but I have not yet received any definite Report from His Majesty's Minister there, and am unable to make any statement till I have received and considered it.

Liberia—Deaths of British Subjects.

MR. FORSTER (Kent, Sevenoaks): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if his attention has been called to the deaths of two British subjects, namely, John Blenkinsop and E. A. Ditchfield in Liberia, and to the circumstances antecedent to and attending the deaths of these two men; if the Foreign Office has instituted a claim for compensation against the Government of Liberia for the deaths of these two Englishmen; and if he can state the ground on which such claim for compensation is based, and the outcome of the negotiations in regard to it.

SIR EDWARD GREY: If the hon. Member will postpone his Question, I will give him what information I have. I am expecting a Report from the Consul shortly.

Labour in the Rand Mines—Comparison between Chinese and Natives.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if there is any substantial difference between the treatment of Chinese and Native labourers in the mines in the Transvaal and in the conditions under which they respectively labour.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The special restrictions and disabilities under which Chinese labourers are placed by the Labour Importation Ordinances during the remainder of their term of service do not, of course, apply to natives. In other respects the conditions of employment are not dissimilar.

MR. FELL: Are all kept in compounds, natives as well as Chinese?

*COLONEL SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby): In the event of anyone harbouring an escaped labourer other than a Chinaman, or giving him a crust of bread, is he liable to imprisonment with hard labour?

MR. CHURCHILL: The conditions under which special restrictions are imposed on the Chinese are fully set out in the Ordinance.

MR. FELL: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered my Question—Are they kept in compounds?

MR. CHURCHILL: The whole compound question has been often discussed in this House.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies how many Chinese and native labourers were working in the mines in the Transvaal on 1st January, 1906; and how many of each class were working there on 1st January, 1908.

MR. CHURCHILL: As I stated yesterday in answer to the noble Lord the Member for the Horsham Division, the official Returns show the numbers employed on the last day of each month. The number of Chinese on 31st December, 1905, was 47,267, and on 31st December, 1907, 37,118, and not, as I said yesterday, 35,676; but between these two dates coolies were imported on licences issued for 16,000 under the late Government.

The natives employed on the same dates numbered 93,831 and 149,757, respectively.

Mr. FELL: Am I to understand that there is a larger number of coloured persons in these compounds compared with what there was when the Government took office?

Mr. CHURCHILL: There is a very much larger number of coloured natives in South Africa employed in working the mines than when the Government took office.

Mr. FELL: Has a large increase taken place in the black population and a decrease in the Chinese?

Mr. CHURCHILL: The hon. Gentleman has stated the facts perfectly accurately.

Mr. FELL: And they live in compounds.

Inspection of Charitable Institutions.

Mr. H. J. TENNANT (Berwickshire): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the administration of the Factory Act of last year, so far as regards the industrial portions of charitable and reformatory institutions where women are exclusively employed, will be placed in the hands of the men or the women inspectors of factories.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Gladstone, Leeds, W.): The inspection of women's work in charitable and reformatory institutions is a duty for which the lady inspectors are, in my opinion, specially suited, and it is my intention that inspection by them shall be the general arrangement. But, as my hon. friend knows, these institutions are scattered all over the country, and, having regard to the available strength of the women's staff, it will not be possible that they should inspect in every case.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of increasing the inspectorate staff?

Mr. GLADSTONE: I am about to do so.

Imprisoned Anti-Vaccinators.

Mr. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board how many persons have been received into local prisons for offences against the Vaccination Acts each year since 1873.

Mr. GLADSTONE: I beg leave to answer this Question. It is not possible to give this information exactly. From a Return laid before this House in June, 1881, it appears that from 1st January, 1868, to 31st July, 1879, 138 persons were imprisoned for offences against the Vaccination Acts; from a similar Return published in 1890 the number imprisoned between 31st July, 1879, and 8th August, 1889, appears to have been 113. For further details reference should be made to these Returns. For the last eight years the figures were as follows:—

Year to 31st March,	1900	37
,, ,,	1901	44
,, ,,	1902	36
,, ,,	1903	56
,, ,,	1904	106
,, ,,	1905	80
,, ,,	1906	58
,, ,,	1907	9

Sir GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): And how many owe it to the influence of the hon. Member for Sleaford?

[No Answer was returned.]

Carnarvon Magistrates and Dog Licence Exemption.

Mr. ELLIS DAVIES (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether magistrates, in granting exemptions under The Dogs Act, 1906, are acting in an administrative capacity only; whether he is aware that the Carnarvon magistrates refuse an exemption to all holding less than six acres of land, whilst in another division the refusal is only to those holding less than two acres, though the tenants in each case have sheep and cattle and exercise grazing rights on the common; and whether, in view of the fact that exemptions have been granted in the past without objection, he will, with a view to secure uniformity in the administration of the Act, give instructions that exemptions be granted on the same principle as heretofore.

MR. GLADSTONE: I beg leave to answer this Question on behalf of my hon. friend. I have no information as to the practice referred to, but if my hon. friend will let me know which are the benches of magistrates to which he refers, I will make inquiry.

Cost of Vaccination.

MR. LUPTON: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board what amount has been paid out of the rates for vaccination in each year since 1895.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): The particulars desired by my hon. friend consist of a considerable number of figures. I think, therefore, that the more convenient course will be for me to send him a statement containing them. This I will do.

Soho Goods Yard Fatality.

MR. WARDLE (Stockport): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to an inquest held at Smethwick, on the 10th ultimo., on the body of George Taylor, who had been found dead in the London and North Western goods yard at Soho; whether he has any official reports showing that the deceased's chest was badly crushed and his heart burst; whether he is aware that the coroner, in view of the conflicting evidence, stated that he thought someone was telling lies about the movement of trucks in the yard, and whether he proposes to have a searching investigation into the facts; whether the jury, after visiting the yard at night-time, added a rider to their verdict that more lights should be provided; and if he can say how many fatal accidents have occurred recently at Soho.

THE SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport): The attention of the Board of Trade has been called to the accident to which my hon. friend refers, and an inquiry is being ordered. The officer holding the inquiry will look into the question of lighting. The Board have no record of any other fatal accident having occurred in this yard during the last three years.

MR. HUDSON (Newcastle): May I ask if inquiries are made by the inspecting officers of the Board of Trade under the Railway Prevention of Accidents Act 1900, respecting the lighting of goods yards, and if any order has been made by the Department in regard thereto?

MR. KEARLEY asked for notice.

Exports and Imports of Motor Cars.

MR. HORNIMAN (Chelsea): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state how motor cars taken abroad or entering England for touring or racing purposes are identified, especially when they subsequently return by other Channel ports, and how they are differentiated from cars exported or imported for purposes of sale, many such cars for this purpose travelling by road and not being obviously different in appearance.

MR. KEARLEY: According to a Customs General Order, entries are required for all motor cars imported into the United Kingdom, and specifications for all motor cars exported, whether accompanied or unaccompanied. The import entry has to state whether the car is imported for sale, and if it is entered by or on behalf of private persons, whether the car is imported for the first time for permanent use in this country. If the car is a British car returned the fact has to be stated. The specification has to state whether the car is exported for sale, or if exported as private effects whether it has been sold to persons abroad.

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E. R., Holderness): Put a tariff on foreign ones.

Japanese Imitation of British Trade Marks.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the use by some Japanese firms of imitations of British trade marks; and whether any negotiations are being entered into in order to secure the protection of British trade marks in the East.

Mr. KEARLEY: The reply to both the hon. Member's Questions is in the affirmative.

Board of Trade Rocket Regulations.

Mr. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been called to discrepancies in the regulations issued by the Board of Trade to rocket companies; that such discrepancies have existed for over fourteen years without any attempt at correction; and, if so, will he state whether it is the intention of the Government to issue a new book of instructions with the necessary alterations.

Mr. KEARLEY: Yes, Sir. The attention of the Board of Trade has been called to a discrepancy between the letter-press and the illustrations in the instructions relating to the rocket apparatus, and it is now being corrected.

St. John's Ambulance Lectures.

Major ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether Scottish candidates under St. Andrew Ambulance for masters' and mates' first-aid certificates must attend eight lectures out of twelve, while the English candidates under St. John Ambulance have to attend only four and five lectures; and whether, seeing that this system involves more time, trouble, and expense to the Scottish candidate than is deemed necessary for the English candidate, he will take steps to make the two courses equal.

Mr. KEARLEY: The St. John Association requires a minimum of four lectures of two hours' duration; the St. Andrew a minimum of eight lectures of one-and-a-half hours' duration. The expense under the St. John varies from about 12s. 6d. to 17s. 6d., that under the St. Andrew is fixed at £1 1s. We have no power to compel either of these associations to vary its course.

Excessive Train Speed.

Mr. CLEMENT EDWARDS (Denbigh District): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will cause official inquiry to be immediately made into the circumstances of the running of the 5 p.m. train from Hastings to Victoria on Sunday last on the South Eastern line, to ascertain whether the train jumped and swerved in an alarming manner at certain curves between Tunbridge Wells and Penge, and, if so, what was the cause of the same; whether there was undue delay in stopping the train after the communication cord had been pulled by certain passengers, and, if so, what was the cause of such delay; and whether the brake was in perfect working order.

Mr. KEARLEY: The Board of Trade are making inquiries of the railway company concerned, and will inform my hon. friend of the result.

Mr. STANLEY WILSON: It was only nervousness caused by the bye-election at Hastings.

Mr. CLEMENT EDWARDS: I have received a number of letters from passengers confirming my allegation. Shall I send them to the Board of Trade?

Mr. KEARLEY: We are in communication with various parties concerned, and expect to get a reply from the railway company in the course of a few hours.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): Is it permissible for people who complain of a train going too slow to pull the communication cord?

Earl WINTERTON: And do the Board of Trade say that a person who thinks the train is going too fast may pull the communication cord?

Mr. KEARLEY: It depends on the part of the line on which a train may be travelling.

Mr. STANLEY WILSON: Oh, it was only election nervousness.

Swiss General Tariff.

Mr. MITCHELL-THOMSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the fact that under the new Swiss general tariff the imports into Switzerland during 1906 of raw materials increased by 220,000 tons, while the imports of manufactures decreased by 36,000 tons and that as a result of the application of the new tariff there was a considerable increase in the revenue derived from the Customs in 1906, while more foodstuffs and natural products were imported at a reduced cost; and whether he can give any information as to the amount of unemployment, if any, prevalent in Switzerland.

MR. KEARLEY: The statements as to the increase in the weight of raw materials, and decrease in the weight of manufactures imported into Switzerland in 1906 are approximately correct, and it is also the case that the Customs revenue of Switzerland in 1906 was greater than in the previous year. The suggestion that more foodstuffs were imported at a reduced cost is, however, not well founded. Omitting wine, it appears that both the quantity and the value of foodstuffs imported increased, and there was an increase in the prices of such important articles as wheat and other cereals, and live and dead meat. Statistics of unemployment are not officially published in Switzerland.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: The figures in the Question were taken from the Board of Trade Returns.

Hull Telegraphists' Wages.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD (Liverpool, West Derby): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, in view of his having accepted the recommendations of the Hobhouse Committee, whether this now involves a scale of wages for large provincial towns commencing at 18s. per week at eighteen years of age, and proceeding by yearly increments to £2 16s. per week; whether he is aware that a clerk named Webster, at Hull, twenty-nine years of age, was on the 31st December last in receipt of £1 3s. 6d. per week, as against the scale of wages giving £2 1s. 6d. per week for telegraphists at Hull at twenty-nine years of age; and whether it is his intention to raise Webster's salary to that amount.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): Hull is in Class I. and the scale of wages for an officer entering at eighteen years of age would therefore be 18s. Officers entering the class at a higher age than twenty-one receive "age pay" at twenty-one (24s.) and thence proceed by the scale recommended by the Committee (Paragraph 261) to the maximum. There is no age pay for an officer of twenty-nine years of age. The officer to whom reference is made was nearly twenty-seven years of age when appointed to the class. His pay will be at once adjusted in accordance with the recommendations of the Committee.

Education Returns.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is prepared to print and circulate as a Parliamentary Paper the syllabus contained in a Return to an Order of the House of Lords, numbered 115–1, and ordered to be printed on the 14th June, 1906, referred to in the First Schedule of the Education Bill, 1908.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): Yes, sir; I shall be happy to comply with the hon. Baronet's request.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL: Immediately?

MR. MCKENNA: Yes, sir.

Denominational Schools.

CAPTAIN J. CRAIG (Down, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, under the new Education Bill, those parents belonging to a religious denomination other than the Church of England in a single-school area who determine, on conscientious principle, to maintain a denominational school for the education of their children, are not only denied all financial assistance from the rates, but, in addition to contributing largely towards the cost of the erection of such school, would be compelled to contribute by rates and taxes to the erection and maintenance of a competing public elementary school in the same area; and if such be the case, whether he will introduce such amendments as will remedy this state of affairs.

MR. McKENNA: As I have already stated, I think questions of this character can be more conveniently dealt with when the reply can be debated, and no doubt the hon. Member will find an opportunity of raising it in the course of the debates on the Education Bill.

CAPTAIN J. CRAIG: Does that Answer mean that an adequate opportunity will be afforded the House for discussing the Bill and that it will not be rushed through by means of the closure?

[No Answer was returned.]

Merionethshire Teachers.

MR. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if the whole of the arrears of salary due to teachers in non-provided schools in Merionethshire has now been paid; and, if so, whether it has been paid by the local education authority or the Board of Education?

MR. McKENNA: All claims which the Board have received and which can be substantiated have been paid or are in course of payment by the Board.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): Is the Local Education Authorities Default Act in operation at the present moment?

MR. McKENNA: Certainly.

Medical Inspection of School Children.

*SIR FRANCIS POWELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, under the proposals of the Government, the cost of the medical inspection of children in voluntary schools will be defrayed from the same sources and administered under the same regulations as in the case of provided schools?

MR. McKENNA: Yes, Sir.

Council Schools.

MR. FORSTER: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, what is the number of provided elementary schools in England and Wales, and the number of children in average attendance in them.

MR. McKENNA: The number of council schools in England and Wales on January 1st, 1908, was 7,274. The average attendance for the statistical year ended July 31st, 1907, was 2,878,825.

Elementary School Classroom.

MR. FORSTER: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he can say how many public elementary schools there are in England and Wales consisting of a single classroom; how many of two classrooms; and how many of three or more classrooms.

MR. McKENNA: The Board of Education have no statistics on this subject, and to obtain the information which the hon. Member asks for would involve the examination of the records of accommodation relating to each of the 20,500 public elementary schools.

Kew Gardeners.

MR. SUMMERBELL: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he is aware that some ten gardeners are under notice to leave the Royal Gardens, Kew, on the 28th instant, and that such men are experiencing great difficulty in obtaining situations; and, if so, will he state whether it is the intention of his Department to turn these men off without employment, in view of the fact that they have only been receiving a subsistence allowance of 21s. per week, and have therefore had no opportunity of preparing for the time of unemployment.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden; for Sir EDWARD STRACHEY): The young gardeners at Kew are employed for a period of two years. Eight of them complete their term of service on the 28th inst., and two on the 4th prox. They will continue to be employed until they obtain situations elsewhere provided that they continue to give satisfactory service and that they use their best endeavours to find other engagements.

Rabies in Northampton.

MR. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he can give the House any information as to the reported outbreak of rabies in

Northamptonshire; and what steps have been taken to ascertain whether the case is confirmed.

MR. J. A. PEASE: Two dogs were destroyed at Northampton—one on the 21st, and the other on the 24th ult.—which had attacked human beings in circumstances clearly indicative of rabies. On post-mortem examination appearances were found which confirmed the suspicion. The Board thought it desirable at once to issue an Order prohibiting the movement of dogs out of the Borough of Northampton and an area within a radius of about five miles. The Order also provides for the muzzling of dogs in public places and for the keeping of all dogs under control within the scheduled district.

Prohibition of Hay and Straw Imports.

*MR. CHAPLIN (Surrey, Wimbledon): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, in view of the fact that it is now a month or more since the first outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Scotland occurred; that it was due, on the admission of the Board of Agriculture, to infected hay, imported from the Netherlands; that there have been two further and recent outbreaks since then; and that the promised Order prohibiting the importation of hay and straw from countries infected with foot-and-mouth disease has not yet been issued, the Board will issue it at once, without more delay.

MR. VERNEY (Buckinghamshire, N.) asked whether the Order, when issued, would cover the case of the importation of hay and straw intended for the purpose of packing as well as for fodder.

MR. J. A. PEASE: The Order was issued yesterday, and will come into operation on Monday next. Whilst the Order prohibits both hay and straw coming into this country for the purpose of either fodder or litter, yet hay or straw which, at the time of importation, is being used for the packing of merchandise, or manufactured straw not intended for the fodder or litter of animals, will be allowed to come in.

MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury) asked how it was the Order issued for Ireland differed from that for England seeing that it totally prohibited all imports of hay and straw from infected countries.

MR. J. A. PEASE said the Board of Agriculture for Great Britain had no control over the arrangements in connection with the issue of Orders in respect of Ireland. As already explained to the House, communications had been entered into with the Board of Customs, and the whole question was being looked into to see what change would be necessary if the Order were extended beyond Great Britain.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY: Can the hon. Gentleman explain the reason for the long delay in the issue of this most vital Order?

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): And could not sawdust be used as a substitute for packing?

MR. J. A. PEASE said there had been no unnecessary delay in the issue of the Order. It had been absolutely necessary to enter into communication with the Board of Customs in order that the issue of regulations might be fully arranged with that body. He believed that in many cases sawdust could not be used as a substitute for hay and straw for packing purposes.

MR. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire, W. R., Barkston Ash) asked how long the communications with the Customs would take?

MR. J. A. PEASE: The decision has already been come to with regard to fodder and litter, and at present it is not intended to extend it. Further information is, however, being obtained.

MR. CHAPLIN asked the hon. Gentleman how he reconciled his statement that there had been no unnecessary delay in issuing the Order with the fact that it was now nearly a month since the outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease.

MR. J. A. PEASE: I believe the Board of Agriculture expedited to the utmost of their ability every step which could be taken with a view to issuing the Order at the earliest possible date.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.) asked whether a cargo of suspected or infected hay, which was refused admission to Ireland by the Vice President of the Irish Board of Agriculture, had been landed in England whilst the English Board of Agriculture was deliberating.

MR. J. A. PEASE: I have no knowledge on that subject.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Can the hon. Member say whether there has been any hay or straw imported into Ireland since the first outbreak?

MR. J. A. PEASE: I am not informed that there has been any.

Beam-Trawling in the Clyde.

MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland in regard to the revocation of By-law No. 16, passed by the Fishery Board for Scotland on 22nd July, 1898, which permitted beam-trawling in the Clyde, whether he proposes to give any compensation to those beam-trawlers who have thereby been deprived of their living, several of whom are elderly men who have pursued this calling for many years.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): There is no fund from which compensation can be provided. Petitions were received from Greenock and Saltcoats against the repeal of the by-law. For these reasons careful preliminary inquiries were made into the circumstances. It is not the case that the repeal will deprive the petitioners, or indeed any of those whom the by-law was intended to protect, of their living. The by-law exceptionally permitting trawling in these waters was designed only to mitigate hardship to individuals and not as a permanent measure. It has been in operation for eighteen years, and has extended to these beam-trawling fishermen during the whole of that period special privileges; and it has been deemed necessary that the exemption should now cease to exist in the general interests of the fisheries in the Clyde district.

Drift Nets and Herring Spawn.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the net known as the drift net is in any way injurious to the spawn of the herrings when deposited on the bottom of the sea; is there a minimum size of mesh fixed by statute for both the seine trawl and the drift net; and, if so, what are the minimum sizes?

MR. SINCLAIR: The net known as the drift net is not in any way injurious to the spawn of the herrings when deposited in the bottom of the sea. There is a minimum size of mesh fixed by statute for both the seine trawl and the drift net; the minimum size is one inch from knot to knot by the Acts of 1808 and 1867, but as under the Act and Convention of the following year the restriction could only be enforced within the exclusive fishery limits, the restriction has fallen into desuetude.

MR. WATT: Is it not the case that the use of the seine net is permitted in no part in Scotland but the Clyde, in consequence of the damage done to the spawn of the herring?

MR. SINCLAIR asked for notice.

Shetland Herring Fishery.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether, in view of the fact that the entire failure of the herring fishing on the west coast of Shetland has followed on the whaling operations there, that the whaling stations were placed there without any authority from any public body after the operations had been stopped by the Norwegian Government on account of the ruin caused to the herring fishing, and that there is a practically unanimous opinion in Shetland that continued whaling operations will bring further disaster on the great herring fishing, he will pass the Bill enabling the Fishery Board of Scotland to fix a close time for whaling during the summer herring fishing.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am unable to accept the facts and inferences drawn by my hon. friend. The introduction at the present time of a Bill to amend the Whale Fisheries Act is in my opinion undesirable in view of the fact that there has been no opportunity of seeing whether the Act, and the Bye-law passed by the Fishery Board fixing a close time for whaling for a period of five weeks during the summer herring fishing season, prove insufficient to meet the requirements of the case.

MR. CATHCART WASON reminded the right hon. Gentleman that in Ireland an application for leave to establish a whaling station on the coast of Donegal had been refused.

Fair Rent Court for County Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state when the next Sub-Commission for hearing applications to fix fair rents in the union of Longford will be held; and will he direct the attention of the Land Commission to the necessity of fixing these sittings oftener than at present.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): The Land Commission inform me that the next sitting of a Sub-Commission Court for the district of Longford has not yet been arranged. Two sittings were held in the district last year, the more recent being that held on 29th October. There are at present only two applications to fix fair rents from the union of Longford that have not been listed for hearing.

The Kilbride Evicted Tenant.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state when the Estates Commissioners expect to be able to take action in the case of the widow Alice O'Connor, of Kilbride, Granard, who was evicted recently by a middle landlord named O'Reilly, of Drumminbawn, Carrigallen, county Leitrim; and whether, pending some settlement, it is possible to make this woman a grant to enable her to sow some crops for her future support.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners are unable to trace any application from Mrs. Alice O'Connor for reinstatement as an evicted tenant. The Commissioners have no power to make any expenditure from the Reserve Fund unless in connection with an estate which is being sold.

Stacpoole Estate Evicted Tenants.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in answer to the unstarred Question put by the hon. Member for North Longford on 19th March, 1907, he promised that in the case of girls named Lennon, who were evicted on the Duc de Stacpoole's estate, the Estates Commissioners would take action on their behalf when this estate was being sold; whether he is aware that this estate is now in the Commissioners' hands; and will he direct their attention to the case of these girls, with a view to inquiry being made, so that they would be compensated at least in part for their lost farm.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners inform me that no purchase agreements have as yet been lodged in respect of the estate of the Duc de Stacpoole, county Longford, and they are unable to identify any application for reinstatement on behalf of the persons named Lennon referred to in the Question.

Weatherall Estate Evicted Tenants.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the eviction of five families on the Weatherall estate at Ballincurry, and six families on the Crofton estate at Kiltycreeva, in North Longford, is about to take place under decrees granted at the instance of landlords at the recent quarter sessions; whether this policy of eviction finds sanction with the Irish Government; and whether the forces of the Crown will be granted to carry out such evictions.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have no knowledge of the matter referred to in the Question, nor do they consider that the matter is one in which they could interfere. In any event, if the evictions should be proceeded with, it would not be legal for the Executive Government to refuse the assistance of the forces of the Crown for the protection of the Sheriff when engaged in the execution of the King's writ.

Crookenden and Casey Estates, Cavan.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say whether the Estates Commissioners have yet made an offer to the syndicate owning the Crookenden and Casey estate, county Cavan; how many tenants are concerned in this matter; when was the inspection of the estate completed; and, if the offer has not yet been made to the owners, will he say when it is likely to be made.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners inform me that their inspector's Report on the estate referred to was received in May, 1907, and that a preliminary estimate of the price which the Commissioners are prepared to offer has been furnished to the owners, and accepted by them. The Commissioners hope to issue their formal offer for the purchase of the estate at an early date. About 469 tenants are concerned in the matter.

Cavan Evicted Tenants.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many evicted tenants have been reinstated in county Cavan for the twelve months ending 31st January, 1908; how many of these cases were dealt with under the Evicted Tenants Act of 1906; will he state the average rate per acre paid to the landlords for the land restored to the tenants; who is the inspector in charge of county Cavan; and will he say what is being done in the cases of M'Nally and Coyle, evicted tenants.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners will shortly present to Parliament a complete Return showing all cases of restoration of evicted tenants, and in the meantime it is not proposed to prepare partial Returns relating to particular districts. The Commissioners are unable to identify, from the information given, the cases of M'Nally and Coyle referred to in the Question. There is no inspector in charge of county Cavan, but three inspectors and two assistant inspectors are engaged in connection with the sale of estates in that county.

Ballinamore and Ballyconnell Navigation Charges.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he will state whether any sum of money is chargeable to the Cavan County Council in respect of the property of the trustees of the Ballinamore and Ballyconnell Navigation District, and, if so, how much; when was this charge first incurred; is there any navigation in the districts named; how were the trustees called into existence, with the name of the present trustees; is there any staff employed by the trustees; and will the expenses of this derelict concern, and the whole matter generally, be considered, with a view to bringing it into conformity with the wishes and interests of the people concerned.

MR. BIRRELL: I am informed by the Board of Works that the County Council of Cavan is liable, under the Final Award of 10th January, 1860, for the payment of the rate leviable by the Ballinamore and Ballyconnell Navigation Trustees in pursuance of that award. The liability of County Cavan is in the proportion fixed by the Final Award, namely, about one-third of the total amount leviable. The Board have no information as to when the first charge by the trustees was incurred, as the rate is leviable by the trustees without reference to the Board. The canal was constructed between 1846 and 1859 at a cost of £228,652, of which £30,000 has been repaid by the counties concerned, the remainder £198,652 being a free grant from the Public Exchequer. The navigation of the canal was abandoned in 1865. The trustees were created under Section 6 of the Drainage (Ireland) Act, 19 and 20 Vic., cap. 62. The Board of Works have no information as to the names of the present trustees, or as to whether any or what staff may be employed, but they understand that the secretary is Mr. James Netterfield, Hill View, Ballyconnell. The case of the canal and the question of its improvement for drainage or navigation purposes have been brought before the Royal Commission on Canals and Waterways, and any recommendation which the Commissioners may make regarding it will receive full consideration.

Irish Congested Districts Board.

MR. J. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the present state of the finances of the Congested Districts Board; whether he is aware that this Board, which apparently has not sufficient money to carry on its legitimate work, employs and pays out of its own funds a large clerical staff recruited without Civil Service examination, which is paid at rates altogether out of proportion to their value as judged by either a commercial standard or the standard pay of ordinary Civil Servants; whether he is aware that some of these temporary clerks are drawing salaries of £250 per annum while the maximum salary paid to temporary clerks in several Government offices is only £78 per annum; and whether he will take steps to see that further wastage in this direction is stopped, and that the funds of the Board may be applied, with as little administrative expense as possible, to the relief of the poor people for whose benefit the Board was established.

MR. BIRRELL: The Congested Districts Board inform me that their clerical staff consists of seventy-seven persons, of whom thirteen are permanent civil servants, and sixty-four are temporary clerks appointed by the Board. One of the latter, who has fifteen years service, has a salary of £200, and the salaries of the remaining sixty-three vary from £78 to £180, and average £100 per annum. The Board's solicitor employs six clerks with legal training, and one typist. The average salary of these six clerks is £150 per annum. Temporary clerks in Government offices are usually employed for the simplest and least responsible duties, but owing to the restricted number of permanent Civil Servants in the Board's office, it is not possible to adopt this course. The Congested Districts Board claim that the average cost of their entire clerical staff is lower than that of any other Government Department in Dublin.

MR. J. MACVEAGH: Why does such a large proportion of the staff consist of temporary clerks?

MR. BIRRELL: Because they find that the best course to adopt.

MR. J. MACVEAGH: Is it not because the officials desire to get into the office persons who cannot pass the examiner.

MR. BIRRELL: I feel sure it is not so.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): Are the temporary clerks paid out of the income of the Congested Districts Board?

MR. BIRRELL: Certainly they are.

Gledstane Estate Evicted Tenant.

MR. C. MACVEIGH (Donegal, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Estates Commissioners has been called to the case of John Gorman, who was evicted from his holding on the Gledstane estate, Cooradooey, near Convoy, county Donegal; whether he is aware that the farm is now occupied by Mr. Russell, who does not live on it, as a grazing farm, and is willing to give it up if he is compensated; whether he is aware that agreements were signed to purchase the estate two years ago, and an inspector has visited the estate and inspected the evicted farm; and whether he can state when the sale will be completed, and if Russell will be compensated and Gorman reinstated.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have inquired into the claim of John Gorman who was evicted from a holding on the Campbell and Gledstane estate, county Donegal, and have noted his name as being suitable to work a holding. The Commissioners are aware that Gorman's former holding is now occupied by Mr. Russell, and the matter has been referred to an inspector with a view to providing Gorman with a holding. I have no information as to whether Mr. Russell is willing to accept compensation. No purchase agreements have been lodged in connection with the Gledstane estate, county Donegal.

Mr. Barry's Cooldorihy Estate.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that negotiations have been in progress for the purchase of that portion of the estate of M. F. Barry (in lunacy), situate at Cooldorihy, county Cork; that the tenants offered to buy on terms which would give them a reduction of 7s. 6d. and 5s. 6d. on first and second-term rents, respectively, but that the Registrar in Lunacy would not concede more than 7s. and 5s., alleging that it would be distinctly for the benefit of the tenants to purchase at those prices; whether he is aware that the offer of the tenants is actually in excess of the prices prevailing in that part of the country, and that two neighbouring estates have been recently sold on similar terms to those offered by them; and, seeing that the Registrar in Lunacy has ordered that the rents shall now be collected in the ordinary course, and that the tenants threaten to resist collection on the grounds that they are being unfairly dealt with, will he recommend, in the interests of the peace and good order of the locality, that this is a case in which the Estates Commissioners may usefully intervene to effect a reasonable settlement, and thus avert friction and trouble in the future.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Registrar in Lunacy informs me that by order of 16th October, 1906, the Lord Chancellor sanctioned a sale to the tenants on the estate in question at 20 and 23 years purchase of first and second-term rents respectively. All the tenants have signed agreements to purchase save five at Cooldorihy, and there is, in the Lord Chancellor's opinion, nothing in the circumstances of these latter tenants to entitle them to exceptional terms. It would be inconsistent with the provisions of the Lunacy Act governing the sale of a lunatic's estate to refer the matter of fixing a price to the Estates Commissioners.

Irish Telephone System.

Mr. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, when he proposes to make a statement as to the proposed extension of the trunk telephone system to rural towns in Ireland; and whether any steps have been taken to determine the possible number of subscribers to be obtained in towns on the main railway lines of Ireland.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: During last year the Post Office telephone system was extended to eleven places in Ireland. Two other extensions are to be completed this month, and extensions to seven other places are in hand. A considerable number of other places have been canvassed and extensions offered under guarantee. In every case in which applications are received, inquiries are made as to the conditions under which an exchange or call office can be established, and as to whether sufficient support for an exchange is forthcoming to ensure a remunerative business.

Navan Post Office.

Mr. PATRICK WHITE (Meath, N.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General what is the cause of the delay in erecting a new post office at Navan; and if he will see that the work is commenced forthwith.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have received a copy of the resolution of the Navan urban district council referred to by the hon. Member. The guarantee for the establishment of a call office and its connection with the trunk wire system was given in September. The survey of the route from Drogheda and the preparation of the working estimates necessarily occupied a considerable time; but the work will be completed as rapidly as possible. A local exchange is also being established. It is desirable that the labourers employed on works of this kind should, as far as possible, have continuous employment. To engage them in every case locally for each extension of the trunk system would involve constant changes in the staff and would seriously limit its efficiency.

Navan Telephone Call Office.

Mr. PATRICK WHITE: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he has received a copy of a resolution passed by the Navan Urban District Council, directing his attention to the delay in establishing a telephone call office at Navan, although the agreement was signed by the residents six months ago; and if he will press the matter forward and employ local labour in the construction thereof.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON: The acquisition of the site for the new Post Office was attended with considerable difficulty, owing to the death of the owner of the property, and to other causes. The purchase has been completed, and the building plans approved, and the Board of Public Works hope to call for tenders within the next few weeks.

Milk Imports.

Mr. HALPIN (Clare, W.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland), whether he is aware that in the nine weeks ending 1st February 578 cwts. of fresh milk were imported into Great Britain and Ireland compared with only 15 cwts. in the corresponding period ending 1st February 1907, of cream 1,520 against 956 cwts., and of preserved milk 138,710 cwts. compared with 135,744 cwts.; and whether, taking into account the death-rate of infants in Great Britain and Ireland, in the latter country, in 1906, 11,756 deaths occurred, the Government will prohibit imports of foreign milk and cream into the British Isles.

THE VICE-PRESIDENT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE FOR IRELAND (Mr. T. W. RUSSELL, Tyrone, S.): The figures quoted as regards the imports of milk, cream, &c., are substantially correct. The prohibition of the importation of such commodities is not a matter within the province of the Department.

Irish Inspector of Industries.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) who is responsible for the appointment of Mr. William Townley Seymour McCartney Filgate as inspector of industries in Ireland; can he state the nature of the duties performed by Mr. Filgate; how much of his official time is occupied in discharging his duties; what were his travelling expenses for the year ended 31st December, 1907; what is the amount of his salary; can he state Mr. Filgate's qualifications for the position of inspector of industries in Ireland; what was his employment previous to his appointment as inspector of industries in Ireland; and did he ever pass a Civil Service examination, or any examination as a test of his fitness to be an inspector of Irish industries.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: Mr. W. T. McCartney Filgate was appointed as inspector of industries under the Department by my predecessor in office, with Treasury sanction. The date of his appointment was the 1st April, 1900. Mr. Filgate's duties, which occupy his whole official time, are to inquire into and advise upon questions relating to the establishment of industries, to visit, direct, and report upon the training of workers in new industries, when such training is being aided by the Department; to inquire into possible markets for Irish manufacturers; to inquire and to report upon British and Continental industries suitable for introduction into Ireland, and to endeavour to secure, where necessary, the introduction of capital to enable such industries to be established. Mr. Filgate, during the time he has been in the employment of the Department, has also organised and taken charge of special Industrial Exhibits at the Exhibitions held in Glasgow in 1901, in Cork in 1902, in St. Louis in 1904, in Limerick in 1906, and in Dublin in 1907, these special exhibits being either maintained or subsidised by the Department. Mr. Filgate's travelling expenses for the year ended 31st December, 1907, amounted to £67 2s. 1d., this amount being small, owing to Mr. Filgate's services being devoted for the greater part of the year to the Irish Industries Section of the Dublin Exhibition. His scale of salary is £300, rising by annual increments of £15 to a maximum of £400, his present salary being £400. Mr. Filgate was trained in the well known East Indian firm of Messrs. Graham & Company, where he served for ten years, during which period he acquired an intimate knowledge of commercial work in its various branches, including textile manufacture. Mr. Filgate acted as organiser and secretary to the Countess of Cadogan's Textile Exhibition in the year 1897, and in the year 1898 he was appointed secretary to the Irish Committee of the Royal Commission for the purposes of the Paris Exhibition. Mr. Filgate received a Civil Service Certificate under Clause VII. of the Order in Council of the 4th June, 1870. without examination, the Commissioners being satisfied as to his qualifications for the post.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: What industries has Mr. Filgate inspected and how much of his time is occupied?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: During the whole of the past year he was employed at the Dublin Exhibition.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the chief industries of Ireland are the brewing, the distilling, and the linen? Does he inspect them?

MR. T. W. RUSSELL: These are the leading industries, but a great industrial revival is going on, and more than one inspector will be required if we are to do our duty.

Mr. J. MACVEAGH: Is one of the chief reasons for the appointment of this gentleman to be found in the fact he was an orator on Unionist platforms in England?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I am not aware of that; I did not appoint him.

Mr. MOONEY (Newry): How many hours a day does this gentleman work? Is it a case like that of Mr. Porter?

Mr. CLANCY (Dublin County, N.): Has the hon. Gentleman had an opportunity of testing Mr. Filgate's qualifications? Is he worth his money?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I have told how he has been occupied since I became Vice-President.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR: Was the appointment created simply in order to give him a claim to draw money out of the public funds?

Mr. J. MACVEAGH: Did I understand the hon. Gentleman to say this appointment was made on the 1st April?

Mr. PATRICK WHITE: How was Mr. Filgate employed before he got this appointment? How long was he out of employment?

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: I really cannot state how he was employed in the year 1906.

Mr. PATRICK WHITE: Was he then out of employment?

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): Is it the endeavour of hon. Members below the Gangway to drive this man out in the same way as they did Sir Horace Plunkett?

Irish Precautions against Foot-and-Mouth Disease.

*Mr. CHAPLIN: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture if he will state what precautions have been taken by the Government to prevent the spread of foot-and-mouth disease from Scotland to Ireland.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL: Three Orders have been issued—the first prohibiting the importation of ruminants and pigs into Ireland. The second, which was issued yesterday, prohibits the landing of hay and straw from infected foreign parts. The third prohibits the landing of hay and straw from Great Britain. What is known as commercial straw will not be interfered with, and as regards packing straw it will be dealt with by licence.

Crimean War Pension.

Mr. BYLES (Salford, N.) I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether his attention has been called to the case of Mrs. Evans, the widow of a man who served on H.M.S. "Cæsar" throughout the whole period of the Crimean War, who is now eighty-three years of age, and without any visible means of support; whether she has applied for an allowance from the Royal Patriotic Fund, and has been refused, on the ground that there are no funds at present for assisting such cases; whether the last balance sheet, issued by the Royal Patriotic Fund Corporation, shows that on the Russian War Fund alone nearly £85,000 remained in hand at the end of 1906, and on the general fund over £154,000; and whether it is possible so to administer these funds that they shall not be beyond the reach of the octogenarian widows of soldiers or sailors who have a claim upon them.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Asquith, Fifeshire, N.): I understand that the case referred to is that of the widow of a man who served in the Baltic (not in the Crimea) during the Russian War, 1854–6, and who survived his service in that War for fifty-one years, dying as recently as December 1907. He left ten children upon whom his widow has natural claim for support. As the husband did not die from service in War, the widow has no direct claim upon Patriotic Funds, and the Royal Patriotic Fund Corporation are of opinion, having regard to prospective calls upon the Funds in their hands on account of those with stronger claims, that they would not be justified in entertaining such cases for relief.

*MR. BYLES: Was not a fund collected at the close of the war specially allotted to widows whose husbands died after the war—providing that they had been married previous to 30th March, 1856, and has not the Secretary to the Royal Patriotic Fund admitted in the correspondence that this widow is eligible but that there are no funds.

*MR. ASQUITH: I have no further information.

*MR. BYLES: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the father of this lady—a pensioner in the Coastguards—had two sons and four sons-in-law in the war.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is asking a string of questions. He had better put some of them down.

Lisensing Bill and Unemployment.

MR. WILLIAM RUTHERFORD: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he is aware that, in respect of each licensed house in England and Wales, the number of people actually in employment is on the average between three and four; whether the closing of approximately 30,000 licensed houses would throw out of employment about 100,000 people; whether he would be prepared to take any, and, if so, what, steps to obviate the distress likely to be caused thereby.

*MR. ASQUITH: As regards the first and second parts of the Question, I can only say that no certain information is available. The Census figures, for several reasons too long to detail, do not enable the average referred to by the hon. Member to be worked out with any approach to accuracy; so for as they go, they suggest a lower average number of employees than that which he mentions. If, as the result of the Bill now before the House, the expenditure on drink is lessened, the probable result will be that more money will be spent in other and more productive ways; and that the surplus employees, whose displacement under the scheme proposed would be gradual, will be absorbed in other occupations.

*MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the capital at present locked up in these 30,000 licences would not be likely to employ more people if invested in almost any other trade?

[No Answer was returned.]

Plural Voting Bill.

MR. WATT: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether it is the intention of the Government to bring in the Pural Voting Bill this Session, and deal with it in the same manner as with the Small Landowners (Scotland) Bill, and the Land Values (Scotland) Bill; and, if not, will he say when a new Bill dealing with the subject of plural voting will be introduced.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he will consider the advisability of postponing this Bill until after the next general election?

MR. ASQUITH: The answer to the first part of the Question is in the negative. I cannot now make any statement as to the course of business in future sessions.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London) asked as to the course of business next week.

MR. ASQUITH said on Monday next the Navy Estimates, Votes A, 1, and 10, would be taken. If they were not concluded on Monday they would be proceeded with on Tuesday. If there was any spare time on Tuesday it would be devoted to one or two small Bills of a non-contentious character. If the Navy Votes were concluded on Monday, Tuesday's sitting would be devoted to the Second Reading of the Children Bill. On Wednesday and Thursday the Army Estimates Votes A and 1, 13, 14, and 15, for the non-effective services, would be taken. If there happened to be any spare time on Wednesday it would be devoted to the small Bills.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Arthur Philip Du Cros, esquire, for the Parliamentary Borough of Hastings.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection:

That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Scottish Bills: Mr. Ward (added in respect of the Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill): Mr. Runciman.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

METROPOLITAN SEWERS AND DRAINS BILL.

"To amend the Metropolis Management Acts with respect to sewers and drains," presented by Mr. Dickinson; supported by Sir William Bull, Mr. Bowles, Sir William Collins, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Timothy Davies, Sir George Fardell, Mr. Claude Hay, Sir Henry Kimber, Earl Percy, Sir Albert Spicer, and Mr. Waterlow; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 140.]

RABBITS ON COMMONS BILL.

"To allow commoners to kill and take Rabbits on Commons," presented by Mr. Everett; supported by Mr. Cobbold, Sir William Brampton Gurdon, Mr. George Hardy, Mr. Rogers, Mr. Soares, Mr. James Parker, and Mr. Nicholls; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 18th March, and to be printed. [Bill 141.]

BREACHES OF BYE-LAWS BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to penalties for Breaches of Bye-Laws," presented by Mr. Wedgwood; supported by Sir Francis Channing, Mr. Austin Taylor, and Mr. Mallet; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 142.]

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY BILL.

"To render Married Women with a separate estate liable for the support of their parents," presented by Mr. Hicks Beach; supported by Mr. Staveley-Hill, Mr. Lane-Fox, Mr. Cave, Mr. Micklem, and Mr. Rogers; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 143.]

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (TAXATION AND PURCHASE OF LAND) BILL.

"To provide for the Taxation and Purchase of Land by Local Authorities," presented by Mr. Scott; supported by Mr. Bell, Mr. Wedgwood, Sir Randal Cremer, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Harwood, Sir Maurice Levy, Mr. Shackleton, Mr. Arthur Harvey, Mr. John Robertson, Mr. Snowden and Mr. Thomasson; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 144.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Proceedings on going into Committee of Supply, if under discussion when the Business is postponed this day, be resumed and proceeded with, though opposed, after the interruption of Business."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 289; Noes, 89. (Division List No. 31.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork,N.E.
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Allen,A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ambrose, Robert
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith,Rt.Hon.HerbertHenry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker,Joseph A.(Finsbury,E.)
Baring, Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barker, John
Barlow, Sir John E. (Somerset)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Barry,Redmond J.(Tyrone,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Beck, A. Cecil
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn,W(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell,Sir J.H(Essex, Romf'rd
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brunner,J.F.L.(Lancs., Leigh)
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton,Rt. Hn.SydneyCharles
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt. HnRichardKnight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,SirWm.J.(St.Pancras,W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett,CH(Sussex,E.Grinst'd)

Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crean, Eugene
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, M. Vaughan-(Cardigan
Dewar, Arthur (Edinburgh, S.
Dewar, Sir J. A. (Inverness-sh)
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Dunne, Major E Martin (Walsall)
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Elibank, Msater of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Everett, R. Lacey
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Crhistopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glen-Coats, Sir T. (Renfrew, W
Glendinning, R. C.
Goddard, Sir Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon, Rt. Hn Sir W. Brampton
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N. E
Harwood, George
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Halland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope, W. Bateman (Somerset, N
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon

Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Kavanagh, Walter M.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph A (Accrington)
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A Levy (Essex, Harwich)
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Manfield, Harry (Northants)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Menzies, Walter
Middlebrook, William
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morse, L. L.
Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N (Doncast'r)
Norton, Capt. Cecil Williams
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs., Leek)

Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, W. H. M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John (Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, W. E. B. (Bradford)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Rea, Walter M.
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, Sir G Scott (Bradf'rd
Robertson, J. M. (Tyneside)
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Scott, A. H. (Ashton under Lyne
Seely, Colonel
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick, B.)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John. G.
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest. J
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A Lyulph (Chesh.)
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Tennant, Sir Edward (Salisbury)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thompson, J. W. H. (Somerset, E
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Wadsworth, J.
Walker, H. De R. (Leicester)
Walsh, Stephen
Walton, Joseph
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent)
Ward, W Dudley (Southampton
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Rt. Hn E (Clackmannan)
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway

White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E.R.)
White, Patrick (Meath, North)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Llewelyn (Carmarthen
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson, A.
Wilson, Hon. G. G. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, Henry J. (York, W.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wodehouse, Lord
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther-Gray, Major
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Stanley
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (City, Lond
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Baring, Capt. Hn. G (Winchester
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bowles, G. Stewart
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C. W
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Wor.
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Clark, George Smith (Belfast, N.
Clive, Percy Archer
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Glover, Thomas
Gordon, J.
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Guinness, Walter Edward
Haddock, George B.
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, Laurence (Kent, Ashf'rd
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Heaton, John Henniker
Hill, Sir Clement
Jowett, F. W.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rutherford, John (Lancashire)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seddon, J.
Sheffield, Sir Berkeley George D.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand
Starkey, John R.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Ford E. (Chichester)
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire)
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winterton, Earl
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. G. Stuart-
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on Question [4th March], "That Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair."

Question again proposed.

MR. LAMBTON (Durham, S.E.) said he desired to call attention to the statement made by the Secretary of State for War yesterday that there was a shortage in the Army of 8,000 officers and that there were 3,000 short in India. That seemed to be an extraordinarily large number for India seeing that the Indian Army was practically on a war footing.

*MR. HALDANE: I mean short on mobilisation.

MR. LAMBTON: Surely the Indian Army was supposed to be ready for mobilisation at any moment. But leaving India out of the question altogether, the right hon. Gentleman had said there were 5,000 short in this country out of 13,000, and that included 1,500 Reserve officers. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of the quality and quantity of the officers and suggested some remedy, but he had given gave no reason for the cause of the shortage. There must be some cause and the House ought to know the reason. It was a most important question, because officers were a class of men who could not be raised at a moment's notice on mobilisation. He wished to know if this deficiency occurred in regiments on service or whether they were up to their strength He thought that one of the causes was the uncertainty in the public mind as to the kind of service they would be called upon to perform in the Army. Another reason was the expense officers were put to on joining. And yet these young officers—these paragons of knowledge and virtue—were expected to serve their country for £100 a year, out of which they had to provide their own uniform. In these days it was no easy thing for parents to send their sons into the Army, because it involved such a large outlay; they could not afford to do it on the miserable pittance allowed. Then the examination to which they were subject had something to do with the shortage. They had constant examinations before their eyes and had to work up to a standard of mathematics entirely unnecessary for officers. Many officers in the Army did not possess what the right hon. Gentleman called "highly trained minds." The right hon. Gentleman expected to get from the public schools 12,500 boys and from the universities from 2,000 to 3,000 a year and 800 from the reserve of officers. The right hon. Gentleman had said that most of them would be schoolmasters, doctors and lawyers. Were these expected to take the place of the officers they hoped to get from Regular forces? It would not be much inducement to those in the Regular Army to find those positions were to be given to ex-schoolmasters, doctors and lawyers. If an officer in the Army applied for one of these posts and it was said on behalf of a certain schoolmaster that he was a splendid fellow because he knew a great deal about Cæsar, would he get the position? Then again, take the case of a doctor. The examiner might reply: "He has killed a great many more people than you have —I would give him the post." With regard to lawyers who would receive these commissions, did it mean those who had never had a brief, or K.C.'s of a militant nature? He did not think the right hon. Gentleman was encouraging men to join the Regulars by such a policy. He was rather laying down conditions as regarded education which were not needed by the service. It was thought by the Labour Members that those in the Army had a very easy life, and were only just beginning to realise their position. As one who had been in the Army he did not agree with that view. The duties of the Army were more seriously considered now than in the past, but that was no reflection on the men themselves, but rather on the methods adopted by the War Office. The system of competitive examinations necessarily left out someone, but if the Government desired to obtain a large supply of officers they would not do so by putting obstacles in the way. In the debate last night it was suggested that if they put a tax on an article they increased the supply of that article, and at the same time reduced the price. Did the right hon. Gentleman think that by putting obstacles in the way of men he would increase the quantity, and at the same time keep up the quality? One obstacle in the way of men entering the Army was the excessively high standard required in mathematics. The higher mathematics were never required by the ordinary officer. At present there was an examination going on in which there were 450 candidates, and he was told that the examination in mathematics was very severe. Some of the other subjects were easy, but foreign to the whole career of a soldier. The right hon. Gentleman ought to be aware that a candidate otherwise suitable for entering the Army might be cast on account of one little point in which he had failed at a competitive examination. On Tuesday he saw an examination paper in which there were seven or eight subjects mentioned on which the candidates might write essays. One of the subjects was "The House of Lords," and another was "Tariff Reform." Supposing he had been a candidate, and the examiners had been Members of that House, no doubt the paper he would have written on the House of Lords would have received a large number of marks from the Opposition side. That was what the poor candidate had to go through when he went before the board of examiners, who might have particular fads of their own as to the way in which subjects should be discussed. A boy who was going through an examination this week was cast in mathematics. When that boy left Eton it was determined to put him into a business profession. He desired to leave the business profession and to enter the Army, and the consequence was that he had none of the cramming which under the present pernicious system was necessary before entering the Army. When at Eton he was in the sixth form, which meant that he was in the first ten out of 1,000 boys. He hoped these were matters which the right hon.

Gentleman would look into. It was not always the best scholar who made the best soldier, any more than it was the best speaker who made the best statesman. The right hon. Gentleman had told them a great deal about the brain of the Army, and he agreed with him that it was absolutely necessary to have as much brain as they possibly could get, but they could not fight with brain alone. They must have body as well, and the body in the Army was the private soldier. He did not think it was always recognised what a force the regimental officer was. The regimental officers were the nerves of the Army, and without them either the brain or the body would be useless. He wished the right hon. Gentleman would pay a little more attention than he seemed inclined to do to the needs of the regimental officers. It had been frequently stated—he thought the right hon. Gentleman had stated—that the officers in the Army had not had the facilities for educating themselves which they ought to have, and which the right hon. Gentleman hoped to give them in future. He did not know that there was anything in the Estimates this year for that purpose. He would point out that officers were neglected in regard to facilities for education, and for bringing themselves up to the mark in what the right hon. Gentleman called the latest science of warfare. He had never yet seen barracks where there was a reference library, or any place where a map could be spread out. These were surely details which ought to be looked into by the War Office.

*Mr. HALDANE indicated assent.

Mr. LAMBTON said the right hon. Gentleman agreed with that. Had it ever been done? Was there any provision for it in the Estimates this year? He hoped that some steps would be taken to enable officers to study in their own barracks, so that it would not be necessary to go to a crammer or to the staff college. Everybody could not go to the staff college, nor did they want that everybody should go there. Of course, all Secretaries for War were in the hands of their military advisers and they were staff officers. He had nothing to say against staff officers; many of them were very brilliant people, and many of them were good soldiers, but not all. Staff officers had their own reward, but the regimental officers had not. The regimental officers were quiet, unassuming men, but they did more for the Army than the staff officers. They had never been encouraged in the Army, and he did not think they were going to be encouraged under the system of the right hon. Gentleman. What was the main object of soldiers? They were simply tools to fight. They entered the Army for ten, fifteen, or twenty years of their life. He believed there was more initiative, more knowledge, and more freedom of action given now to junior officers than there used to be. In the old days, staff officers and the general commanding on a field day knew what was going on, but nobody else ever knew. He remembered a field day at Aldershot when he was on picket duty on the summit of a hill. Presently a staff officer rode up and asked him: "What the devil are you doing here?" He replied: "I do not know. My colonel put me here. What am I supposed to be doing?" "What the devil is that to you?" said the officer, and he galloped away. Such procedure was not very stimulating to the brain, but he thought it was excellent for discipline. The right hon. Gentleman talked very much about stimulating the brain and making everybody very clever. He knew some people who were so clever that they did not want to fight. They wanted men who would undertake the hard work of the Army. The right hon. Gentleman said yesterday that some of the regimental officers and others would receive promotion in respect of their education at the London School of Economics. He did not know whether that meant general promotion or promotion in particular portions of the Army. It seemed to him, at all events, rather a strange way of encouraging the regimental officer.

*Mr. HALDANE: I said that the training there was for the administrative side of the work of the Army. Does the right hon. Gentleman think that you can have the transport of troops, work out difficult calculations, and do the thousand and one things which have to be done in connection with the making of contracts by officers in the field without any training? It is the want of this training which has cost us hundreds of thousands of pounds, and that must be put right. It can be put right by the training given at the London School of Economics.

Mr. LAMBTON said the work of transport could be carried out by officers without going through the London School of Economics. He did not think that the Duke of Wellington would ever have got into the Army at all if he had had to do that.

*Mr. HALDANE was understood to say that such training was recommended by a Commission which sat after the South African War.

Mr. LAMBTON said the South African War was not the only great war that had ever occurred. There were other lessons learned besides those which were learned in South Africa. The right hon. Gentleman must not trust too much on the training given at the London School of Economics. He must trust the regimental officers and the men who were doing a great deal more for the Army than a good many of the show officers. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that the training received through various colonels was not altogether satisfactory, and that they were not very equal as teachers of their profession. No doubt that was so. Under the present system promotion seemed to be given to those who advertised themselves. A man who gave interesting lectures, who was in touch with newspapers, and got inserted paragraphs written by himself stating that he was instructing his officers in all the newest science of war, would be selected for promotion, while the unassuming man who went in for real military work would be left out in the cold. He wished to put before the right hon. Gentleman the claims of the officers. He could not speak as an educationist. It was twenty-five years since he passed his entrance examination into the Army, which was not then as severe as now. As a soldier he had only six years service, and that in time of peace, but during that time he learned one thing which he never would have learned in the London School of Economics, and that was *esprit de corps*, love of his regiment. When he passed with the other recruits in the Coldstream Guards through the early drills the colonel and the drill sergeants wore the medals for the Alma and Inkerman, and there was not a man or boy in the regiment who did not look upon those officers with pride and almost reverence. The motto of the Coldstreams was *Nulli Secundus*, second to none. Second to none they had ever been and second to none he hoped they would ever remain. That was the spirit which he trusted would always run through the whole British Army, and that was the spirit which a War Minister should desire to maintain if he expected the British Army to rival in the future the glorious deeds of the past.

*Mr. WARDLE (Stockport), in moving "That, in the opinion of this House, the powers now vested in chief magistrates to call upon the War Office to supply troops during times of trade disputes are open to grave abuse, are a menace to the liberty of the subject, and ought to be inquired into and reported upon by a Committee of this House," said that in submitting the Motion he would point out that it dealt with two questions, first, the power of chief magistrates to call on the War Office to supply troops in case of disturbance, and secondly, to the employment of the troops in cases of trade disputes. He, however, would confine his remarks to the latter question. There was not the slightest doubt in the minds of any person in the House as to the position of the trade union leaders in regard to violence in trade union disputes. Violence had always been condemned by them; and they were as anxious as anybody that there should be no such thing as riot or disturbance in connection with trade disputes. Fortunately riots of any kind had been of rare occurrence in this country. For a whole century of history very few disturbances had arisen in which the military had been called out. He might summarise them as those which happened at Peterloo, Liverpool, Southampton, Hull, Trafalgar Square, Featherstone, Belfast, Penrhyn (twice called out) and the famous Bristol riots in reference to the suffrage. If a comparison were made between the riots and disturbances in the first half of last century with those which occurred in more recent times, it would be found that their nature had entirely changed. Whereas the former disturbances were political in their character and had mostly to do with the franchise, during the last thirty or forty years they were mainly industrial or connected with strikes. To-day with the exception of the unemployed question or woman suffrage there was no political movement on foot which was likely to be connected with a riot or disturbance. They who belonged to trade unions hoped and believed that those riots and disturbances would be fewer in the future than in the past. While they agreed with the growing desire for conciliation, arbitration, and machinery which would prevent those great disputes, they could not shut their eyes to the fact that there was a great danger connected with disturbances of that character in which chief magistrates and other officials had the power to call out the military. He had gone carefully into the history of the two outstanding disturbances which had occurred within the last few years—Featherstone and Belfast. In both these cases he had come to the conclusion that there was no need for calling out the military and no occasion for bloodshed. It was true that some one had blundered, and the person who blundered was the man on the spot. The man on the spot had often been the cause of a great deal of mischief both in this country and abroad; and he was not quite so convinced as some people were as to the wisdom of trusting the man on the spot. The same principle applied to leaving the discretion of calling out the military in the event of a riot or disturbance to the chief magistrate of the district. They were told in this House during the Belfast trouble both by the Secretary for War and the Chief Secretary for Ireland what was the law in this matter; and he believed he was correct in saying that the law was that a military person was called out in his capacity not as a member of the Army but as an ordinary citizen. Yet he was called upon to do things which an ordinary citizen could not do, and therefore that was one of the dangers of allowing civil persons to call out military persons. He knew that so far as the Army Regulations were concerned, they were fairly explicit and straightforward, and that the military should not be called out except the occasion warranted it. But at the same time they could be called out by the desire of a mayor, chief constable, divisional commander, a resident magistrate, and one or two other persons entirely on their own responsibility. That danger he was afraid would be increased in the future by the new Territorial Force. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean had pointed out on the previous day that there was a great danger that not only would the ordinary military be called upon to use firearms, but that the Territorial Force might be called upon in the same way as the Regular Army to suppress disturbances caused during trade disputes. The fact that in these days industrial disputes did occasionally take the form of riot should, he thought, make the House pause and alter the law from what it was in the old days, when disturbances were mainly of a political character. The Chief Secretary for Ireland in the debate which took place on the Belfast riots said that—

> "The position of a chief magistrate in a city like Belfast was not one for envy."

He and his friends thought that in the interest of the chief persons who were in a position to call out the military as well as of the persons who were concerned in a riot, that power should be taken away from the former. In the case of Featherstone the whole district was in a ferment and the manager of the colliery and the magistrate lost their heads, called out the military, and bloodshed followed. The bloodshed was caused because the people were incited to riot by the presence of the military. The Secretary for War sat on a Committee which inquired into the whole circumstances of the Featherstone riots, and after that Committee had reported another Committee of Inquiry was appointed which also issued a Report. The Committee on which the right hon. Gentleman sat said at the end of their Report that they thought it was necessary that there should be a codification of all the rules with regard to civil disturbances and that these should be circulated broadcast, and that everything should be done to put them on a satisfactory footing in the future. He asked the right hon. Gentleman whether that codification of the law had ever been attempted to be carried out? If not, considering that the right hon. Gentleman was at present Secretary of State for War and therefore concerned with the King's Regulations for the guidance of the Army, it should be his duty and his pleasure to see that such a codification was made. In regard to the other Committee which made a full inquiry into the whole case of civil disturbances and riots, they reported in January, 1895, and the Report was presented to the House. Along with their Report they issued a number of regulations for calling out the military in future, and they added at the end—

> "We would suggest that these regulations should be revised so as to bring them in accordance with the recommendations which we have submitted."

Those regulations dealt almost entirely with the power of calling out the military and the provision of additional constables so as to prevent the necessity of calling out the military. But they did not deal with the point which he had raised—viz., that the chief magistrate when exercising his power to call out the military should, as a rule, apply through the chief constable for the military, and not take it upon his own initiative. That would still leave with him the power to do so under certain circumstances. With regard to the provision of additional constables and the exchange of constables, in both these instances he understood that instructions had once or twice been issued by the Home Office calling the attention of magistrates throughout the country to the desirability of providing for the exchange of constables so that there should be sufficient civil force in the event of disturbance, thus doing away with the necessity for calling on the military forces. He thought that none of these recommendations had really touched the point as to the power of the chief magistrate or any other magistrate in his particular district. One of the reasons why they introduced this Motion was that magistrates were not, in their opinion, the proper people to decide, alone at any rate, whether the military should be called out. They might be entrusted with the carrying out of the common law, but in the case of a trade dispute they might themselves be interested parties, and therefore that these should be the persons who were put in the position of having the power to call out the military, when there might be no need to do so, was a state of affairs which could not be any longer maintained. He did not know whether it was in the power of the Secretary for War to amend the law, but certainly he and the Government with him could do what they wanted. It was not a great deal. It was that there should be a Committee of Inquiry appointed to look into this matter, and see if some provision could not be made to obviate this necessity of calling out the military. There was only one other point that he wanted to deal with, and that was the very grave reasons which existed why the military should not be called out in civil disputes if it could possibly be avoided, and particularly in trade disputes. He had no doubt that the right hon. Gentleman knew what had been the effect at Featherstone and Belfast of calling out the military. It was that innocent people suffered. It was not those who were concerned in the riot or disturbance who were killed; it was those innocent people who had nothing to do with it, and that was because the using of modern weapons of war upon an unarmed crowd, or practically an unarmed crowd, was very dangerous. The use of arms in dealing with an unarmed mob certainly seemed to him one of the reasons why this Committee of Inquiry should be held. When the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War sat on a Committee with Lord Bowen and another that Committee reported to the effect—

> "We are so impressed by the danger of using the modern rifle and cartridge with its full charge of powder against crowds in thickly populated districts, where there are close-lying collieries, districts and villages, that we cannot rest content that the point should be left without further investigation. We think the attention of the military authorities should be formally called to the question whether

special and less dangerous ammunition could not conveniently be used for troops when employed for the purpose of suppressing riots."

The right hon. Gentleman was a signatory of that Report. Then, again, there was the question not only of the arms which were used, but of when and how the time of firing should be fixed. He understood from that Report that in both France and Germany they were not quite so ready to fire upon an unarmed crowd as we were in this country. He believed he was right, according to the right hon. Gentleman's own Report, in saying that they gave more warning in those countries than we did in this country. They beat a drum or sounded a bugle so as to warn the crowd that the firing would take place, a thing which did not occur in this country, but which certainly seemed to be one of the things that ought to take place. He did not desire to weary the House with regard to this question, but it was a very grave and important matter to the trade unions, and affected them very much indeed. The trade unionists did not desire violence; they did not want to see trade disputes develop into riots and disturbances, but when they did so develop, it did not necessarily follow that all blame should be laid on the men or the trade unions; their action was due to the fact that they were forced into it by circumstances over which they had no control. Therefore, they thought that the civil powers first of all, not only in ninety-nine cases out of 100 but in 999 cases out of 1,000, were quite sufficient to deal with any action which arose out of a trade dispute. Having regard to the recommendations made in the Report, it certainly would seem desirable that constables should be drafted from one part of the country to another with much more readiness than they could be at the present time. He knew he was treading on dangerous ground when he spoke of Belfast and the Royal Irish Constabulary, but there was not the slightest doubt that if there was fear of anybody going on strike, police could have been drafted in from other quarters, and there would have been no need to call on the military at all. Knowing that there were religious differences in Belfast, the police could have been brought from England, and if there was no co-ordination between England and Ireland in this respect we were not the United Kingdom of England and Ireland some people suggested, and he thought it was time that such a state of things should be removed. He was not going to say a word about magistrates except this, that they were not always the best judges in matters of this kind, and there should be some provision to prevent them calling out the military whenever they chose. He begged to move.

*Mr. GEORGE ROBERTS (Norwich) in seconding said that the Labour Party in promoting this Resolution did so with no frivolous motives, but because they were convinced of the fact that the employment of troops in time of trade disputes was a serious matter, not only to those concerned in the dispute, but to the community at large. They had been minded to put this Motion down by past experience, such as that referred to by his hon. friend. They contended that the intervention of the military should be very rare and never resorted to unless every other endeavour had been thoroughly exhausted. There was no getting away from the fact that to vest such tremendous power in the hands of any one person was capable of becoming a grievous danger to the community. He was glad that his hon. friend in concluding his remarks had stated that he had no intention of implying any distrust of justices of the peace. He felt that to be a very desirable statement, because he happened to be one himself, and therefore might hope to appreciate the responsibility which would rest upon him in the event of the contingency about which the hon. Member had spoken. It was quite possible that the mayor or chief magistrate of a district might be a person of highly nervous temperament, who would become panic-stricken and call for the intervention of the military when no real cause for that was necessary. Again, it might be also that he would be subjected to pressure from interested persons. In fact, experience during the Belfast dispute somewhat indicated the possibility of this danger. It was there alleged that the Shipping Federation had used its influence with the Mayor of Belfast in order to secure the intervention of the military. It was said, and it had been stated in the House, that the Shipping Federation threatened that if the Government itself did not take strong action they themselves would use force—in fact, would organise a force of their own. The Chief Secretary for Ireland when questioned on this matter on 13th August last year, said that with reference to the letter addressed to him by the Shipping Federation, he dared say that its terms were not very proper, and he had pointed that out in reply. They felt that there was a great danger involved in a circumstance of that character, because it might well happen that interested persons would use their influence in order that these powers might be used to secure the object which they desired. It was just as well to understand that a trade dispute was, after all, a civil struggle with which the State, as such, had no right to interfere on behalf of either of the two parties. It was inconceivable that the military would ever be called out in the interests of the working section involved in such a dispute. Therefore, they could see that when the military were called upon to intervene they really did so in a class interest—a situation which ought to be avoided, at any rate, by the present House of Commons. He was further impressed with the grievous nature of this complaint owing to the new Territorial Force. It seemed to him that they of the Labour Party were perfectly justified in viewing this measure with a certain amount of suspicion. The right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean yesterday pointed out to the House a danger that they had anticipated through the passage of the Bill. He had put a question to the Secretary of State for War the other day with reference to a circular issued by the Warwickshire County Association calling upon employers of labour to give preference to men who were willing to join the Territorial Force. He did not charge the right hon. Gentleman or his advisers with any attempt to exercise undue influence in these matters, but nevertheless the right hon. Gentleman himself might not be quite so well aware of the fact as Labour Members were that large masses of British workmen had not that power of choice, of free right, in regard to the work they did, and it might well happen that men were compelled because of fear if they did not accept a situation that others were willing to do so and would therefore feel compelled to accept conditions that under more favourable circumstances they would be unwilling to abide by. The exercise of such influence might mean the pressing of a number of men into the Territorial Force. These men might be members of their respective trade union organisations, and it was not unnatural to expect that some occasion would arise when they were involved in a dispute between their union and those who were employing them for the time being. They had to contemplate the danger of the employer exercising his influence with the mayor of the district, and the mayor in his turn, becoming imbued with a sense of danger which perhaps in his nervous state of mind he might exaggerate, and use his influence with the Army Council, for the purpose of calling out the Territorial Force in order to deal with any probable disturbance. Therefore, there would be the spectacle of a trade unionist in that force being turned from an ordinary workman and citizen into a soldier in the course of a very few hours. He was informed that in the Territorial Force a man would have no option of refusal; he would be bound to respond to the call, otherwise he would be subject to the provisions of martial law. He did not know whether they were perfectly justified in anticipating a danger of that extreme character; if they were not, he would be very glad to receive the desired assurance from the Secretary for War. Nevertheless, they felt the danger was a real one and they were very anxious that they should not wait until they were confronted with it ere taking action. If they were right they were well advised in coming to that House and asking Parliament to make provision against what they were all prepared to acknowledge was a source of grave concern to a considerable section of law abiding citizens. With his hon. friend the mover of the Resolution he was of opinion that in the Featherstone riots there was no occasion for calling out the troops. The situation there was created by the fact that the district was denuded of police, who were called upon to keep order among the swells at Doncaster Races. A contingency of that kind might arise in other parts of the land; therefore he thought that the military should never be called upon save under proper restrictions imposed by that House, and only when it had become perfectly certain that the civil force was utterly incapable of coping with the anticipated danger. It was perfectly true that to impress troops into a service of that character had a provocative effect upon an assembly of people. After all, the surest safeguard of peace was the constitutional conduct of a trade dispute by the men's leaders, who were able to exercise over their followers more effective discipline than could be achieved by the military, whose presence had an irritating influence. The Committee, who had inquired into the Featherstone Riots had made the following recommendations—

> "In time of possible disturbance, some magisterial rota or committee, with one or more experienced justices should always hold themselves ready to act in their magisterial capacity, and to accompany, if necessary, any troops which are called upon in aid of the civil Power. Indeed, when matters are so grave as to render military intervention probably necessary, there should be the most complete organisation of the justices and of the civil Powers."

> "We think that the attention of military authorities should be formally called to the question whether special and less dangerous arms or ammunition might not conveniently be used by troops when employed for the purpose of suppressing riots."

He was not sure that these recommendation would cover all that they desired by the promotion of this Motion, under which they asked for an inquiry in order to guard against possibilities in the future and to protect the interests of the citizens in times of trade disputes. It might be even more necessary to adopt these safeguards now than it was in the time of the Featherstone riots, because the weapons which soldiers carried today were more deadly than formerly. Consequently, the military could not be called out without involving great danger to life and limb; and innocent persons, unaware of the gravity of the situation, might be killed or wounded. They desired that legislative action should be taken to obviate such possibilities in times of peace rather than wait for the contingency to arise. The highest quality of statesmanship was to make provision against possible dangers, and it was in that spirit they submitted the Motion, in the hope that they would receive satisfactory assurances from the right hon. Gentleman, either that some of the dangers they anticipated were not well founded, or, if they were well founded, that they would be legislated for.

Amendment proposed—

> "To leave out from the word 'that' to the end of the Question, in order to add the words 'in the opinion of this House, the powers now vested in chief magistrates to call upon the War Office to supply troops during times of trade disputes are open to grave abuse, are a menace to the liberty of the subject, and ought to be inquired into and reported upon by a Committee of this House.'"—(*Mr. Wardle.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

*MR. HALDANE: I think no one who has listened to this debate will fail to recognise not only the seriousness of the topic but the moderate manner and substance of the statements which have been made. The question is not whether the military are often called in on such occasions. The truth is it has happened very seldom. But the question is whether these occasions have not disturbed the public mind, and given such a sense of unrest that the whole thing should be reduced to the very smallest proportions possible. The unrest thus caused has, I think, done more mischief than the calling-in of the military has done good. Nevertheless, I think it is convenient that I should point out that there have been and may be some cases in which it is essential that the military should act, but I should further point out the narrowness of the limits in which such occasions ought to arise. The two hon. Members who have spoken have both stated the law in a very accurate and sensible form, basing their view on what was laid down in the Report of the Featherstone Committee. I sat on that Committee. The paragraph which contains the statement of the law on this subject was the work of one of the most distinguished and most humane Judges who ever sat on the English bench, the late Lord Bowen. It is the classical source of the statement of the law on this subject, and I do not think it can be improved. In fact, I had that very passage, which was read out by the hon. Member for Norwich, and another very admirable statement, reprinted and sent round to the Army, anticipating thereby something of what the hon. Member wished in the way of a codified statement of the law. Let me say at once that much as the Labour Members dislike the calling out of the troops, the military authorities dislike it still more. I think there is nothing more hateful to the military than to be called out to perform these civil duties. My recollection of the answers of Sir Redvers Buller to the questions put to him by the Featherstone Committee was that this duty was so loathsome that no soldiers ought to be asked to recognise it by providing any different kind of ammunition for these occasions from that used on ordinary occasions. Sir Redvers Buller said it was not the business of the military to be asked to act as police, they did not want to encourage the notion that they were to be asked to do the work of police by the provision of a special ammunition, which, moreover, would not be any more merciful than the ammunition ordinarily used. I have always felt that there was the greatest weight in what Sir Redvers Buller urged as to the dislike of the military for this civil duty. Let me remind the House what the law on this subject is. It is not statute but common law. In common law the prime maxim is that the safety of the public is the supreme canon in these matters. The law says, if there is a disturbance going on, the magistrate whose duty it is to restore order may call upon the citizens to come in and interfere, and to use such violence as is necessary and no more, to put down the disturbance. Such violence as is necessary and no more. That is often a very difficult thing to judge, but it is to be no more violence than is necessary. Therefore, they have no right to call in the military in a case where the police can quell any riot; they have no right to use firearms where they are not necessary, and anyone doing so and killing would be guilty of manslaughter. That is the principle which regulates the calling in of the military, and it can only be in very extreme cases that the calling in of the military is justified. I recollect well the circumstances of the Featherstone riots, and it was clearly proved that the military were not called in by the miners, but by a colony of strangers, who were not acquainted with the characteristics of colliers. Lieutenant Barker was called upon by the magistrate to protect these people. They were shut up in the engine-room for hours. The menacing action of the colliery people got more and more violent, and at last they proposed to burn down the colliery and throw the manager down the shaft. They were throwing jagged pieces of iron—I have a specimen still in my possession—and the result was that there was a very serious situation indeed. It was then that a magistrate, not one who had called out the troops, but another who happened to be there, kept his head and took matters into his own hands. He warned the crowd in the most explicit manner, and it was only when this strange body of men were proceeding to actual violence that he called upon the officer to fire, and the officer did fire, and the most damage was done to innocent people. That only shows that there may be cases in which you have no other means of helping yourself. The police ought to have been there, but they were not, and there will be cases from time to time when you have not an efficient force of police, and in these cases you must call on the military. The military ought never to act unless the case is so extreme and so urgent that more harm will come from their not acting than from their acting. There always comes harm from their acting. It is always an obnoxious thing to call on soldiers to do this police work, but there may be cases when it is necessary in order to prevent still greater disaster. It will be seen from the King's Regulations that an officer is not bound to fire or to use military weapons even though he is commanded to do so by the magistrate. That follows from the law that you must not use more violence than is necessary. In other words, the officer and his men are there only on the footing of civilians. That is the common law, but we have defined it by the King's Regulations. Article 283 says that, if the officer finds it unnecessary to take immediate action, it is not obligatory on him to do so, nor is he to continue any action longer than he thinks is absolutely necessary. All commands to the troops are to be given by the officer, and the troops are not on any account to fire except by the word of command of their officer, who, if it becomes necessary to order the troops to fire, is to exercise his discretion both as to the number of rounds and the object to be aimed at. Officers commanding troops are on every occasion that they are called out for the enforcement of the law to take the most effectual means in conjunction with the magistrates in explaining beforehand to the people that, in the event of the troops being ordered to fire, their fire will be effective. I think we are more humane here than on the Continent, where the order to fire is given much more easily than here. The King's Regulations say further that every possible warning is to be given to people before the order to fire is made effective.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): Are we to understand that the officer in command will be justified in not turning out his troops ?

MR. HALDANE: He would refuse to turn them out at his peril. By the common law everyone who refuses to aid the civil power is guilty of a misdemeanour. The officer has to exercise the difficult discretion of deciding whether it is necessary for him to come out or not, and it is not concluded by the fact that the magistrate thought it necessary. That is all. Care is to be taken not to fire at persons separated from the crowd, and to fire over the heads of the crowd. As far as it is possible to put these things into the military code, we have done it. The whole thing depends on the common law, which is of the most elastic character. I know no place where the common law is better laid down than in the two documents which I have here, the late Lord Thring's explanation of it, and Lord Bowen's. We have circulated this right through the Army and put it into our military manuals so that everybody is now informed what the law is. There is another point which was raised by the seconder of the Resolution. Is it true, or not, that the Territorial Force can be called out for the purpose of putting down a riot ? The answer is, it is not true. We carefully provided in drawing the Act of last session that that should not be so. Under the law as it now stands, Volunteers who happen to be out training with regular troops could be called upon to put down a riot or disturbance which was going on near at hand. Nobody would wish to do so, and you would wish Regular troops if you had the choice between them, but the Volunteers are liable, if they happen to be there, to be called upon to act. That is merely because every citizen is liable to be called out, and if the case were one in which is required more power than the ordinary citizen could use you would call on the Volunteers, if you had them there, to use their weapons. That applies also to Yeomanry and Militia. As regards the ordinary soldier, this is the point. He can be called out at any time to render this service. The Volunteer could not. It is only when he happens to be there that he can be called upon.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): What we want to be clear upon is the limitation of the words "training or exercise."

MR. HALDANE: In the case of the Volunteer when he was training or exercising with Regular troops he could be called out. In the case of the Territorial soldier, when he is out for training or exercise he is under military law and can be called on, but he cannot be called out for this purpose. That is the point I want to make. The Regular soldier can because he is always under military law. The Territorial cannot be. He is only under military law when he is being trained or exercised either alone or with any portion of the Regular force, or when attached to or otherwise acting in support of any Regular force, or when embodied or called out for actual military service for the purpose of defence in pursuance of any agreement. When he is being trained or exercised he is there just as the Volunteer, or in the case I have put, and if there happened to be a disturbance going on close at hand he could be called upon to go, but he cannot be embodied for that purpose, and that is what we carefully attended to in passing the Territorial Act last year, so that it might not be said that the Territorial Force was one that could be embodied in whole or in part for the purpose of putting down these disturbances. It is obvious that to call it out to put down disturbance is not to call it out for training or exercise, and it is only for training or exercise that you have power to call them out, and then only if they are under military law. The hon. Member asked me whether we would have a Committee on this subject. That is of course a question which should go to the Home Secretary who is responsible for the civil aspect of the controversy, but speaking for myself I do not think anything could be done further than we have done already, and I do not think any Committee would make the common law clearer than it is. It is an elastic law but you cannot make it any clearer.

Mr. JOHN WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) asked to be allowed to mention one point which the right hon. Gentleman had promised to consider. It was whether there could not be any different ammunition served out and whether a weapon suitable to the occasion could not be supplied on these occsaions, seeing that in almost every case of recent years the people who had been hurt were those who had been a quarter of a mile away. It was well enough in the old times when the blunderbuss or something of the kind was used, and they hit the man they wanted to hit. Now they hit the men who had nothing to do with the quarrel.

Mr. HALDANE: I am not sure that I agree that the blunderbuss would hit the man you want it to hit. I am speaking not from experience but from actual knowledge of what happened at Featherstone. The marvel was that more people were not hit, and I think what saved them was this. It was a small bore rifle of enormous muzzle velocity. The troops fired low and the shot went between the legs of the people and ricochetted. There was an unfortunate Sunday school teacher a quarter of a mile off looking on, and the bullet went through both his thighs and lodged in the thigh of another Sunday school teacher who was with him. I should be very sorry to substitute the old Brown Bess for the modern high velocity small bore bullet which makes a much slighter wound. The truth is, you ought not to use the soldiers at all. The only justification for using them is when you are absolutely driven to it. There may be cases in which you are absolutely driven, but they should be reduced to the very minimum. It is for that reason that I am not in favour of encouraging the idea that soldiers are there to be used and should be given special weapons suitable to the occasion.

Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington) said he understood that there was to be some alteration in the responsibility which was now placed upon a subaltern officer in regard to riots. It had been laid down that the officer must do his best and take his chance afterwards as to what a jury would say. As an adjutant it had fallen to his lot to instruct subalterns, but he now understood that there was going to be an alteration made in the King's Regulations and Manual of Military Law. Was the alteration going to date from this year? He understood that in future the officer was not bound to fire at the order of the magistrate.

Mr. HALDANE: That has always been so.

Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD said that under the old law if an officer refused to act and loss of life occurred, he was liable to a court-martial. They might have a very fussy magistrate who would order the officer to shoot, and if he refused to shoot and loss of life occurred, he would still be liable to court-martial. Let them take the case of a very humane magistrate who said he would not have any firing at all. If loss of life and damage to property occurred and if the officer used force, he would be liable to be tried for manslaughter if he fired. That would place the officer in a very difficult position. Even if the magistrate did give the order and the officer used violence and loss of life occurred then the officer could be tried by a civil power for murder. He did not think that was a responsibility which ought to be placed upon the officers of the British Army. The right hon. Gentleman had said that this was not a military question, but a common law question. If it was a common law question it should be so amended and defined that the officers of the Army, who loathed this duty more than any other, should, at all events, not be subjected, whatever course they took, to be tried twice in a Civil Court and three times in a Criminal Court.

Mr. ATHERLEY-JONES (Durham, N.W.) said he did not think anyone would quarrel with his right hon. friend's exposition of the law when he said that a single magistrate might requisition the military. He might requisition them by writing or telephone according to the King's Regulations, and then the military authorities were bound to obey. The magistrate must take the preliminary step by directing the military officer to fire. The military officer might, according to the military regulations, abstain from firing if in his judgment it was unnecessary. That was the state of the law before the right hon. Gentleman spoke and as it would be after. It was that state of the law to which he objected. What was a soldier when acting in civil service? He was not a soldier and was not recognised as a soldier. Lord Justice Tindall had laid down that there could be no distinction in such a matter between a soldier and a private individual. As a matter of fact, according to the dictum which had been laid down, soldiers were not there as soldiers but as armed police. The grievance in this matter was twofold. In the first place, however, they might recognise the humanity of the military and the magistrates, and whether through malice or hate, excessive zeal or lack of judgment, it was in the power of a single magistrate to enable the armed forces of the Crown to fire upon the people. He thought they should have had from the Secretary for War some assurance that greater precautions than the discretion or lack of discretion of a single magistrate should govern matters of this kind. He had gone through a category of cases in which the military had, in the past, applied force, and he had no hesitation in saying that in the Featherstone case, the South Wales case, the famous Lancashire riots, the Nottinghamshire riots, and the West Country riots, the employment of the military was wholly unnecessary, and the civil force would have been able to deal with every riot about which there was any record without the assistance of the military. The military used weapons with a range of over two miles, and consequently, the use of such weapons was not effective in dealing with the persons participating in the riot, but was most effective in regard to the people entirely outside the area or ambit of the riot altogether. He thought they ought to get some assurance that the use of firearms in such cases should never be resorted to without the enaction of the Home Secretary or the right hon. Gentleman himself. That, at any rate, would be some safeguard. His right hon. friend had said that the Territorial Army could not be employed, or rather could not be called out for this purpose unless they were exercising or training with the Regular Army. He thought it was perfectly competent for the Territorial Force to be called out for the purpose of training and exercised and employed for the purpose of suppressing a riot. His interpretation was, apart from the regulation which had been read out, that it was perfectly within the competence of the War Office if they chose to call out a section of the Territorial Army for the purpose of training, and then employ them for the purpose of suppressing a riot. He could conceive nothing more calculated to produce difficulties than the employing of any portion of the Territorial Army for that purpose. An eminent Judge had deprecated in the strongest possible terms the use of the Volunteers for such a purpose. He thought the House was indebted to the hon. Members who had brought this matter forward in the moderate way in which they had done, and he confessed himself disappointed at not receiving from the Secretary for War an assurance that better precautions would be taken in the future against a recurrence of this evil.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping) said that if the officer did not shoot he would be tried for mutiny, and if he did shoot he would be tried for murder. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would consider very seriously this point before he issued the explanation of the common law which he had to-day foreshadowed. No officer reading the Order to be issued would have the nerve to act if called upon, even if he had gone through the London School of Economics. Did they suppose for a moment that a man when called upon to act suddenly and with judgment, in the face of a great danger, would be able to avoid falling into one of the faults which had been foreshadowed by the right hon. Gentleman? Before issuing such an order the subject ought to be gone into more fully, or else a better explanation ought to be given in order that the unfortunate subaltern officer and even the officers of higher rank might have no doubt as to what their duty was. If an officer was ordered to fire he did so at his own peril. When an officer was ordered by the magistrate to shoot he might either shoot or refuse, and that was placing a very unfair responsibility upon the officer and the men. Those men would, in pursuance of an odious duty, be called upon to fire on their fellow citizens, who might be their own brothers and relatives. When placing men in such an unfortunate position, surely it was only asking a small thing to demand that the exact duty required of them should be clearly defined in order that the officers and men should not be placed in the extraordinary position of having, first of all to interpret the law, and then to carry out their duty. It was perfectly true that generally it was innocent people were killed, and the reason was that the men invariably aimed high, and the bullet at its extreme range killed people who were not militant. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would seriously consider the position in which he was placed, and that he would lay down absolutely clearly, and once for all, what the troops should do and what they should not do when called out in aid of the civil power.

MR. ACLAND (Yorkshire, Richmond) said that the hon. Member for North-West Durham had suggested that in spite of the law and the Army Act it would be possible to call out the Territorial Army for the purposes of training or exercise in order that they might be used to aid the civil power in suppressing disturbances. There were only two ways in which that could be done. Either the War Office must direct commanding officers of the Territorial Army to call their men out for training in camp or for drill at a time when they would not otherwise be called up, or the officers themselves must do it on their own responsibility in order that their men might be handy. Both these suggestions were absolutely unworthy of the hon. Member. It had been admitted on all hands that the regular solider hated this business, and was it less likely that the Territorial Force would do so?

MR. ATHERLEY-JONES: I never made that suggestion. What I did point out was that it was within the power of the War Office to mobilise these men at any time for the purpose of exercise or training and that it would be competent for the War Office to call upon them, whilst so mobilised, to assist the civil powers.

MR. ACLAND: The suggestion that the War Office would order the training or mobilisation of the Force in order that the civil powers might employ their services is an unworthy one that ought never to have been made.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said he was very glad this question had been raised, because it was one of very great importance. It was a question of peculiar interest to the Irish people, and to those connected with the agitations which had been going on in Ireland. In this country it was fortunately true that occasions when masses of unarmed people found themselves confronted with armed soldiers were few and far between. In Ireland what were called police were in reality soldiers; they were armed with rifles, and in Ireland they had had more frequently than in England during the past twenty-five years the miserable spectacle of unarmed people being fired upon. He saw the case some years ago at Mitchelstown where two or three perfectly innocent persons were shot in cold blood in the street. He did not think anybody could point to a single case of a conflict between the people on the one hand and the soldiers on the other where the calling in of military had had good effect in preventing the spread of disturbance and in preventing violence. In every single case he knew of where people had been fired upon the men who had been shot had been entirely outside of the dispute, and that made the whole circumstances of the case all the worse. He agreed with the hon. Member who declared that soldiers, and especially officers, suffered a grievance in this matter. It was perfectly true that there was no work that soldiers had a greater repugnance of than that of being called upon to confront unarmed people in an industrial or agrarian dispute. He knew that was the case in Ireland where he had seen troops called upon to carry out evictions. The people recognised that they disliked the work intensely, and the result was that there had never been the same feeling against the Army as there was against the police. It was a monstrous thing to say that, if troops were called out, the responsibility should be put on the officers and the troops. Those who were responsible first of all for calling out the troops ought to take the responsibility. A great many magistrates were not experienced; they were men without training, legal or otherwise, and to say that any magistrate who got into a panic or lost his head was to have the power of calling out troops and ordering them to fire on the people, and that, if it turned out there was no justification, the officer was to be held responsible, was to put the officer in a position which was quite unjust. He was surprised that the Secretary of State had not recognised the force of the case which had been put before him by hon. Members. If the matter was to be left as it was now, it would be a most unsatisfactory ending to the debate. The Secretary of State had told them what the ordinary law was, and no doubt his description was perfectly true. This was a matter that ought to be specifically dealt with. First of all, there ought to be more stringent regulations with reference to the calling out of the troops to deal with unarmed masses of people in industrial or agrarian disputes. Those who called out the troops ought to be made to bear the entire responsibility. If the Secretary of State for War would place this question on a different footing, if he would place the responsibility for calling out the troops to deal with cases of industrial disturbance or agrarian agitation more clearly on the shoulders of the people who called them out, he would be doing something which would result in much good in future, and something for which many people would thank him. He was surprised to hear an hon. Member say that cases of firing on the people took place, if not more frequently, more readily in this country than abroad. He was under the impression that people were more frequently and more unnecessarily fired upon abroad, but cases had occurred too often in this country. When cases of firing on the people, either by the military or by the police, had occurred in Ireland the bitterest feelings had been aroused and the greatest damage done.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): I have not had the opportunity of hearing the whole of this debate, but I think I have been able to gather from what has passed since I entered, the views which are held in the various quarters of the House. I think the hon. Member for East Clare may set his mind at rest in regard to my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War; he does not in the least oppose the settling of this matter permanently on a practical footing and on the soundest basis which can be established, having regard to the complexity of the law on the subject. I agree with my right hon. friend that we cannot take too much care with regard to this. These unhappy occasions occur fortunately very seldom, but when they do occur there is no time to settle questions of responsibility. I quite agree that the commanding officer, whether a senior or a subaltern, is in a very difficult and a very disagreeable position. Not only so, but it is equally difficult, perhaps more difficult, for the solitary magistrate who may have to give him the order. At any rate, my hon. friend will admit that it may be extremely difficult for the magistrate—I do not carry it further than that. Great responsibility has to be taken at a moment's notice, and at a time of confusion when it may be difficult to see clearly what should be done. Everything possible ought to be done to put the matter on a sound and rational basis. Therefore, we have no objection to the appointment of a Committee, and we hope—though we are not very sanguine—that the law which is at present obscure, will be made more explicit. Whatever the difficulty of that may be, at any rate the Committee will do their best to elucidate the law, and by practical suggestions endeavour to avoid the troubles, difficulties, and dangers encountered in the time past. I would suggest to the hon. Member for Stockport that as we have given a substantive undertaking to appoint a Committee to report to the House he should withdraw his Motion.

Mr. WARDLE said that under these circumstances he would ask leave to withdraw the Motion.

*Mr. WYNDHAM (Dover): I understand that the Motion cannot be withdrawn. I did not wish to intervene, but in the absence of my right hon. friend I think it my duty to say that we do not oppose the Government in the course they have decided to take. But we reserve to ourselves the full power to criticise the terms of the reference and any other matter pertaining to the appointment of the Committee. We recognise fully the complexity of this problem. On the one hand, we desire as ardently as any Member of the House can desire, that the duty of a soldier under the particular circumstances when he is called upon to intervene in aid of the civil power, should be defined with greater precision; but on the other hand, we do not desire that the soldier as a citizen should be absolved by law from doing his duty as a citizen. The law imposes on every citizen, even if he is not a soldier, the duty of acting in aid of the civil power. The soldier when called out in aid of the civil power is a conspicuous and effective citizen whose action everybody takes note of and whose failure to do his duty as a citizen becomes a matter of common knowledge. Again, if he fails, he is exposed to a double punishment—to an action in a civil suit and also to the loss of his career as a soldier. We cannot discriminate between him as a soldier and as a citizen in ordinary cases. If a soldier sees a man beating a woman in the street he is bound to go to the assistance of the woman. Or if a soldier sees a policeman being attacked, he is as bound to assist the policeman as any Member of this House would be. The difference in the case of the soldier is that his conduct is before the eyes of all and is also subject to review by his superior officer. To that we make no objection in ordinary cases. But in the particular case which has been brought before the House when a magistrate summons a soldier to aid him in the discharge of certain duties—we hold that the duties of the soldier ought to be defined with greater precision than at present.

*Mr. HALDANE: The Motion to which this is an Amendment is that you, Mr. Speaker, do leave the Chair. The most convenient course would be to negative the Amendment, and the Government will undertake to appoint a Committee "to inquire into the powers now vested in magistrates to call upon the War Office to supply troops during the time of trade disputes."

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND asked if that would cover agrarian disputes?

*Mr. HALDANE: It will cover every thing connected with trade disputes.

*Mr. WYNDHAM: The right hon. Gentleman's terms of reference do not touch the point which I tried to enforce on the House. What we want is an attempt to define with greater precision than at present the duties of the soldier when called upon to assist the magistrate, not the powers of the magistrate.

Captain J. CRAIG (Down, E.) said he would not have intervened in the debate had it not been that the basis of the arguments used by the hon. Gentleman in support of his Motion was the riot in the City of Belfast, and he thought it was only fair to the House that some slight explanation should be given of the facts of the case. He admired the care and moderation with which the Motion was brought forward and seconded, and he hoped to speak moderately himself. He was present in Belfast at the time of the riots, and was therefore qualified to speak of the action of the chief magistrate. His Lordship was blamed by some for the action he took, but eventually he was admired by all for the restraint with which he exercised his powers after obtaining the best possible advice at a very critical time. The suggestion that the power of calling out troops should be taken away from the chief magistrates, and placed in the hands of the War Secretary or the Home Secretary, appeared to him to be pernicious. Those who were on the spot at a critical period must take the responsibility of calling out troops to aid the civil power. If the War Secretary had the power he would have to apply to the chief magistrate as to whether it was necessary to call out the military—that was to say, the very man from whom it was proposed to take away the power. At any rate, they were bound to have someone responsible. They might surround him with advisers, but in the end one man must give the order. In Belfast the Lord Mayor called in the advice of a large number of resident magistrates from the surrounding districts, who had had long and various experience in such matters, but in the end his Lordship had to give the order. It was said by the Labour Members that at the present time owing to the discipline of trade union officials it was not necessary to bring in the military in case of trade disputes. But he would point out that, in Belfast, the trouble arose through the action of a trade union official. When Mr. Larkin was sent across the water to Belfast to organise the dockers a most regrettable affray arose in the streets in which Larkin was implicated. If the trade union officials could be trusted to exercise some control over the great body of workers, there would be no necessity to call out either the military or the ordinary police. How could the Labour Members sitting in that House, using the powers behind their organisation, be responsible for any person like Larkin?

*Mr. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is taking this opportunity of reviving old animosities connected with Belfast. Nothing he has said so far relates to the Army Estimates.

Captain J. CRAIG said he bowed at once to the Speaker's ruling, but he merely wished to point out the other side of the question of particular riots to which the hon. Member had referred. He would like to refer to a remark of the Secretary for War to the effect that more unrest had in the past been occasioned by the present state of the law than good had ever been done by calling out the troops. He did not quite understand the right hon. Gentleman's reasoning. Theoretically all of them deplored at any time having to call out troops in any dispute, trade or otherwise, but at the same time if serious troubles did come upon any community of people it was difficult to say where a trade dispute ended and a party riot commenced. What was to take the place of the military in such a case as that? There must be some force. The hon. Member opposite had suggested that there was no necessity whatever for calling out the troops on account of disputes in the United Kingdom, because of the great facilities which railways gave for getting constabulary from any part of England or Wales to the seat of the trouble. But that did not apply to all parts of the United Kingdom, because in Ireland they could not train the Royal Irish Constabulary from the North to the West of Ireland or *vice versa*, and it became absolutely essential, if life and property were to be maintained, that there should be some power by which the chief magistrate, or the magistrate of the city, or the county council, should have authority to call out the military in case of an emergency. He understood from the Amendment that all that it was intended to do at present was to appoint a Committee to inquire into the whole matter, both from the civil side and the military side, and the arguments which were used in the first part of the debate were nearly all from the civil side of the question and only in the latter part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech did he come to the question of the officer's responsibility. He must confess that he thoroughly agreed with what had fallen from the right hon. Gentleman on the Front Opposition Bench. The right hon. Gentleman insisted, and he thought quite rightly insisted, that if there was to be a Committee of Inquiry into the whole of this matter it should be more for the protection of those officers who had to carry out the unfortunate and disagreeable duty of giving the order to fire on the people in the case of a strike or riot. He hoped the Committee would look at the question from every point of view and see that there was no undue sentimentality about it In this country passions might be aroused, they knew not how, and if there was any weakening or sign of weakening on the part of the Secretary for War or the Home Office it would be a very great pity so far as maintaining law and order was concerned. This power was never unnecessarily used, and no instances had been brought forward of undue harshness or of anyone deliberately using the power in their hands for anything other than that which they considered was good and right. He hoped the authorities would, in their wisdom, be very careful before they affected or frittered away any of the powers which they possessed. They must all agree how very disagreeable it was when it was necessary to call in the military power, but they must have the power of maintaining law and order in the country, for all persons irrespective of class or creed, whether they were labouring men or landlords or tenants. It was with the object of asking the right hon. Gentleman not to enter into any sentimentalism on this subject and see that proper suggestions were made to uphold the law that he had risen.

Sir F. BANBURY (City of London) said that before the Amendment was withdrawn he would like to say one word. The terms of the reference, as he understood them, were to the effect that a Committee should be appointed to consider the employment of the military in the case of trade disputes. In his opinion that was not desirable. In the opinion of an ordinary citizen of this country a riot was a riot, whether it arose out of a trade dispute or from any other cause of disagreement, and he was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman by the terms of his reference should lend any encouragement to the idea that he would sanction different treatment to a riot which arose out of a trade dispute and a riot which arose out of anything else. That was what was underlying the whole of the speeches from below the gangway. [Cries of "No."] He thought if hon. Gentlemen would refer to their speeches they would find that that was so. One hon. Member had said that in the old days riots arose out of political disturbance, and then, perhaps, it was not unnecessary or inadvisable to call in the military power, but that now they arose out of trade disputes which was a different thing. To show that he was right he would point out that the hon. Member for Clare wished to include agrarian disputes. That proved what was running in the minds of hon. Members below the gangway. It was no use appealing to the Party opposite, he knew, but he wished to call the attention of the country to the fact that a distinction was to be drawn between a riot which arose out of a trade dispute and one that did not.

*Mr. WYNDHAM: By the leave of the House I should like to say I do not understand that the right hon. Gentleman has formulated any terms of reference. and I reserve on behalf of the Opposition our full right to examine any terms of reference put on the Paper. All I understand is that it has been agreed that a Committee is to be appointed to consider two topics, one the powers of the magistrates, and the other the duty of soldiers when they are called out to aid the civil power.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) said, that although the speeches made were moderate in tone, underlying them the impression was conveyed to the Ulster Members that this Resolution was aimed at the City of Belfast. He did not wish to transgress the Speaker's ruling, which he understood to be to the effect that they could not discuss the causes in Belfast which had led to the intervention of the military. But if he was at liberty to do so he would like to point out to the hon. Member who said that there was danger in the military being in the streets, that he would have found, if he had been in Belfast, that there was danger of being in the streets without the military. The whole city was in confusion, business was paralysed, tourists were afraid to cross to Belfast, and he was told at one hotel that they had been empty for a fortnight. In that case the municipal authorities were prepared to act and to act in a way in which he thought the Chief Secretary and his advisers ought to have acted in other parts of Ireland. If this Motion was meant as conveying any blame or censure upon the authorities in Ireland, then he for one would make his protest against such a Resolution being passed. If the Government would give them an assurance that in the amended form in which they accepted the Motion, they implied no kind of censure upon the authorities in Belfast, he would not press the matter further.

Mr. MOORE (Armagh, N.) said he desired to associate himself with what other hon. Members had said with regard to Belfast. He witnessed a good deal that was a disgrace to the city When he said disgrace to the city he meant a certain organised artificially imported section of it.

*Mr. SPEAKER: I am afraid the hon. Member was not here when I ruled before. This is not an opportunity for discussing what took place in Belfast. We are now on Army Estimates, and the hon. Gentleman must consider this question solely from the military point of view.

Mr. MOORE said he had no intention of transgressing the ruling, but merely wished to make an observation on the terms of the reference.

*Mr. SPEAKER: They are not before the House.

Mr. MOORE said a remark was made by the hon. Member for East Clare, and responded to by the right hon. Gentleman in regard to how far the military were to be used in certain cases of agrarian dispute. Might he not refer to that?

*Mr. SPEAKER: The remark does not seem to be relevant. The Secretary of State for War has said he will propose a certain reference, and no Committee can be appointed without that reference. If the terms of that reference are not agreeable to the hon. Member, then he will have an opportunity of criticising them.

Question put, and agreed to.

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. MACLEAN (Bath) said he rose to call attention to a subject as to which he had a notice on the Paper, namely, the social condition of the private soldier. The question was one of citizenship. The British soldier, if he might attempt to define him, was merely a citizen who had temporarily and voluntarily abandoned certain civil rights for the service of his country, getting in return, food, clothing, lodging and money. Two things followed upon this; first, that his training while in the Army should leave him not only an efficient soldier, but also fit for the full duties of citizenship, and, secondly, that he should have a fair chance when he resumed full civil rights. A great improvement had taken place in the position of the private soldier in the Army from the days when the Duke of Wellington told the Royal Commission of 1840 that the discipline of the Army could not be maintained without adequate measures of flogging. A very important point was the substitution of detention for purely military offences instead of imprisonment. The soldier, like the civilian, took his chances in the matter of offences against the criminal law. For the first time there was a differentiation, and a proper differentiation, in favour of the soldier who offended against purely military regulations. Formerly he was sent to prison and thus lost a certain amount of self-respect and the respect of his fellows for an offence which was not against civil law, but against military regulations. He was very glad to find that there was now a place of detention for such offences where the soldier wore his uniform, was known by name and not by number, attended drills, exercises, school and gymnasium, and ultimately regained his unit, a better man and a better soldier than formerly. Another point of great importance was the housing of the soldier. The herding together of large numbers of men in unsuitable barracks inevitably lowered their self-respect and the tone of the regiment with which they were associated. He was glad to find that improvement in that respect had taken place. In the new barracks men were even given cubicles where they might have the privacy of at any rate a small space during the hours they were left to themselves. Some months ago he had visited Gibraltar. There he found some barracks of modern type, but there were others which certainly did not provide such accommodation as should be given to soldiers. As to the feeding of the soldier, the canteen system required further overhauling. Many of the wet canteens were little better than beer shops. He was glad to note that great improvements had already been effected, and that the canteen was being made a comfortable club for the men, where they could get beer, tea and coffee, and also food. The extension of the privilege of wearing plain clothes was a welcome reform. He did not pretend to talk as an expert on military matters even though some years ago he attained to the dizzy eminence of the rank of corporal in a Volunteer corps. He was one of those Members who accepted the invitation of the War Secretary to visit Aldershot last summer, and he had been struck by the arrangements made for the social life of the soldier there. There had been a marked, an almost marvellous, improvement in many respects in the social life of soldiers, and that had had very good results in the character of the men as shown by the following figures. In 1866 cases of drunkenness were 26·4 per cent., but in 1906 only 4·5 per cent. Trials by court martial in the former year were 12·5 per cent. and only 3·2 per cent. in the latter year. And cases of desertion were 13 per 1,000 in the former and only 5 per 1,000 in the latter year. The requirement of a character from all recruits had tended very largely to raise the standard of the men who joined the Army. He suggested that still further improvement was easily capable of being made in the social conditions of soldiers. Another test of the rise in the standard of soldiers was the fact that 52 per cent. of the men of the British Army possessed an education certificate of proficiency. The large number of old soldiers who were out of employment was lamentable, and the country should find means by which these men might re-enter civil life and not drift, as they so often did, not only into the ranks of unemployment, but into the ranks of the unemployable. He was glad to note the keen interest of the War Office in this important matter. Since 1906 the War Committee had taken practical interest in training men to occupy positions in civil life after leaving the Army. Much more work in this direction could be done to provide a brighter future for the soldier after he left the Army. The two points he had tried to make were that the social life of the soldier should be developed, and that not only for the soldier's own sake but for the sake of the community he should be given ample opportunities of taking his place in civil life once more.

*MR. WHITEHEAD (Essex, S.E.) said he should like to make a few observations about the latter part of the Resolution which stood in the hon. Gentleman's name.

*MR. SPEAKER: There is no Resolution in the hon. Member's name, and if there were it could not be moved. The only Question before the House is that I now leave the Chair.

*MR. WHITEHEAD said he had put it in the wrong form; he ought to have said the latter part of the hon. Member's observations on the question of the employment of soldiers after they left the Army. There were certain difficulties in connection with the attempt which he believed was being made to find employment for soldiers. The difficulties arose in this way. In places where there were works under the War Office, the present policy was to dismiss civilians who had been previously engaged by the Department in order to find employment for soldiers. While they were all sympathetic with soldiers who desired to find employment, still he thought they ought to look at the other side of the picture. Soldiers who left the Army were mostly unmarried men; they had small pensions, or something at all events to fall back upon. The civilian employees on the other hand were mostly married men with families dependent upon them. It was, therefore, a very great hardship on civilians who had been in the employment of the War Office for years, that they should be dismissed with no fault found, but merely in order that employment might be given to soldiers. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not pursue this policy too harshly, and he appealed to him to bear in mind the fact that these civilians who had been dismissed during the last two years, or were being threatened with dismissal, had entered the employment of the War Office at a time of pressure. Probably they had thrown up other work on a sort of understanding that work in the War Office would be more or less permanent. He submitted to the right hon. Gentleman that this particular class of employees were worthy of every consideration. He hoped that such dismissals as had been going on at Shoeburyness and elsewhere would not continue, merely in order to substitute soldiers, and that if the right hon. Gentleman found it necessary for purposes of economy or in the interests of the public as a whole to effect dismissals he would do it at a time of the year when these men who had settled down near the Government works might have a fair opportunity of getting work elsewhere, not in seasons of slack trade. He would ask whether finality had yet been reached in the matter of dismissals and whether those now engaged in that part of the war service in which his constituents were particularly interested might now look for a continuance of that civilian element which had been part of the establishment so long. He also submitted that it might be not really in the interests of the public at large to have dismissals take place in this way, because in time of public pressure the War Office must look to trained artificers, engineers and other civilians to come and help them, and if it should happen that subsequently such men were dismissed merely in order to make way for soldiers who were in many respects more fortunately situated it would be a great discouragement to civilians to go into the service of the War Office and to that extent the nation would be prejudiced in time of pressure and of difficulty. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would weigh this consideration.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.) said he would like to have information as to the position in which the barracks now stood. He understood that something was not altogether right with the barracks at Brighton, and they had a number of debates and answers to Questions last year with reference to Piershill barracks, when an artistic difference was drawn he understood between being insanitary and unhealthy. They would be most gratified if the right hon. Gentleman would give them further information as to how these barracks now were, because there was no difference of opinion in the House that every effort should be made to put them into healthy and sanitary condition without any mincing of words as soon as possible. They remembered debates in previous years largely in connection with loan expenditure deliberately incurred for the purpose of seeing that barracks were built which were thoroughly healthy, sanitary, and satisfactory in every respect. Although they knew the policy of the Government was strongly against loans, it was better to have healthy and sanitary barracks even if they had to borrow the money than to leave them in an antiquated and unsatisfactory condition. He had noticed in the abstract of the account for this year that the total decrease amounted to £307,000. If that was analysed it would be found that there was a diminution in expenditure of £205,342, and the so-called decrease was due to an increase of the appropriations-in-aid of £95,000. That was not very far off one third of the so-called total decrease shown on the face of the abstract of the Army Estimates, and it was really due to enhanced receipts. He knew there was a school of thought not very strongly represented in that House which had the greatest possible objection to the system of appropriations-in-aid. It was only fair and right that these

Votes should be credited with any genuine receipts that might belong to them, and accordingly fewer demands should be made upon the Exchequer for issues to meet payments under the various Votes. It was somewhat remarkable that at a time when very considerable reductions were being made in the effective forces of the Army they should also be able to increase the appropriations-in-aid which came to the relief of expenditure. It would be interesting and he thought useful if the right hon. Gentleman could give an explanation as to where and from what sources the main bulk of these receipts were expected to come. They must bear in mind that to all intents and purposes what appeared as an appropriation-in-aid came sooner or later either from the British taxpayer himself or from some individuals or classes of individuals. Whatever merits or demerits the Army might possess, certainly that of money making was not one of them, and accordingly these receipts must come from other sources, and he thought if they were analysed they would be found either to be from the taxpayers of the country for services rendered, or that a considerable increase was anticipated this year to come from various sources in connection with India. For instance, if they took Vote 6, sea transports and remounts, there was an increase of something like £6,000 for receipts connected with sea transport. That was presumably for services rendered to the Navy. At a period when considerable reductions were being made in the effective forces of the country it would be interesting to know how it was that the right hon. Gentleman was able to make that still further demand from the Navy to the extent of some £6,000. To take another instance, he saw that right hon. Gentlemen anticipated during the coming financial year to be able to obtain another £3,000 for payments by officers for the use of horses. It would be interesting if he would tell them where these extra appropriations were expected to come from, and if they were the result of any deliberate change of policy. No doubt there was an admirable and excellent reason, but he noticed that under Vote 7 there was a considerable sum for clothing which had to be recovered from the Indian Government. Also on Votes 13 and 14, the non-effective votes, there was an anticipation that the receipts made would be considerably in advance of previous years owing to contributions from the Indian Government. He did not know if this was likely to be a continuing process or whether it was automatic, but practically all the appropriations-in-aid which figured in the Estimates would be found to be for services which had been rendered either at home or by the Indian Government. Still where they found there was such a large increase in appropriations-in-aid amounting in the course of this year to £95,000, they would be grateful if the right hon. Gentleman would give them some further information. He did not quite understand the relations of the appropriations-in-aid under the new vote for the Territorial Force. He presumed to some extent they balanced one another, but he found that under the new Vote 4, there were anticipated appropriations-in-aid amounting to £36,000. Under Votes 4 and 5 of last year, which corresponded he understood to this, the sum amounted to £31,000, showing an increase to be expected for the new Territorial Force on appropriations-in-aid of something like £5,000. He would like further information on the matter which completely puzzled him. Under sub-head G. there were repayments in redemption to the amount of £20,000. Last year the right hon. Gentleman thought it advisable to reserve certain sums of money for defraying debts incurred by the various Volunteer corps on drill halls and ranges. Those he understood had now been extinguished with the exception of about £25,000. This year it was proposed on somewhat the same lines to clear off certain outstanding debts resting on the Volunteers. He could not understand why, after having cleared off those debts in regard drill-halls, etc., this year there was a credit to the Territorial Force of £20,000. Upon Item G., there was an appropriation-in-aid of some £35,000, and on page 50 there would be seen an item, repayments in redemption of loans, £20,000. Why was there this repayment of loans in regard to Volunteer corps?

*MR. HALDANE: They are surpluses.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH said he could not see any loans outstanding which could be repaid and come in as appropriations-in-aid, and, therefore, he could not see how they could come in as a reduction of the Vote which they were now called upon to pass. The right hon. Gentleman yesterday had given various estimates as to the expenditure of the Territorial Force, and he hoped the figures he then gave would turn out to be something like final. He sympathised with the right hon. Gentleman because when the House was asking to have this, that, and the other done, it was bound to be a troublesome thing for any Government to resist proposals, which, however small they might be themselves, when added up amounted to a very considerable sum. What was asked for last year it was quite clear had considerably swollen the Estimates and cost of the Territorial Force. He hoped the Secretary for War would not be too sanguine in thinking they had arrived at finality as far as the demands of the Territorial Associations were concerned. He hoped the training he had had in the House of Commons would always induce him to take every step he could to keep down unnecessary expenditure. The more he understood and grasped the details of the work of the County Associations, the more he was bound to confess that he thought the expenditure upon them would be sure to increase in the future. There was the boot allowance which required a good deal more attention than had been given to it. There was also the subject of travelling allowances. Under the Memorandum which had been issued in Sections 26 and 65, there appeared a scale of travelling allowances. He could speak with some confidence upon this point because he knew the conditions of scattered counties in which travelling expenses must necessarily be heavy, and where he was extremely doubtful that they would be able to make both ends meet under the present allowances. With regard to allowances made to enable the men to do the necessary musketry courses, he had been asked to find out if any allowance was to be given for providing the men whilst at musketry practice with food and provisions. He had been informed that no such provision had been made in the Memorandum, and it was obvious that if the men had to be away from home at musketry practice for a considerable portion of the day, they could not expect satisfactory results in the way of shooting unless they had had a fairly good dinner. Such matters as this would tend to irritate and annoy those men whom they were hoping to retain and to induce to join in the future. With regard to sergeant-instructors, he found in Paragraph 66 of the Memorandum that an allowance of £6 10s. was to be given to them. No doubt there were portions of the country where that allowance might be sufficient, but he thought the right hon. Gentleman would fully appreciate the importance of sergeant-instructors living up to a certain standard. In colliery districts or big manufacturing centres it was very important that the sergeant-instructor, who had to live in the midst of those whom he had to drill and induce to join, and with whom he would have a good many connections, must be in a somewhat superior position. He doubted whether £6 10s. was sufficient to enable such a man to do his duty efficiently. All he could say was that he had paid a good deal more than that out of his own pocket to enable the sergeant-instructor to live in better quarters and to enable him to live up to his position. He understood from the Secretary for War that these allowances were not to be paid from private sources, and that no obligation would be placed upon the officers to make up any deficiencies. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not be too sanguine in this matter and would recognise that when they were asking him to make still further demands upon the Exchequer, they were only doing it in the best interests of the Territorial Force. Although the right hon. Gentleman might have to adopt certain rules of thumb for the purpose of enabling grants to be given to the different Associations, he hoped he would allow, subject to his control, far greater latitude in forming the estimates of expenditure. It was almost impossible to draw up Estimates for the Volunteers which would cover all circumstances, and which were applicable under one definite rule. A battalion largely recruited from the urban districts where distances were not great, and where means of communication were easy, could not fairly be compared with battalions recruited from a very large and extended area. He did not like to be constantly referring to his own battalion, but when one saw a battalion recruited from a big population like Derby, it would readily be seen that it was not nearly so expensive as a battalion recruited from the Peak of Derbyshire, where there were outlying stations fifty-one miles away from the headquarters of the regiment. It was obvious that the same conditions would not apply in both cases. He hoped the Secretary for War, when he had got over the initial difficulty of setting these Associations on their legs, would allow them considerable latitude in forming their estimates for providing all their requirements, because it was evident that the same rule could not possibly work out satisfactorily in all cases. There were two distinct classes from which the infantry portion of the Territorial Force could be drawn, viz., the big urban districts and the scattered country districts. He had not had time to find out what were the allowances to be given for attendances at drill, but it was perfectly clear that they would not be able to arrive at a satisfactory result by laying down a general rule for all battalions without considering the different circumstances. As to whether grants could be given to half companies or even to sections, it was not quite clear under the proposals before them. He presumed that further information would be given on these points which would enable them to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion. He thanked the right hon. Gentleman for the answer he gave him that afternoon as to the rules of training. Apprehensions had been excited in the minds of certain commanders of Volunteers by one of the regulations affecting the annual training in camp. The same thing he understood applied to sergeants and the rank and file. He hoped that so far as the men were concerned the right hon. Gentleman would not insist in maintaining that regulation. It would obviously be extremely complicated, and it would be difficult for a man living in a far distant place to find out who was the general officer commanding his division. He did not know whether many people now serving in the Territorial Force would be able to attach much meaning to the regulation, but obviously it would be better that those applications should be addressed, as had always been done before, to the officer commanding the units who would have the means of finding out the true facts of the case, and be able to deal with them properly. He noticed that that was marked "Provisional" on the outside, and he hoped the matter would receive the right hon. Gentleman's attention.

*MR. HALDANE: It is quite clear in the Act.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH was afraid he had forgotten the Act. He was dealing with the lesser volume of the two, namely, the pamphlet which had been issued within the last two or three days. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not be too sanguine in thinking that he had reached finality so far as the cost of the Territorial Army was concerned.

*MAJOR DUNNE (Walsall) said the House must have been struck by the amount of work that was being done by the Secretary of State for War and those responsible to him for the organisation of the Army. The right hon. Gentleman had been less than just to himself in applying to his scheme the quotation: "The little done, the undone vast." He thought the House and the country generally would feel that a great deal had already been accomplished. He was particularly glad that the right hon. Gentleman had made reference to what was called the striking force of 160,000 men, because there was a great deal of misconception not only in the House, but outside, as to what exactly that force consisted of. When they examined the figures which the right hon. Gentleman had placed before them, he thought the feeling of alarm in the country that the striking force was far more than adequate, and that it might be called an aggressive force, would be dispelled. As to the Cardwell system, whenever it was debated in the House it met with a certain amount of abuse; but he thought it had been pretty conclusively shown now that that system held the field against any other yet proposed, and that it would continue to hold it. Most soldiers, at all events, were agreed that the advantages of a system by which the training was carried out in this country in units, these units being kept together in large military centres like Aldershot and Salisbury Plain, enormously outweighed those of the opposite system of training in depots. If that system were departed from great expense would be involved in re-building and renovating the present depots. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to a matter in which, personally, he took a great interest, namely, the instruction of officers. He had the good fortune to graduate at the staff college, and he could speak of the inestimable value of the training received there. The right hon. Gentleman had paid a well-merited compliment to the value of the instruction given at that institution, and what he foreshadowed in regard to the facilities and inducements to be offered to officers, who could not all have the advantage of a staff college education, should go a long way in the direction he desired. He did not agree with the hon. Member for Durham that the new tests and higher educational standard required of officers would meet with opposition on their part. If the officers were given facilities for instruction, and the inducement that when so instructed they would be afforded adequate employment, the right hon. Gentlemen might rely upon their most cordial co-operation. But there was no part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech which to him was more satisfactory than the evidence given of the improvement in the conduct of the rank and file. It showed that the Army was becoming year by year a more respectable and attractive profession in the eyes of the classes from which recruits were mainly drawn.

Colonel IVOR PHILIPPS (Southampton) expressed the opinion that the extension of the privilege of wearing plain clothes to the private soldier would have a great deal to do in popularising the Army. He knew it would be said by a great number of his right hon. friend's advisers that such a step would tend to depreciate discipline, but he thought they already had sufficient examples to show that such would in no way be the case. The police were allowed to wear any costume they liked when they were off duty, and the soldiers of the Indian Army, whose discipline, as the right hon. Gentleman knew, was on an even higher scale than that of our own Army, wore plain clothes, not only when they were on leave, but when they were walking out and in their barracks. The right hon. Gentleman could effect a very great economy in his Clothing Vote by adopting the reform which he was suggesting. If he called for a statement from the India Office showing what it cost to clothe the Indian soldier he would be very much struck by the difference. He believed the British soldier would willingly provide himself with a decent and respectable walking-out suit if he were allowed to do so. He hoped his right hon. friend would look into the matter.

Mr. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash) congratulated the Secretary for War on the breezy spirit of optimism which permeated his opening address. He hoped the shortage of 8,000 officers, which was a very serious matter, would be overcome by the remedies he had suggested. It was necessary that the conditions under which a man entered the commissioned ranks should be made easier. So long as an officer was required to provide himself with so much in the way of furniture, uniform, and horses, the Army would remain—as it was called—a playground for the rich instead of an open field for all classes of the community and for men with most ability. He hoped to receive some assurance from the Secretary of State for War that he proposed to do something to remedy the very grave danger arising from the shortage of horses. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that 126,000 horses were required to keep the Army up to war strength, but that he proposed a reduction of 70,000 to keep it at peace strength. If the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to make that reduction, what preparation was he making in case a serious emergency arose, to meet this shortage? The French Government, and to a certain extent the German Government, had a system of a required number of horses ready-trained, to keep the Army up to war strength. The question could only be thoroughly dealt with by bringing it before the House and the country and reminding them of the danger we were running. The President of the Board of Agriculture stated last December that there were 10,000 fewer foals dropped last year than in the previous year. On another occasion the noble Lord said that a reserve of 37,000 horses would be required for a peace establishment and he advocated the registration of horses. It was necessary to ask the question, what steps were the Government taking to remedy the existing shortage? Every day there was a tendency for the general omnibus utility horse, which had done such good service in South Africa, to drop out in view of the growing amount of motor traction. This was affecting the horse supply all over the world and produced obviously a great shortage. He asked for some details of the proposed scheme of registration and when it would be put into operation. Inquiries conducted by military experts like Colonel Birkbeck of the Remount Department showed that the English-bred horse was the most reliable for cavalry purposes. It was time to do something to encourage horse breeding in this country by direct means in order to remedy the shortage. Good mares were going out of the country owing to the neglect of the Government to keep them. Yorkshire used to be the great horse-breeding county of England, but it was enormously decreasing. The horses young farmers used to hunt with were not now bred to the extent they used to be. Under these circumstances the Government ought to be prepared to establish depots in which they could train the horses they purchased and secure that there would be a supply of trained horses at any given moment. So long, however, as they adhered to the custom of buying horses five years old it would be difficult to solve the problem. If horses were bought at a younger age they would be able not only to get them cheaper, but to secure their proper training at an earlier age, and that would lead to greater efficiency. A good deal might be done by offering premiums to farmers. It was no use providing men, guns, and equipment, without providing horses to supply the cavalry and artillery. There were as many as 2,010 men in the cavalry walking about because they had no horses to mount. It must be a very expensive matter to keep these men practically doing nothing when they ought to be mounted and trained as cavalry and artillery soldiers.

*MR. C. E. PRICE (Edinburgh, Central) congratulated the Secretary of State for War on the approval given to his scheme by the country generally, but expressed regret that something more had not been done to encourage men who passed through the ranks to gain a commission. Taking the Return issued last year he found that only fifty-six men who had passed through the cavalry regiments had received commissions as second lieutenants during the past twenty-two years, and fifty-two of them were given during the first eleven years, leaving only four for the second period. That number could not possibly represent the measure of the brains and capacity of the men who had passed through the ranks. Taking any other trade or profession, such as the legal, medical, or the more important trades of the country, they found that men born in the humblest houses rose to the highest positions in their professions or trades. The same thing would take place in the Army if due recognition was given to the men of brains and capacity who passed through the ranks. He sincerely trusted the right hon. Gentleman would signalise his occupancy of office by doing something to make the Army attractive to men of the better working class, by giving them some hope that they could rise to the highest positions in it if they showed by their efforts they were capable of filling them.

MR. GUY BARING (Winchester) desired to say a word or two upon the subject of the education of military officers. Having himself served through three of the stages of that education he could say that he was thoroughly in agreement with what had been said as to the third stage of it being absolutely unsatisfactory. The young officer when about twenty or twenty-one years of age joined his battalion from Sandhurst. He had had, partly at the public expense, a very good elementary education. He came fully primed into his particular branch of the profession. He knew a good deal about military law, and was very well grounded in attack, but very often he had not the remotest chance in the earlier part of his life of exercising the practical part of his profession. Of course there were undoubtedly the industrious apprentices who looked at their books and kept themselves up to date, but the ordinary officer did not, because there was no occasion for him to do it, and the result was that, after leaving Sandhurst, he got rustier and rustier, and then he arrived at the point when he had to pass a promotion examination. What happened was that he naturally flew to his great friend the crammer, who got him over the fence, and then he proceeded again until he got to another step of military promotion, and then came the next examination. That was a very unsatisfactory state of things. It was rather a bold step to suggest, but he would like to see promotion examinations done away with altogether, and if possible annual examinations put in their place, and some machinery set up by which the officer was obliged to take down his books and refresh his memory and keep himself up-to-date. All that was done now was to ensure that perhaps twice in fifteen or twenty years the officer knew the subjects which he was supposed to know, but the authorities ought to ensure that he always knew them. There was another part of the officer's education which was neglected through the various branches of it being in such watertight compartments. Unless an officer went to the Staff College he had no opportunity of learning the work of other branches besides his own. He supposed there were very few infantry officers who knew artillery tactics or artillery officers who knew about infantry tactics, or cavalry officers who knew about either. He would like to see that altered. It would be for the benefit of the Army if competent officers from the different branches were to deliver lectures to other branches in the service. He very much hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would take to heart the speech of his hon. friend the Member for Durham made earlier in the evening It was an interesting speech, and it put very well the feeling of a great many officers in the Army. It was to this effect, that it was not only to the Staff that the officer should look for his advancement and promotion. He thought the right hon. Gentleman from being at the War Office and coming naturally into contact with staff officers allowed undue weight to the staff branch of the Army, but he would be doing the Army a great disservice if he let an officer think that it was only on the staff that he could do himself good. The ordinary regimental officer ought to have every opportunity of getting promotion or getting some advantages, even if he did not want to go on the staff. One other point he wished to make was that if all these demands were made by the right hon. Gentleman on the officers—he did not believe for a moment that they would be resisted, he was certain that they would be only too delighted to respond to the call—either they would have a shortage of officers or they would have to increase the pay. Other professions were getting more and more attractive, while the Army was getting more hard-working. The regimental pay of the British officer had not been altered since the days of Queen Anne, and he did not think they were asking anything extravagant in requesting that the matter should be looked into in the near future.

*MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland) wished to call attention to the case of a deserving class in the British Army and to win the practical sympathy and support of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War on their behalf. At the beginning of last session the hon. Member for the Abercromby division and himself called the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the treatment of the soldier suffering from consumption and to the fact that he was discharged without any consideration whatever. The basis upon which he put his argument at that time was the fact that the War Office had sent out a blue paper to the municipal authorities asking them when a soldier was discharged for this cause and sent home to keep him under supervision. That he thought was rather unfair treatment so far as the authorities were concerned, because the War Office was placing upon municipalities responsibilities that ought to be discharged by the Army Department. As a result, the right hon. Gentleman kindly appointed a Select Committee, four out of six of the Members of which were leading military gentlemen, and he himself had the honour of serving on it. They received a good deal of evidence of a very practical and skilful character, and the work of the Committee finished in August of last year. There was a unanimous recommendation made that the Department should endeavour to give every diseased soldier discharged for tuberculosis, from four to six months residence in a sanatorium before he was finally discharged from the Army. This matter was considered in 1902 by the late Government and by the Army Council, and there was a great similarity with regard to the decisions of the War Office Authorities in 1902 and 1908. In 1902, it was decided that this matter could not be dealt with without similar treatment being meted out to all Government employees, both military and civil. He wanted to point that out, because he considered it to be a very important aspect of this question. The soldier suffering from consumption was altogether different from a soldier suffering from heart failure or any other disease. It had been urged that a man suffering from heart disease should have the same treatment meted out to him as was given to a man suffering from consumption, but let the House consider the subject in what he submitted was its proper light. He would take the ordinary soldier to-day. Directly it was found that he was suffering from consumption the officer had no option but to discharge that man and send him home. What was the home of the soldier? Ordinarily, the soldier was the son of a working-man, and he was sent back to his home where he could not have the ventilation and other adjuncts of life necessary to bring about a good state of health and prevent the spread of infection. The soldier went back, slept in some cases in the same room with other members of the family, in many cases in the same bed, and yet it was proved by the evidences of medical officers of the Army that these men were a danger to anyone with whom they came into contact, and that the greatest precautions should be taken to prevent them coming into contact with other people. The fact that the Government to-day compelled the local authorities to notify tuberculous disease as infectious showed that these men constituted a danger. He contended that the Government were not doing their duty unless they sent the men to a sanatorium. Every year 350 men suffering from this complaint went into the municipalities where they spread the disease. They all loved the British soldier, but he thought that their treatment of him when he contracted consumption while serving with the colours was bad and utterly unfair. It could not be said that the authorities did not take all the precautions that were necessary to get a soldier who was sound in wind and limb. After the medical examinations he had to undergo, and the measures they took to see that he was physically fit, he thought he could draw the inference that no less than eight out of every ten men who were discharged suffering from consumption had contracted the disease when serving with the colours. The answer of the right hon. Gentleman in reference to dealing with this matter was, he considered, very disappointing. The finding of the Committee was that the average number of these men was 350 every year, and in order to provide the necessary accommodation and give these men a chance in life and prevent the spread of disease the initial expenditure would be £16,000 and the annual expenditure £6,000. That would give to 350 soldiers every year an opportunity of being cured of this terrible disease and being enabled once more to fight the battle of life after they had been discharged from the Army. Yet the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues had decided that so far as the finding of the Committee was concerned they were not going to adopt it. All he could say was that had the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues considered the Report of the Army Council of 1902 and decided upon it, the time of Members of this House, of witnesses outside this House, and the expense of the Select Committee might have been saved so far as the taxpayer was concerned. The Army Council in 1902 arrived at the same decision, and why the right hon. Gentleman should appoint this special Committee in view of the finding of the Army Council in 1902 and then take up the same attitude as was taken up six years ago, he could not possibly conceive. The Select Committee's work was exhaustive in the extreme; the matter was fully investigated by medical experts, and it was with the intention of finally appealing to the right hon. Gentleman before the Report of that Committee was issued that he rose. He was rather surprised at the delay which had taken place in issuing the Report. The work of that Committee finished last August and he signed the Report last year and although we were in March of this year it had not seen the light of day. Before it was issued he wanted, as he had stated, to appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider the decision arrived at, and at a cost of £6,000 a year give the soldiers a chance of four to six months residence in a sanatorium, so as to enable them to recover their health, to fight the battle of life, and to prevent the spread of the disease in various parts of the country. The soldier in America got an opportunity of residence in a sanatorium, and was allowed, if he was cured, to rejoin the Army and serve under the colours. Certainly it could not be argued for a single moment that what could be done in America could not be done for our soldiers at home. He trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to take a broad and sympathetic view of this question, and not allow a few paltry thousands to stand in the way of those unfortunate soldiers having an opportunity of being cured of this disease, and so enable them to regain their health.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield), who was imperfectly heard, was understood to say that there would be a difficulty in getting officers for the special Reserve to serve for a year, or even four months, and he urged his right hon. friend to alter the proposal for obtaining Special Reserve officers. The only time when they could get Special Reserve officers was when they came into the Army and when they were young, and at that stage they could not get from them a year nor even four months consecutively, because they had not the time to go through that long period. He did not say that that was not necessary if they were going to make Regular officers of them, but he thought they ought to have Regular officers if they liked of inferior quality, who would fill up the gaps in time of stress. Therefore, he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would see some easier way in regard to officers for the Special Reserve than that of going up for a year's work at a time, or doing two examinations, one in the public school and one at the university, and then four months after that. He did not think that they were getting sufficient officers towards filling up the enormous deficiency that would inevitably take place on mobilisation. In the Regular Army the deficiency was already 5,000 and on mobilisation it would be something enormous.

*MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said with regard to this question of officers the difficulty could not be for one moment a question of money. He had been going through the Estimates and he found that they were spending on the officers of the Army something like £4,000,000. That was a tremendous lot. As far as he could make out the officers got about £500 a year on the average. Surely that was plenty. He would venture humbly but persistently to suggest to the right hon. Gentleman that there was one way of getting any number of the best possible officers, and that with great economy, namely, to make it absolutely essential that every officer should have passed through the ranks. If the officer was a man of the people his pay would be ample. The men who passed through the ranks and rose to be officers were of the class who became the managers of large works, and industrial concerns, mines and factories—men who were capable of commanding thousands of workmen under great difficulties, men who had risen from the ranks in their various industries. Therefore, he suggested that they might utilise in other ways this lavish expenditure on officers. For instance, there were four generals getting £4,000 a year each, and three getting £2,250 each. There were half-pay field marshals getting from £1,300 to £2,000 a year each. There were twenty-six other generals on half-pay, getting from £500 to £800 a year each. There were 218 retired generals getting from £600 to £1,185 a year. There were 331 generals. What on earth could the right hon. Gentleman do with 331 generals? They must be tumbling over each other; it was impossible that they could be needed for our small force, for which a dozen generals would suffice. This enormous number of highly paid officers, he thought, was a great waste of money, and they got no return in any shape that was worth having. If they were to have an efficient Army at anything like a reasonable price they must give up spending £4,000,000 a year on officers for a little bit of an Army. No other country paid their officers in anything like the same proportion. Out of an Army of about 170,000 men about £4,000,000 went on officers in pay and pensions. What they should do was to give a retired officer about £100 a year, which was enough to keep him out of the workhouse, and if he were an officer of good family let that family keep him when he retired. Any man of education and of talent, however, could surely turn himself to something that would be for the good of his country. Why should a man retire in middle life, full of health and strength and capacity, to live on a pension all the rest of his days? They did not treat the soldiers like that. For a soldier £26 a year was enough; four times that ought to be enough for an officer. Of the £4,000,000 a year nearly £2,500,000 was wasted on ineffective pensions. Until that matter was tackled, until they had some man of strength and iron will to deal with it, they would not make satisfactory progress. If the right hon. Gentleman put his services to such a good use he would find that he had a difficult job. He would have to face the Opposition in the House of Commons, and the opposition of the Department with which he had to work, and at the same time offend the people with whom he had to deal, in suggesting really practical economies. In a private concern the managing director dealing with a similar case of extravagance in salaries would either have to shift some people, or be shifted himself. In regard to officers they could get the best talent in England for £500 a year, and to pay any more was simply a waste of money. He would not draw the line strictly at £500, for field marshals might get £1,000 a year. It was not a question of whether the pay was £500 or £5,000; if an officer liked the Army he would stick there. In regard to the Yeomanry and horses, he had heard mentioned that agricultural horses had increased; but no doubt the right hon. Gentleman was right in preparing for the time when motor cars would take the place of horses. Generals in the future would have 10,000 motor cars to carry 60,000 men to attack the enemy's communications and then get back again out of harm's way all in a night. With regard to the Army generally, he understood that the size of the striking force depended to a great extent on the size of the Army outside of this country. But it should be remembered that our soldiers had rifles and artillery four times as effective as the weapons possessed by our soldiers fifty years ago; therefore one-fourth the number of troops should now be sufficient; 25,000 troops would be enough in India instead of the 78,000 we had now uselessly got there.

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1908–9.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

LONDON COUNTY COUNCIL GENERAL POWERS BILL (BY ORDER).

Read a second time, and committed.

*MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye) in moving "That it be an instruction to the Committee to strike out from the Bill all clauses dealing with the milk supply other than the model milk clauses," said he was speaking on behalf of the Central Chamber of Agriculture, which had the support of the County Councils Association and of Lord Northcote's Committee, which was appointed to inquire into the question of tuberculosis. Behind this proposal there was the whole agricultural community and the bodies responsible for local government in agricultural districts. In addition there was a large number of Members of Parliament on both sides of the House who had signed a memorial to the President of the Local Government Board, and of course this matter was also supported by innumerable resolutions and petitions from agricultural bodies in all parts of the country. Their position was that in this question of the milk supply, which was admitted on all hands to be a most important question, they must have general legislation. It was the only thing that would meet the case from the point of view of the consumer or the producer, and the Central Chamber of Agriculture and the other bodies he had mentioned had for a number of years past been pressing for this general legislation, though unsuccessfully. The attitude which they now took up on these Bills was that, pending a general Act, they must have uniform local legislation, and in order to secure uniformity they must move on the basis of the Model Milk Clause, which had already been adopted in the case of a hundred private Acts. He might perhaps be allowed to give a summary of the circumstances which had led up to the present situation. In 1899 the question of tuberculosis of the udder became very prominent, and a great many towns and boroughs sought to obtain local Acts dealing with the matter, and these Acts contained a vast variety of remedial proposals. It was naturally felt that some attempt at uniformity was essential, and with that object in view the Local Government Board and the Board of Agriculture of the day consulted and hurriedly framed what were known as the Model Milk Clauses. He thought even the framers would admit that they were incomplete, but at the same time they were the only basis that they had for any attempt at uniformity, because they were inserted in all this vast number of local Acts already including all the London boroughs, and last year, in a form which was only very slightly modified, the clauses were inserted in the London County Council General Powers Act. Some authorities had other clauses dealing with the matter of the milk supply, and all, whether model or otherwise, gave power of inspection and other powers outside their own area and jurisdiction, and it was that jurisdiction outside their own area which had caused such vast inconvenience to the agricultural community. He knew of one case where a certain dairy farmer was registered in no fewer than twenty-nine different places, and if this Bill passed he would have to be registered in a thirtieth, with the result that he was liable to visits from an enormous number of inspectors with varying views and acting under varying regulations, and he did not know where he stood. This was true more or less of the whole of the producers of milk. In addition to this they had the general question of the purity and cleanliness of the milk supply. It used to be considered that this could be completely dealt with at the source of production by regulations affecting cowsheds, and the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Orders were the result. They dealt with sanitary conditions and other matters, but they were not compulsory. That was a very important point. It had now been found, and he thought the whole agricultural community as well as local authorities and representatives of the consumers would admit, that these orders had not been quite sufficient and that milk arrived in a dirty condition at the place to which it was consigned. It was now sought to place on the dairy farmers responsibility for the state of the milk on its arrival. He did not deny that pollution was sometimes attributable to the agriculturist. In many cases it was difficult to ensure that the milkman should wash his hands and cleanse the cow which had possibly been rolling, before he milked. It was absolutely necessary for the milkman to press his head and shoulders against the cow, and he sometimes scraped off caked dirt which might fall into the milk. But that was not all. A vast variety of things had been found in milk churns which had come to London, including tobacco, tobacco pipes, and tea leaves. It was no uncommon thing to see a number of churns standing open at the

London railway termini, because many of the companies would not carry them if they were locked. The milk was liable to pollution on that account. It was admitted on all hands that there was a good deal of theft and consequent adulteration at the railway termini. It was said that workmen going early to their work brought their cans of hot tea, tipped part of it into the churns and replaced it with milk. Agriculturists naturally objected to accepting the responsibility for such things as that. The railway companies refused to accept it and no steps had been taken to enforce it upon them. This Bill threw the whole responsibility for these matters on to the producer. The agricultural community had no wish to avoid inspection or to resist any sound proposals to ensure a pure and clean supply of milk, but they said the regulations must be uniform. The matter was first taken up by the Chamber of Agriculture. The Dairy Products Committee of the Central Chamber issued a report which was adopted by the council and submitted to a joint conference of the Central Chamber of Agriculture, the County Councils Association, and Lord Northbrook's Committee. Certain alterations were made and were submitted to the general body and approved. They recommended, *inter alia*: (1) That the authority dealing with the question of the purity of the milk supply should be the same authority as under the Diseases of Animals Act, otherwise the county council; (2) That the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Order of 1899 should be consolidated and amended; (3) That proper legislation of a general kind should be introduced dealing with sanitation and matters of that kind, providing for proper inspection and setting up a new class of regulation as regarded tuberculosis. There was also a recommendation that there should be no further overlapping jurisdiction, which was a very important matter, and that the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops Order should be made compulsory. The agricultural community did not desire in any way to shirk their responsibility, or to hinder any steps to secure a pure supply of milk. On the other hand, they asked that they should not have liability for pollution in transit after the milk had left their hands, or else that steps should be taken to render the use of sealed vessels obligatory. The dairyman was already responsible to the local authority in his area, and if this Bill were passed he would be made responsible to the London County Council. He admitted that the position of London, into which 50,000,000 or 60,000,000 gallons of milk were brought every year, was unique; but that only strengthened the case of the agriculturist, because it meant that the county council would be given a power of interference outside their area which would affect dairies over a very large area of country; this would make the nuisance intolerable and unbearable, and prevent the producer from supplying his milk any longer. It would be impossible for the milk producer to contend with all these disadvantages which would be placed upon him, if London in addition to all the other bodies was given powers of this kind. He had endeavoured to put the case for the agricultural community on general grounds, and he submitted that they had a very strong case. The President of the Local Government Board had promised legislation on this subject this year, and there was, therefore, all the more reason for resisting piecemeal legislation now. He felt that the House could not resist a position so strong, the disturbance of which would bring so much injustice and discomfort to the whole community. Without any further argument he begged to move.

MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury) seconded the Motion. He said that he would briefly summarise the points upon which their case was based. This was a demand put forward by the agricultural community in general. Dairy farmers throughout the country, whatever their opinions might be on matters of legislation affecting the tenure of land or other controversial topics, were unanimously of opinion that if Government legislation was to be introduced in connection with the regulation of the sale and supply of milk such legislation should affect not one particular area of the country, but the country as a whole. The President of the Local Government Board would no doubt tell them that London was unique, and its position unlike any other borough in the country. That was quite true. Probably they would be told that the innovations introduced into these model clauses were very slight, but they were of vital necessity to the well-being and health of the inhabitants of London. Nobody pretended that the Model Milk Clauses were all that could be desired, but this Bill introduced dangerous innovations which gave the London County Council power to deal with milk and penalise the seller if the milk contained any matter rendering it unwholesome or unfit for the food of man. Under the Model Milk Clauses they possessed this power only in regard to milk which contained the germs of tuberculosis. There were one or two other objections, but agriculturists based their claim mainly on the ground that they wished any legislation to be uniform throughout the country. In this they had the sanction of the Government of the day contained in declarations made by Ministers during the present session. The President of the Board of Agriculture had announced in the House of Lords that it was the intention of the Government to bring in a Bill dealing with the regulation of the sale and supply of milk, and the President of the Local Government Board had made a similar pronouncement. On those grounds the agricultural community asked the House to give this instruction to the Committee.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it be an Instruction to the Committee to strike out from the Bill all Clauses dealing with milk supply other than the Model Milk Clauses."—(*Mr. Courthope.*)

*MR. GUINNESS (Bury St. Edmunds) said he was very glad to notice that the proposer and seconder of this Instruction had both acknowledged the necessity for a change in the present regulations regarding the supply of milk. There was another point on which, as representing the London County Council, he found himself in accord with what they had said. They had both pointed out the great advantage of public legislation as opposed to piecemeal legislation in dealing with this question. In that the London County Council entirely concurred. Before the London County Council drafted the clauses which were now being considered they approached the Local Government Board to find out whether they proposed to bring in a public Bill dealing with the whole matter. The London County Council realised that the right hon. Gentleman had exceptional facilities for judging of the necessity for further legislation to ensure a pure milk supply for London. They all remembered the views to which the right hon. Gentleman frequently gave expression on the London County Council in favour of a purer milk supply and hoped that he would bring in general legislation on the subject. It was only when the London County Council received the answer that the Local Government Board were not in a position to commit themselves to legislation that these clauses were drafted. He admitted the desirability of uniformity. It was a great disadvantage that there were at present over 100 Acts of Parliament dealing with the milk supply. Their first object was to ensure a cheap supply, and if they hampered the producers of milk throughout Great Britain by unnecessarily harassing restrictions the price was likely to be raised. The London County Council, being unable to get an assurance from the President of the Local Government Board that he would introduce a general measure dealing with this question, felt it necessary to bring in a modification of the model clauses. It was no argument for acquiescing in the existing unsatisfactory state of affairs because they were told they could not get an ideal state. If the President of the Local Government Board would give an assurance that he would bring in legislation which would ensure a pure supply of milk, and also take into consideration the special position of London, the County Council would gladly be relieved of the necessity of pressing their proposals. The hon. Member for the Tewkesbury division had stated that the modifications which the London County Council proposed were slight modifications of the model clauses. The view of the council was that the model clauses did not go half far enough. It was not enough to check the supply of tuberculous milk; they wanted also to keep out dirty milk.

They approved of the machinery of the model clauses, but sought to extend their application. The county council had in some cases not satisfied the metropolitan borough councils, because they had not gone far enough. In order to ensure a cheap supply, the council were anxious not to throw any undue burden upon the local authority, and therefore they had kept the whole power of inspection at railway stations in the hands of the council. Certain metropolitan borough councils complained of that, but the county council proposed to strengthen the hands of the borough councils by provisions in the draft clauses to enable them to proceed for penalties against those retailers of milk who put on sale dirty milk. Section 47 of the London Public Health Act, of 1891 was not strong enough, for it only enabled a borough council to seize milk which was obviously unfit for human consumption. A good many magistrates had refused to convict sellers of milk which was certainly dirty, because they were not absolutely convinced that it was unfit for human consumption. The powers now asked would enable the borough councils to bring pressure to bear on retailers to keep milk free from contamination in the retail shops where milk was bought in small quantities. They did not propose any inquisitorial powers whatever and they felt certain that no clean farmer would be penalised in the least by their clauses. The Inter-Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration had recognised the importance of clean milk, and had recommended that in default of action by the Rural Sanitary Authorities, County Councils, and as a last resort the Local Government Board should be empowered to intervene. The National Conference on Infantile Mortality also recommended in 1906 that the scope of the regulations should be extended to cover dirty milk. No doubt many large dairies were doing all that was necessary to ensure a clean supply, but a large proportion of the population had to depend upon small shops, and under present conditions that supply was very insanitary, no less than 73 per cent. of the milk sellers in Finsbury exposing their milk for sale in uncovered vessels. The state of affairs now existing was very dangerous. In Finsbury Dr. Foulerton found that 32 per cent. of the samples of milk he examined contained pus and 40 per cent. contained dirt. Dr. Harris, medical officer of health for Islington, last year examined the contents of thirty-four churns at Finsbury Park station, and out of the thirty-four successive churns thirty-three contained cow dung. The House was aware that tuberculous milk was only excluded by the model clauses if it came from cows suffering from tuberculosis of the udder, but there were many other disorders of the cow's udder which caused pus in milk, and which was probably very dangerous to human life. In the report of the National Conference on Infant Mortality one witness gave evidence in regard to an outbreak of 600 cases of sore throat where the ailment was very like diphtheria. That outbreak was traced to a skin affection of the udder of a single cow. There was no doubt that the presence of pus in milk was very dangerous to human life. Another form of contamination in milk for which there was no excuse was the presence of cow dung. That was dangerous even from the point of view of tuberculosis. A Report published last year by the Bureau of Animal Industry of the United States showed that there was a large amount of tuberculous infection from this cause in milk quite apart from that caused by tuberculous udders. Under present conditions the milk passed through so many different hands in London that it was quite impossible to discover where contaminated milk originally came from, and so the dirty farmer got off with impunity. If the President of the Local Government Board was going to bring in general legislation, he should remember that it was no use for the Metropolitan borough councils to be enabled to proceed against the retailers of milk in London unless some authority—in his opinion the London County Council seemed to be the only possible one—was enabled to go to the railway stations and find out there what milk was dangerous before it reached such a stage in its distribution as would make it impossible to find out whence the milk had originated. He hoped that the general legislation promised by the President of the Local Government Board would embody provisions such as those laid down in Part 2 of the

London County Council General Powers Bill. All the trouble with this dirty milk was due to the fact that in a large number of districts in the country the Dairies, Cowsheds, and Milk-Shops Orders were not enforced. He would remind the House that it was optional on the part of the local authorities to put these Orders into force. The Privy Council had laid down some very valuable regulations as to the condition of the milk, the sanitary condition of the cowsheds, and the prevention of contamination; and Paragraph 13 of that Privy Council Order enabled the sanitary authorities to frame additional regulations in regard to the inspection of cattle, the sanitation and ventilation of the cowsheds, and the general cleanliness of the milk supply. It was a very disquieting fact that, according to the Local Government Board figures, no fewer than 324 sanitary authorities had made no regulations under that Order, and in the case of a large number of other sanitary authorities no enforcement was insisted upon. He was sure they all sympathised with what had been said by the hon. Member for Rye as to the danger of over-lapping between local authorities, and they realised that it was a disadvantage to farmers that they had sometimes to notify as many as 100 different authorities of the occurrence of cases of tuberculous disease. But, as the present arrangement had failed to ensure a clean and pure supply of milk to London, it was now insisted that the matter should be put into the hands of the consumers, and that the London County Council as their representatives should be enabled to look after the interest of those primarily affected. The reports of various medical officers of health in different counties from which the London milk supply was drawn would show the dangerous condition of things which existed, and the filthy and revolting state of the cowsheds in various places. The report from Derbyshire stated that the local authorities did not see why the ratepayers in the rural districts should pay for the inspection of dairies the milk from which was consumed in London. They thought the cost of administering the Orders should come out of Imperial taxation. The result was that in many districts there had been no inspection of the cowsheds. From Leicestershire the report was that the registration of dairymen, cowkeepers, and purveyors of milk appeared in some districts to be a dead letter, and that the legal safeguards were allowed to remain in abeyance. Men in the district might with impunity sell milk no matter from what source it came, even where there had been an outbreak of typhoid fever. In Wiltshire certain rural district councils imposed no supervision whatever, and in Cheshire the cowsheds were, for the most part, dark, badly ventilated and drained, and dirty. If possible the conditions were worse in many cases in Lancashire than in Cheshire The veterinary surgeon in Manchester mentioned a large number of farms which were totally unfit for dairy purposes, and where they had been able to stop the supply of milk from these farms coming to Manchester it was sent on to London. In one case a farmer applied to the Manchester Corporation asking to be allowed to keep a tuberculous cow because he had discontinued sending the milk from it into Manchester and sent it now to London. In another report it stated that very rarely were the cowsheds washed down, that the dirt on the floors was inches thick, and that other animals than cows were kept in the sheds. Another medical inspector stated that the introduction of various abominations into the milk at the cowsheds might account for the high death rate in the district. In many districts no regulations had been adopted by the local authorities. In one case of twenty-nine members of the district council no less than five were milk sellers, and four of these occupied unregistered premises. The reports from Anglesey stated that the conditions of the dairies there was a scandal and a danger, and that the butter and milk came from foul and filthy premises. In very few instances were the cows' udders washed before milking. Dirty cowsheds were really only a part of the danger. The milk after being drawn stood in cowsheds with little ventilation and in an atmosphere laden with pollution. The milking was done often by men who came dirty from doing dirtiest farm work, with dirty clothes and hands to milk even dirtier cows—cows which had not been groomed for twelve months or in fact since they were born. Cows in many cases were only able to obtain water from ponds which were contaminated with very dangerous drain water, and bacteria and cow dung dried on to the cows, and found their way into the milk. A great many of these undesirable ingredients were knocked into the milk in the process of milking, and when the milk was not strained at once it was charged with bacteria. If the milk were drunk while fresh there was less danger, but 95 per cent. of the milk supplied to London came from a greater distance than 100 miles. None of it was drunk before twelve hours had elapsed, and in the case of a very large proportion, it had to wait twenty-four hours.

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER said it appeared to him that the hon. Member was going into many details suitable for the Committee, and he should confine himself more closely to the Resolution before the House.

*Mr. GUINNESS contended that what he had said had a good deal to do with the question before the House, because the model milk clauses referred to by the hon. Member for Rye only dealt with tuberculous cows, and he wanted to show that there was danger quite apart from tuberculosis, and that no restrictions which dealt only with that danger would meet the needs of London. He would not say anything more about that matter, except to bring home the urgency of the case as shown in the Report of the Departmental Committee on Physical Deterioration, which showed that in 1902 in London of every thousand births no less than twenty children died before reaching the age of one year, owing to dysentry, diarrhœa, enteritis and cholera, and that in the country districts out of a thousand births only eight children died from the same causes. This showed that in London these diseases which were chiefly due to an inadequate and impure milk supply were two-and-a-half times as great as in the country where the milk was drunk fresh before the bacteria were able to multiply in it. He thought that, considering the conditions under which our population lived, the death rate in London was exceedingly low and reflected the greatest credit upon our medical officers of health and on the sanitary authorities. It was lower than in any other part of the country, and the only figure which stood out in black contrast to the general condition of health in London was that of infantile mortality, which was chiefly due to the contaminated milk supply. This was a matter of the gravest importance, and he hoped that the President of the Local Government Board would, if he was proposing legislation, keep in mind the special position of London and remember that, if we were to have a sanitary milk supply in London and keep down this infant mortality, it should be possible for the local authorities in London to step in and take the place of those sanitary authorities in the country who neglected their duties and allowed milk to be contaminated by sewage.

*The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. John Burns, Battersea) said the House had before it that evening three Bills promoted by three separate local authorities, dealing with the subject under discussion to which the Motion of the hon. Member for Rye related. One was the Bill of the Widnes Corporation for the establishment of a sterilised milk depot and also containing tuberculosis clauses. Another was a Bill promoted by the Blackburn Corporation, which had inserted in it what were known as model clauses, but it had two clauses which went beyond the model clauses in one respect and dealt with tuberculosis in an exceptional manner for local legislation. The other Bill, around which the discussion had mainly ranged that evening, was a Bill promoted by the London County Council. They, a year or two ago, got the model clauses in one of their Bills, and the county council, in his opinion, very properly applied to Parliament now for additional powers to enable not only the borough councils, but the London County Council to deal, as they must do if they discharged their public health duties to their constituents, in a more effective and drastic way with the milk supply than was now possible under their limited powers. As these three Bills from three different towns dealt more or less with the same subject in a somewhat similar way, it was only right that at that moment he should express the views of the Government on the London County Council Bill, the Widnes Bill and the Blackburn Bill, and in so doing he would briefly say that the Government took no exception to the hon. Member for Rye's Instruction. It must be clearly understood, however, that the Government did not identify itself either with all the objects or motives that might have induced the hon. Member and the interest on whose behalf he acted to take the course implied by his Motion. The hon. Member sought uniformity of law and of general regulation. He wanted penalties to be co-ordinated—in a word, to make the punishment fit the crime. The hon. Member wanted, he presumed, on behalf of those for whom he spoke, uniformity of law, of penalty, of procedure, and of method in dealing with all the aspects of the milk supply. If that was his object, and it was a very desirable one, the Government thought that it could be done better by a general Bill, by general law and by general regulation, in preference to spasmodic and exceptional local attempts; and they took that view because they thought in the interests of all, particularly the farmer whose interests in his judgment were not at all damaged nor were they incompatible with a better protection of the consumer than now prevailed — they thought in the interests of the farmer, the dairymen, and the general consumer, and especially the children in our large towns, that the time had arrived when they should have a better milk supply, a cleaner milk supply, he hoped a larger milk supply, and he should rejoice to hear that these three conditions could be secured without having a dearer supply. To bring some of these objects about he had on behalf of the Government to say in a word that they would fulfil the promise he had given on an earlier occasion to bring in a general Bill for dealing with the milk supply of the country. They thought that the interests of a great industry and what he hoped would be an ever-increasing and growing industry, demanded this general treatment, and he was very pleased to hear from the hon. Gentleman who moved this Motion that the farmer and the dairyman and the agriculturist generally clearly recognised that the conditions that now prevailed could not much longer continue. What was more, the best of them went so far as to say that they ought not to continue, and he believed that the interests of the progressive farmer and of the clean and healthy and enterprising dairyman were such that they ought to co-operate with all sections of the public and the Government and the local authorities to prevent the worst of their calling from carrying on a great industry except under the best, cleanest, and most scientific conditions. In other words, milk had become a national question, and he felt that the House by the speeches to which they had just listened regarded it as an Imperial obligation upon the Government to carry out the proposal they all had in view, and considered that a general milk Bill was demanded. He must tell the House frankly that his chief object was the protection of the public health, and he believed that that could be done without handicapping the farmer or harassing the dairyman. On the contrary, he believed that it would be profitable to both and beneficial to the public. The Bill which he intended to bring in, and he hoped that those who had spoken would assist to carry it through this session, would help them to satisfy a number of requirements which he did not intend to elaborate, but he might say it would seek to secure cleanliness, purity, and reliability in the milk supply, and to remove the evils of overlapping jurisdiction, and would deal with the question of compensation if any, in certain cases, and a number of other matters. There was another aspect of this question which had only been lightly touched upon, and that was the necessity of doing this in the interests of the town children. He had the honour of being the President of the Infant Mortality Conference at which he spoke last year, and intended to speak again this month, at their annual conference. He believed that what was being increasingly brought home to those who were responsible for the diet of old and young alike, both in the home and in institutions, was the great value of milk, good milk and plenty of it as an article of diet, and he must frankly say that the increasing demand that there was for pure milk was not going to be further increased if the public were to rest content with the description of the circumstances under which some milk was produced, that had been given by the hon. Member who had just sat down. In fact the hon. Member's speech was rather inclined to tempt nearly everyone who was microscopically acquainted with the condition of some dairies and some shops to paraphrase Bob Eccles, in *Caste*: "What, milk! Milk! I'd rather have a drop of cool refreshing gin." Perhaps the hon. Member would substitute stout for gin. He was convinced that we could not get the children as strong, as vigorous, and as beautiful as they ought to be, unless milk more thoroughly entered into the diet of the poor children in the poorer districts in our towns and he noticed with interest that the dairyman, the milk purveyor and the farmer at least that night, had come to the conclusion that the time had come when they should co-operate with the Government and the local authorities in putting their trade on a better footing than it was now. He trusted that in regard to the provisions of their Bill, which would deal with the conditions of transit of milk and the vessels in which it was sold, and other things, they should have the co-operation of every interest which wanted to promote agriculture and farming, and above all milk farming, on the lines he had laid down. He could only assure hon. Members on all sides of the House that the Government would clearly take into consideration the unique and exceptional character and size of London and the need in this matter of exceptional treatment for London by virtue of its peculiar position. The milk supply of London could not be satisfactorily controlled unless the central body had greater control than it now had, not only over milk but over a number of other things. He assured the Members for Blackburn and Widnes, and the Members who represented the London County Council, that much that each of them sought would be embodied in the Government Bill along with other matters which they had not mentioned. He hoped the Motion of the hon. Member for Rye would be carried without a division, and that he might enter upon his task of dealing with the whole question by Government Bill with the knowledge that all parties and interests would be ready to co-operate in carrying a just, reasonable, fair, and equitable Bill dealing with the milk supply of the United Kingdom.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH said he had no wish to stand between the House and a decision, but he desired to thank the right hon. Gentleman for the promise he had made. He had no right or claim to speak as an agriculturist or as a representative of agriculture, but in his opinion the agriculturists would be well advised if they did their best to co-operate with the Government in endeavouring to arrive at a system which would be satisfactory to all parties concerned. Now that they had arrived at an agreement, he did not like to criticise the speech of his hon. friend, but he was bound to say that a speech couched in terms such as he had used was one not calculated to conduce to a satisfactory settlement. The logical conclusion of his speech was that, if one was allowed to drink milk at all, he ought only to be allowed to do so under exceptional circumstances and the greatest possible supervision. He did not think language of that kind was calculated to promote a satisfactory conclusion. He did not commit himself or anyone to supporting any Bill in all its details, but he certainly thought they ought to wait until they could see the measure; they would be well-advised to leave the matter and ask the Government to introduce the Bill as soon as possible, assuring them that they would do their best to arrive at a conclusion satisfactory not only to consumers but also to agriculturists throughout the country.

*Mr. COOPER (Southwark, Bermondsey) said he had a certain amount of interest in the Bill, because the clauses in question were introduced in 1905 when he was Chairman of the Public Health Committee of the London County Council, and were the product of that committee. No one was more earnest at that time in supporting those clauses than the present President of the Local Government Board. He showed certain reasons why London should be treated exceptionally. He pointed out that thirty-five county councils of England had not appointed medical officers of health. At the present time thirty-two had not appointed such officers. He also pointed out that a number of sanitary authorities had no efficient sanitary inspector. It was important for the London County Council to push these clauses on. If it had been necessary he would have supported in a division the hon. Member representing the London County Council, because he recognised that the London County Council ought to have this legislation placed in their hands. But if the President of the Local Government Board was going to bring in legislation dealing generally with England, of course he felt they were bound to withdraw these clauses and to do their best when the Bill was introduced to make it available for the whole country. He sincerely hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would endeavour to see that the administration of county councils in these matters was improved, as there was no legislation on the subject at all and the tuberculosis order did not affect it in any shape or form. This was absolutely new legislation in England, but it had been applied to at least twenty or thirty large cities in America. In Massachusetts it had proved very successful. The Massachusetts Board of Health published what was called a White List of farmers who obeyed their regulations, and this was a potent force in getting them to carry them out, for they were extremely anxious to get on the list. He would have liked the President of the Local Government Board to have stated when the Bill would be introduced, but he hoped there would be no delay. He did not think it would be a contentious Bill, and it would certainly be a very valuable one. The reason why London should be treated exceptionally was that there were 150,000 gallons of milk imported every day, and of that at least 15,000 gallons probably a far larger quantity, were dirty, being contaminated in the manner described by the hon. Member opposite. That fact alone ought to induce the President of the Local Government Board to expedite the measure.

Colonel LOCKWOOD said he should like to speak on behalf of his constituency which was a daily increasing factor in the milk-producing area for London. The farmers he represented were anxious to assist in every possible way in producing a pure milk supply, but they hoped the right hon. Gentleman would lay down a sharp limit showing where the farmers' responsibility began and where it ended. He had endeavoured to obtain the opinion of the farmers in his constituency on this Milk Bill which he had predicted, and there was a universal consensus of opinion on this point. They said that the retailer's limit was fixed, and they were very anxious indeed that the limit of responsibility of the farmer should also be fixed. They, of course, knew that the cleanliness of the milk was a very important subject, but there was another point to be considered. They might produce and retail milk in as cleanly a way as they would, but they must educate the people to keep it in a cleanly way. Milk produced and retailed under the best possible conditions was very often rendered harmful by the way in which it was kept.

MR. SEDDON (Lancashire, Newton) said he rose to express his disappointment at the decision of the President of the Local Government Board. No doubt he had the welfare of the people at heart, but the Widnes Corporation Bill had a clause which he maintained did not invade the grounds of objection laid down by the hon. Member for Rye. He was glad the Bill was not to be jeopardised, because there were many provisions in it which would be very useful. Clause 67, which dealt more particularly with sterilised milk, laid down that the milk should not be supplied, except for consumption by children under two years of age. He came from a town, St. Helens, which might claim credit for its efforts on behalf of sterilised milk and the reduction of infant mortality. He would therefore be very much obliged to the hon. Member for Rye if he could make an exception in the case of Widnes, and let the Bill go to the Committee without the instruction to strike out from it all clauses dealing with milk supply other than the model milk clauses. If he agreed, he would be doing something for the prevention of infant mortality in the town of Widnes. He would not endeavour to move the hon. Member by argument or logic, but he would appeal to his good nature to use his good office with the President of the Local Government Board to make an exception in the case of Widnes.

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton) expressed disappointment with the speech of the President of the Local Government Board. It seemed to him that the agricultural interest in this question had squared the Local Government Board to the prejudice of the municipalities.

*MR. JOHN BURNS: I do not think you will say so when you have seen the Bill.

MR. HARMOOD BANNER said that, in view of the full complement of Bills the Government was going to introduce, he would have much preferred to have seen a local Bill so good as this carried rather than wait for the right hon. Gentleman's Bill. The milk was coming in daily. In Liverpool they already had means for the supply of sterilised milk, for which there was a great demand both in that city and in the surrounding locality. It seemed to him extraordinary, when proof had been given of the necessity and the desirability of sterilised milk depots in towns, that the President of the Local Government Board should step in and stop the acquirement of them. He could, as President of the Municipal Associations, assure him that this was a matter that they had very much at heart, and, although they had not had the honour, as a deputation, of waiting upon the right hon. Gentleman, they would be very glad to discuss it with him and show him the desirability of the inquiry. He was really astonished that in the case of Widnes, where the clauses would not anticipate the provisions of the right hon. Gentleman's excellent measure, they were to be put off in the interests of the Royal Agricultural Society. It was distinctly against the desires and wishes of the Corporation, who were actuated by earnest intentions in the interest of the health and happiness of the children of the district. He therefore asked the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider the question of the sterilised milk depots so far as Widnes was concerned. He would cause enormous disappointment if at the instance of agriculture he turned round from his earnest endeavours on behalf of municipalities. He hoped on this question of sterilised milk he would not require the inhabitants of Widnes to go to London or Liverpool for the means which brought their children health and were so necessary for the good of the community.

MR. E. GARDNER (Berkshire, Wokingham) on behalf of milk producers thanked the President of the Local

Government Board for the very commonsense view he had taken of the question. He did not believe there was a man inside or outside the House who had a greater desire for the welfare of the people and the children in particular than the right hon. Gentleman. He understood him to say, however, that in regard to London the Bill he proposed to introduce would in all probability impose different conditions. That was a very serious matter indeed. There was no question of such great importance as the advantage of a pure and cheap supply of milk, but the question was how they were to get it. They would not get it by imposing harassing conditions on those who supplied it, and although London was a very important centre of consumption it took a very large area to supply it. If different conditions were imposed in regard to London it would do something to damage the source of supply and the quantity. He had raised some degree of dread in the minds of those who produced the milk.

*Mr. DEPUTY-SPEAKER said he must remind the House that the only question before the House was the instruction on this particular private Bill, and it was not in order to discuss the provisions of the public Bill which was to be introduced.

Mr. E. GARDNER thanked the right hon. Gentleman for what he had done, and hoped that in his legislation he would treat them fairly.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER wished to add his thanks to the right hon. Gentleman and to put one point that had not been mentioned, and that was that the fewer people were satisfied the sooner they would achieve their object. If these boroughs and London, which was such an exceptional case, had this protection they would have to wait a long time for it in the country. There were other large towns—Birmingham, Glasgow and others—where the mortality was very nearly as great. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on bringing in a universal policy instead of allowing this piecemeal work which would be an injury to the farmer and very little good to the country.

Mr. T. DAVIES (Fulham): Will the right hon. Gentleman tell us whether he can bring in the Bill this session?

*Mr. JOHN BURNS: Yes.

Question put, and agreed to

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to strike out from Part II. of the Bill all Clauses dealing with milk supply other than the Model Milk Clauses.—(*Mr. Courthope.*)

BLACKBURN CORPORATION BILL (BY ORDER).

Read a second time, and committed.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to strike out from the Bill all Clauses dealing with milk supply other than the Model Milk Clauses. —(*Mr Courthope.*)

WIDNES CORPORATION BILL (BY ORDER).

Read a second time, and committed.

Ordered, That it be an Instruction to the Committee to strike out from the Bill all Clauses dealing with milk supply other than the Model Milk Clauses. —(*Mr. Courthope.*)

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question, "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Whiteley,*)—put, and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at six minutes before Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 6th March, 1908.

The House met at Twelve noon of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS (STANDING ORDERS 62 AND 67 NOT COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, referred on the First Reading thereof, Standing Orders 62 and 67 have not been complied with, viz.:—Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill.

Ordered, That the Report be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders.

Madras Railway Company (Annuities) Bill.—Read the third time, and passed.

PETITIONS.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation, from Stafford and Woking; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour, from Bootle, St. Anne's-on-Sea, and Sheffield (two); to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from North Kensington, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND) ACCOUNT.

Account [presented 5th March] to be printed. [No. 83.]

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

Copy presented, of Returns of Accidents and Casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several Railway Companies in the United Kingdom during the three months ended 30th September, 1907, together with Reports of the Inspecting Officers of the Railway Department to the Board of Trade upon certain Accidents which were inquired into, Part II., Reports on Accidents [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

PASSENGERS TO AND FROM PLACES OUT OF EUROPE.

Copy presented, of Return showing (1) Numbers and Nationalities of the Passengers that left or arrived in the United Kingdom for or from Places out of Europe; and (2) the net balance of such Passengers outward or inward in each month of the year 1908 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of the London County Council Syllabus, contained in a Return to an Order of the House of Lords, numbered (115–1)—1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TREATY SERIES (No. 6, 1908).

Copy presented, of Accession of Sweden to the International Sanitary Convention, signed at Paris 3rd December, 1903, 20th December, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ARMY.

Copy presented, of Report of the War Office Committee on the Treatment of Soldiers invalided for Tuberculosis [by Command]: to lie upon the Table.

ARMY.

Copy presented, of Schemes made by the Army Council for the Establishment and Constitution of Territorial Force Associations [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Irish Valuation Scheme.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will consider the immediate advisability of assimilating the exceptional Irish scheme of valuation by means of a commissioner and staff with the settled practice and precedent of Great

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Britain, where local authorities are represented on assessment committees.

(*Answered by Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman.*) Proposals for the reform of the existing method of valuation in Great Britain are now under the consideration the Government, and, in the meantime, I think it would be premature to make any statement as to the desirability of assimilating the Irish practice to that which now prevails in the rest of the United Kingdom.

Conviction of W. and F. Faulkner of Sheep Stealing.

MR. ROWLANDS (Kent, Dartford): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether a petition was presented to him in August 1907 praying that a free pardon be granted to William and Frederick Faulkner, who were convicted of sheep stealing, at the Warwickshire summer assizes, 1905, and sentenced to four months imprisonment, the petition being based on the fact that James William Bradwick has since confessed that he committed the crime; and whether, having regard to these circumstances, he can now see his way to recommend that these innocent men receive a free pardon.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I received the petition referred to and a statement in writing from the man Brandrick (not Bradwick); but, after careful consideration of all the facts, I found, and can still find, no sufficient ground for the grant of a pardon to the Faulkners. I may add that it clearly appeared at the trial of the Faulkners that a third man, not in custody, was concerned in the sheep stealing.

Licensing Districts.

MR. BARNARD (Kidderminster): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer how many licensing districts there will be in England and Wales under the new Licensing Bill.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) No alteration in the licensing districts is proposed in the Licensing Bill. There are at present 990 such districts.

Grocers' Licences.

MR. BARNARD: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer how many grocers' licences were in existence at the passing of the 1904 Act; how many of them remain; and how many new licences of this sort are in existence.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) There are no statistics of licences held by grocers as distinguished from those held by other shopkeepers who sell other goods besides liquor. Full information as to off-licences generally is given in the annual volume of licensing statistics. It appears that on the 1st January, 1905, the date on which the Licensing Act of 1904 came into operation, there were 25,405 off-licences in existences, of which 14,402 were held in respect of shops in which other goods besides liquor were sold. On the 1st January, 1907, the latest date for which exact figures are available, the number was 25,143, of which 14,024 related to shops in which other goods besides liquor were sold. The number of new off-licences granted in each of the years 1905, 1906, and 1907 were 192, 211, and 198, respectively. If the total of 403 for the two years 1905–6 is deducted from the above figure of 25,143, it would appear that there were on 1st January, 1907, some 24,740 off-licences which were in existence before the year 1905.

Harpenden Sewerage Scheme.

COLONEL LONG (Worcestershire, Evesham): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in view of the exceptionally healthy conditions of Harpenden, the Board will take into consideration the scientific evidence which has been laid before them that the water supply is not and cannot be contaminated by any local drainage, and will allow the Harpenden Urban Council to defer drawing up a sewerage scheme until one can be drawn up on sound scientific principles based on the final Report of the Royal Commission.

(*Answered by Mr. John Burns.*) The Local Government Board caused a local inquiry to be held with regard to the complaint which had been made that the Urban District Council had made default in providing their district with sufficient sewers. The Board took into consideration all the evidence submitted at the inquiry and subsequently in regard to the matter, including that relating to any risk to the water supply of Harpenden owing to the want of sewers. They are of opinion that there should be no delay in carrying out a proper scheme of sewerage and sewage disposal.

Sale of Spirits in Scotland.

MR. WILKIE (Dundee): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can state the number of gallons of spirits sold in Scotland by the licensed publicans and the number of gallons of spirits sold by the licensed grocers.

(*Answered by Mr Runciman.*) The Board of Inland Revenue inform me that they have no material on which to answer the honourable Member's Question.

Position of Clerks to Surveyors of Taxes.

MR. WILKIE: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury if the clerks in the offices of the surveyors of taxes, who are wholly employed and paid by the Government, are now to be placed on the permanent establishment of the Civil List, the same as other Civil Servants.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I must refer the hon. Member to the Answer given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer yesterday, and printed in to-day's Notice Paper, to a similar Question by the hon. Member for South Down. I can, of course, add nothing to that reply.

Extra Police at Headford, County Galway.

MR. HAZLETON (Galway, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that, in spite of the peaceful condition of the district, in which crime or outrage is unknown, the police force at Headford, county Galway, has been increased from six to twenty men; whether he can state the reason for this increase; and whether orders will at once be given for the reduction of the force in the district to its normal strength.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Inspector-General informs me that the police force at Headford has been increased from six to sixteen men owing to the existence there of cases of boycotting and to the disturbed condition of the locality.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee A (in respect of the Polling Districts and Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Attorney-General, Mr. Herbert Samuel, and Mr. Gladstone; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Birrell, Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland, and Mr. Solicitor-General for Ireland.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had added to Standing Committee A the following Fifteen Members (in respect of the Polling Districts and Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill): Mr. Agnew, Mr. Bertram Straus (Mile End), Mr. Robert Price, Mr. Marnham, Mr. Schawn, Mr. Hugh Law, Mr. M'Calmont, Captain Craig, Mr. Thomas Corbett, Mr. Kennedy, Mr. John Johnson, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Jeremiah MacVeagh, Mr. Long, and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That they had added to Standing Committe A the following Fifteen Members (in respect of the Law of Distress (Amendment) Bill): Mr. Middlebrook, Mr. Whitehead, Mr. Hodge, Mr. Lardner, Mr. Nield, Mr. Brace, Sir William Bull, Mr. Mitchell-Thomson, Mr. Butcher, Mr. Muldoon, Mr. Beale, Mr. Lehmann, Mr. Micklem, Mr. Napier, and Mr. Walker.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee; That, in pursuance of the provisions of The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, they had selected the following Fifteen Members to form the Parliamentary Panel of Members of this House to act as Commissioners: Mr. McCrae, Sir John Tuke, Mr. Findlay, Mr. Ainsworth, Sir John Dewar, Mr. John Deans Hope, Mr. Wilkie, Mr. Bell, Major Anstruther-Gray, Viscount Dalrymple, Mr. M'Callum, Mr. Charles Price, Sir Andrew Torrance, Sir John Jardine, and Mr. Tennant.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

EDUCATION (LOCAL AUTHORITIES) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. WALKER (Leicestershire, Melton), in moving the Second Reading of the

Education (Local Authorities) Bill, said it would be remembered that the Education Bill of 1906 contained certain clauses which were practically non-contentious. Some of them were dealt with last session by the Administrative Provisions Act. There remained the Delegation Clause which he was now offering in the form of a separate Bill. He asked the House to consider this short measure without reference to any other Education Bill which might be thought to be contentious. The clause had had vicissitudes. It was entirely recast in this House from the form in which it was first presented, and the Second Reading of the clause as recast was adopted without division. It received further discussion when it went to another place, and its final form was as it stood after agreement between the Government and Lord Belper, as representing the County Councils Association. His Bill embodied the clause in the final form in which it passed the House of Lords. The County Councils Association had considered the point and desired that the Bill as now drafted should receive its Second Reading without opposition, holding themselves free to suggest Amendments in Committee. His hon. friend the Member for Middleton, who was on the Executive of the County Councils Association, would address the House on this point. His Bill, therefore, embodied the clause in its final form, omitting a few sentences which were irrelevant to the subject as standing by itself. Before proceeding to give a description of the Bill, he might say a few words in regard to the necessity for a Statutory Delegation.

At this point, the hon. Member was seized with sudden illness and resumed his seat; but almost immediately afterwards formally moved the Second Reading of the Bill.

*Sir FRANCIS POWELL (Wigan) seconded the proposal for the Second Reading of the Bill. He took some part in the debate in 1906, and he hoped in the few remarks he had to make he would be able to avoid the sin of repeating what he then said. The principle of the Bill was one which he thought should commend itself to the House, viz.: that of devolution, which was calculated to meet the very great difficulties that had arisen in large counties in the administration of the Act of 1902. In examining the authorities who would naturally guide one in a matter of this kind, he included the speeches made in another place. The present Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs gave an account in the House of Lords of his experience in his own county while speaking in favour of the proposals in the Bill. His Lordship said—

> "He had in his own county seen immense agenda papers where whole pages had been taken up with proposals relating to such question as whether a caretaker should have a salary of so many shillings a week or so many shillings plus a few pence more. He did not admit that the county councils had broken down under the work—they had not, but few who had not been actively concerned in this work could realise the enormous strain there had been and the sacrifice of time and labour. They wished, if possible, to relieve that immense strain."

Another authority who might have more influence with members on his own side of the House—Lord Lansdowne—said—

> "So far as the question of principle is concerned, I do not know that the two sides of the House differ very widely. We are, I think, all of us in favour of delegation. It is no use arguing that point; and I think most of us will admit that if this Bill becomes law it will increase the necessity for delegation. Again, so far as I was able to gather the three canons laid down by the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in regard to delegation, I, for one, am not disposed to challenge them. I understand His Majesty's Government consider it essential that the delegation bodies should be entrusted with matters of detail rather than questions of high local policy. That principle is safeguarded by a section in the Bill."

Then the noble Lord went on to approve of the second principle embodied in this Bill that there should be "financial responsibility thrown on the delegation body and area." And the third principle embodied in this Bill, which was commended by Lord Lansdowne, was that "in all cases where public money had to be spent the representative element should predominate." He would state the case of the West Riding of Yorkshire, because he was a resident there during a part of the year and had opportunities when he represented one of the old divisions of that Riding to know the geographical difficulties which attended a limited area. The population of the West Riding according to the last census was 1,460,000. The increase since then judging by the increase between the years 1891 and 1901 would certainly bring the present population up to more than 1,500,000. If they looked to the acreage, leaving out the county boroughs, the West Riding contained no less than 1,681,000. Even these figures did not sufficiently convey to the mind the magnitude of this district. The administrative area extended from the immediate neighbourhood of Rochdale just across the border in Lancashire to near Kendal in Westmoreland and from the moors of Lancashire, which bounded the West Riding on the west, up to the city of York. The tourist who desired to become acquainted with the geography and archæology of the county could find a view of York Minster within the area, and in his journey south he could not escape from that great district until he had passed through Sheffield. He thought that that brief description of the population and area of the West Riding was sufficient for his purpose. But they had to consider not only the area and population, but the character of the population and the geographical features of the district, which made it so difficult on account of the imperfect railway communication to get from one part of the West Riding to another. That was sufficient proof that there must be some delegation in such a county. He had no desire to discuss any controversial matters which had arisen in the West Riding in regard to education. He might, however, say in no unkindly spirit that the authority of the West Riding would have been more fortunate in their litigation had the area of their administration not been so large, and if the complication of their affairs had not been so great. Certainly he felt that the details of the Bill required very careful consideration. They must consider, first of all, whether the powers it conferred ought necessarily to be compulsory in every case. They had to consider the constitution of the authorities, because questions might arise as to the precise definition of their powers. The right hon. Gentleman the Minister for Education would no doubt offer some remarks on these points for the guidance of the House in the course of the discussion. He observed that in the year 1906, the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor referred with joy to the clause embodied in this Bill as a means of enabling him to remove his feet from the hot marl of the education question. He hoped this Bill would have a soothing influence on the President of the Board of Education, who would no doubt explain why he did not take it in as part of his own proposal. The right hon. Gentleman probably thought that his own Bill was already sufficiently embarrassing. The Bill should, in his opinion, be referred to a Committee of the Whole House and not to a Committee upstairs, after it passed its Second Reading. It was a most essential part of the framework of the organisation of our elementary education. It must be borne in mind when they went into Committee how in areas so large as, for instance, the West Riding, the population differed. In the same county they had beautiful rural districts and densely populated towns which had, however, not yet risen to the dignity of county boroughs. All he asked the House to do now was to accept the principle of delegation. He believed the application of it was absolutely necessary in certain cases; whether it was to be tried in all cases was a question for Committee. There were many minutiæ of the Bill which were more fit for discussion in Committee than in the House, but he hoped there would be no delay in adopting the principle of the Bill. He felt that some reform in the direction of delegation was absolutely necessary for the efficient working of our educational system. He had great pleasure in seconding the Motion for the Second Reading of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*VISCOUNT MORPETH (Birmingham, S.) moved that the Bill be read a second time that day six months. He was sure that every Member in the House regretted that the hon. Member who moved the Second Reading should have been unable to continue his speech, because they all knew the great interest he took in this matter, and would have liked to have heard the arguments by which he defended his proposal. He also wished to thank the hon. Baronet who seconded the Resolution for his expressed intention of removing the Bill from the category of party questions so that they might be able to discuss it without reference to other measures of a political character. It had been said that this was a very modest Bill which only provided for delegation in certain educational matters; but the administrative upheaval which it would cause throughout the counties of England and Wales was very far from being modest. In fact the change was so far-reaching that it should not be dealt with by a private Member, but should be only undertaken in a Bill introduced by the Government itself. The mover of the Second Reading had told the House in a few words that the proposal had received the assent of the two Houses of Parliament in 1906. That was quite true, but circumstances were not quite the same at the present time as they were two years ago. In the first place, it was not quite correct to say that there was no opposition to the proposal as originally introduced. There was considerable opposition, and the opponents succeeded in obtaining modifications to the proposal. Moreover, this question in 1906 was overshadowed by political and religious controversies, and it was allowed to pass through comparatively unnoticed and without the attention it deserved. During the past two years there had been more experience of the working of the Act of 1902; and only on the previous day an important report by the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education had been issued; so that the added experience of the last few years had very materially altered the position. The Bill made no allusion to the Act for the medical inspection of schools, which had been put on the Statute-book since the Bill was originally introduced. There was no indication in the Bill that the medical inspection should be delegated from the county authorities to minor authorities. He would also point out that the Government had not thought fit to introduce this clause into their own Education Bill, no doubt for very good reasons. Probably the Government recognised that the position was not the same as it was, or they might have wisely thought that having an important Education Bill of their own which raised very acute questions of controversy, it would be inconveniient to overweight it with this subject. His own opinion was that when this question was dealt with it should be by the Government, acting with all the expert advice which they could command, and not by a private Member. If there was no time for the Government itself to deal with it there would be less in the odds and ends of time which a private Member could command to press the Bill through the House. The county councils of England had the greatest objection to this Bill on administrative and educational grounds. The hon. Member for Melton had said that the County Councils Association had agreed not to oppose the Second Reading; but that agreement, he thought, must not be taken to mean that they in any way approved of the Bill now before the House. He could distinctly say, and he had taken pains to find out, that throughout England the county councils, and especially the education authorities, were greatly afraid that the work which they had been doing during the past years would be upset and jeopardised by this Bill. The hon. Baronet who seconded the Resolution said that the Bill was to be regarded in the light that local interest would thereby be enlisted in the work of education. If it were possible to regard it in that light there would be very slight opposition at all to it. It was the business of the county councils to enlist and make use of all the assistance they could get in their educational work. He passed by the fact that the county councils as representative bodies were entitled to the support of the House when they were strongly of opinion that this House should not lightly and without very grave reasons upset their whole system of educational administration. They objected to this Bill on three grounds: it would impede the work which they were doing, it would be more expensive, and it would make the education of the country less efficient. He thought he could prove all these points. The merit of county council administration was not its rapidity, as everybody knew that had gone into the question. It could not be caled quick in its action. First of all, the county council had to come to an agreement with the managers in the locality which was being dealt with. Besides that they had to deal with the President of the Board of Education, and not only with him, but with the Local Government Board, and there was the greatest delay. Yet it was proposed where there were four bodies dealing with this question of education, two Government Departments, the body of managers and the county authorities, to add another authority, practically the parish council or the rural district council. If that was done there would be endless correspondence backwards and forwards. It was a difficult thing to get three bodies instead of two to agree to a common policy. Such a proposition as this must entail delay in the execution of the work which required to be done, which already took a long time, and which ought to be hastened rather than made more lengthy. He would ask the House to observe this all-important point. The delegation under the Bill was a delegation to elected bodies elected by the ratepayers, and consequently they would have two authorities dealing with the work of education, both with the authority of the electorate behind them, and both claiming the authority upon which all persons who were popularly elected insisted. There was also this further difficulty. At the present time delegation was made to a Committee when it was made by a county authority. Under this Bill the delegation would be of a statutory kind, because the schemes would have the force of a statute and would only be able to be altered with very great difficulty, if at all. So that they would have minor authorities directly representing the electors equally with the county authority, with statutory powers in control of certain portions of the system of education. He could not think that it was a good principle to divide the work of education into two, and he would say that that division was conducted on no intelligible principle at all. But even if it were possible to divide education into two watertight compartments under the control of two authorities, it would be administratively a bad policy. There was another very important matter that he would like to refer to. The proposals of the Bill were that the devolution should either be to the parish council or to the rural district council or to a combination of those areas, either a combination of rural districts or a combination of parish areas. He would like to urge upon the House that the proper area for any delegation which took place in rural districts—and for the present he was mainly talking about rural districts, because the Bill chiefly affected them—the proper area was the parish. As soon as they got beyond the parish and the rural district council they got a body which was too large or too small. He spoke from experience. In the county on the education authority of which he served when the Bill of 1902 was passed they attempted a system of having groups of managers of a certain number of schools. They found the greatest opposition to that proposal. They found that, when they got out of the parish and grouped half-a-dozen together, they soon got out of local knowledge of the people who were attached to a certain school or sent their children to that school and who were very little interested in a school a dozen miles away or even a shorter distance than that. He thought no one would deny that the parish was the proper area for devolution and in his opinion the proper persons to whom authority should be delegated were the managers of the school. It was quite possible—and in the area to which he had referred they had indeed done it—for the managers to be elected, either all of them, or at any rate the majority of them. They allowed the parish council to elect four out of six members so that the managers should be representative of the parish council. But he asked the House to note the difference between that and the proposals of this Bill. Under this Bill it was provided that the elective minor authority should have co-ordinate powers with the county authority. Under the proposals which hon. Members would see had been adopted, roughly speaking, by twenty councils in England, they delegated powers to the managers, and they had allowed the managers to be appointed by a representative body, but the managers still remained the agents of the county authority, it was their business to carry out the policy of the county authority, and as the ultimate resort, if they set themselves to obstruct the policy of the county authority, the latter could override them and alter the conditions of service. Under this Bill, supposing a minor authority were to set itself against the county authority and refuse to spend money, endeavour to starve the schools or try to destroy an enlightened policy pursued by the central authority, the county authority would have no power to step in, because the minor authority would have equal powers with them under the statute. He would like to know whether it was proposed in this Bill that the minor authorities should have the power of corresponding directly with the Board of Education, because if they had, it would lead to great confusion, and if they had not that power, it would lead to the duplication of work. Moreover the Bill would make education more expensive. He would not object to that or grudge the money if any educational advantage was to be secured. His complaint of the Bill was that without any educational advantages whatsoever, it would add and add very considerably to the cost of administration in the counties. Obviously, in the first place, it would require a vast army of local officials. He saw in a report issued by the Kent County Authority that they calculated that the salaries of these officials would come to £6,000 alone. Of course it might be debated, but he was not going to deal with it fully, that it would be a saving of money in regard to the Central Administration. As they had seen however, there was very conflicting evidence on that question, and to his mind the weight of the evidence was on the side that the setting up of district offices and the appointing of all these officials at comparatively large salaries did not relieve the central authority, and had not led to their being able to save much money, although he admitted that some counties had said that they would have to increase their staffs if the local committees were abolished. But others were very strongly of opinion the other way, and in one case, that of Hampshire, so strongly had they felt that the local committees simply hampered the work and added to the expense that they had abolished them. Then the stationery and books under this Bill were to be left to the local committees. What was likely to be the result of that added expenditure for no advantage of any kind whatever? He did not want to drag in controversial questions, but he was thoroughly opposed to the parochial protection which was at the root of this proposal. In his county when the Act of 1902 came into force they saved £2,000—and they were not a rich county but a poor one—on that head alone, and they were able to devote it to educational work instead of to that which was positively useless. In the county of Kent he saw from the same report which he had quoted that they had actually saved £10,000 on their books and stationery alone, by getting a county tender instead of allowing their local committees to order their books and stationery from the bookshop round the corner. He would also point out that the Bill of the right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Education, went in the direction of having a county rate, it being easier to carry on educational work when it was spread over a whole county. This would also be more economical, but the policy of this Bill was in exactly the opposite direction and proposed that special rates should be charged on the different parishes in a county. Coming to the point of efficiency, he had already endeavoured to show the House that the work must be hampered when education was divided under two authorities, and that there must of necessity be delays. But the really important point of this Bill to his mind was that nothing was gained educationally under it. He would ask the attention of the House to the work that might be delegated under this Bill. There was the question of attendance. He did not know whether he was going beyond what was right in this House, but owing to the misfortune of not having heard the speech of the mover of the Bill the House did not know what the hon. Gentleman had told him, which he thought he was justified in repeating as no secret was made of it. The hon. Member said that if the Bill went to Committee, he proposed to remove the power of enforcing the obligations of attendance from the special committees, and that relieved him from the necessity of pointing out how extremely dangerous it would be to delegate that power. It was extremely difficult to get the small local authorities to apply the laws as to attendance, and they were the very first who were apt to break them by employing children in the schools. But as the hon. Member assured him that he had withdrawn that he would not allude to the matter further. These bodies might not fix the salaries and everyone would rejoice that that was so who remembered the scale of pay under the small rural school boards. Dismissal was also removed from the purview of the small authority, and that would give the teachers a certain security. They also might not engage the teachers, but that, he thought, was one of the functions that might be delegated to local managers or to the minor authority. It was the one question in which the parents living in the locality took a most lively interest, and it was a duty which might very properly be delegated to the local managers, subject, of course, to the veto of the educational authority on educational grounds. The extraordinary thing was that Members would find, on looking through the report of the Consultative Committee, that every council in England had some form of delegation and that nearly every one of them gave the appointment of the teacher, subject to proper restrictions, to the minor authority or the managers. Yet this Bill expressly denied the right, and made it one of the subjects which could, under no circumstances, be delegated. In his opinion the Bill was reactionary even from the point of view of the devolutionists; and it would tend to stop the good work which they were sincerely desirous of advancing. The question of capital expenditure was also removed from the powers of the local authority, and next to the appointment of teachers, the subject of the greatest importance with educational work was the provision of new schools and the enlargement of existing schools. In fact, no educational duties of any importance were delegated under this Bill except small repairs, the supply of books and stationery, the appointment of caretakers and such like minor matters. The Bill was a pretence; it did not carry out what it professed. It set out to encourage local interest in the schools, but the only way in which such interest could be stimulated was by giving real power. Any attempt to stimulate it by giving sham power was quite worthless. He did not deny that hon. Members who were supporting the Bill were true and sincere friends of education. No doubt they thought that by the Bill they would improve rural education, but he feared that in a great many cases those hon. Members were not conversant with the facts of rural life or with the machinery as it existed at the present time. Anybody who knew how the system was working at the present time knew that more and more as years went by the zeal and interest of the county authorities in it was increasing. In his own county the chief occupation of the rural district councils was to pass resolutions denouncing the expenditure of the county council. He had taken pains to inquire and he had found from other hon. Members that the experience in their counties was that the rural district councils were constantly complaining of the expenditure and asking that it should be cut down. It was to his mind extraordinary that hon. Members who he knew were zealous in the cause of education, and who wished to see it advanced, should by this Bill deliberately take power from the most progressive element in the county and hand it over to the more stingy, reactionary, and unprogressive bodies. It was significant that London was excepted from the operation of the Bill. If there was an unwieldy and difficult area to administer it was, he supposed, the county of London, but he, as a former Member of the London School Board, would be the last to desire London to be cut up. If it were cut up, and the powers with regard to education parcelled out among conflicting authorities, education would suffer. He imagined that London was left out of the Bill because the London members were strong and would resist their inclusion. But why should the rural counties of England not receive the same treatment? They possessed representative bodies and had been extending their work. If hon. Members would only look at the pamphlet which had been issued they would see that practically every county in England and Wales had some scheme of devolution suitable to its own circumstances, and although the report of the sub-committee was not very definite whatever moral was to be drawn from it was not the moral embodied in the Bill before the House. Under the Bill all the counties would practically be tied down to one form of devolution. [Cries of "No."] If hon. Members would look at the summing up of the Report they would see it stated that it was difficult, if not impossible, to devise any uniform system which would give general satisfaction throughout the country. They would also see that there were twenty-two counties which had not devolved powers to district bodies, and the Report said there were very weighty reasons for not adopting such a policy. Under this Bill it was the fact that all counties would be tied down to one form of devolution which handed over practically no power to the minor authority, whereas under the present system they were free to find the scheme which was most suited to their needs, and could devolve vastly greater powers than were now proposed. He would like in conclusion to offer to the Minister for Education two practical reasons for not adopting this Bill at the present time. In the first place the counties would have this year to deal with the question of medical inspection, which would not only throw a great charge upon them but would need the expenditure of much time and energy. And further, they might have to deal with the Government's Education Bill—he assumed it for the sake of argument. To ask them in addition to throw their machinery into the melting pot was to ask something beyond their power to accomplish. He appealed earnestly to the right hon. Gentleman not to adopt this Bill, which would hamper the work of education, and give powers to bodies who had shown no interest in the cause of education, but had, on the contrary, consistently opposed any expenditure and had indeed desired to cut it down to the last farthing.

Viscount Morpeth.

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme) said he desired to associate himself with the noble Lord in regretting the indisposition of the hon. Member who was in charge of the Bill. He did so the more freely because he thought they owed the hon. Gentleman a debt of gratitude, whatever they might think of that particular measure, for enabling the House to have a day in which to discuss education free from any religious rancour or sectarian bias, and to look at the educational problem from a purely educational point of view. He rose to oppose the passage of the Bill and he wished to say at once that his opposition dated originally from the opposition of the Staffordshire County Council. They in Staffordshire were no doubt in a peculiarly happy position so far as education was concerned, for they had as chairmen of their educational committee Mr. F. Kitchener and Mr. J. T. Homer, both experts on education, assisted by Mr. Graham Balfour. The position of educational government in Staffordshire was, he believed, recognised even by the Board of Education as being, perhaps, the best in the whole of England and Wales. They in Staffordshire, therefore, very strongly objected to being compelled by this Bill to adopt measures which might be suitable for other counties, but which were not suitable to them in the state of development at which they had arrived. The Bill said that every county council "shall" propose a scheme of delegation. His first objection was to that word "shall." It had been suggested that the word "may" might be substituted, and that the Bill should be purely optional. But even such a change would not satisfy him, for he had come to the conclusion that any such delegation as was proposed by the Bill would be detrimental to the country as a whole as well as to Staffordshire. If the House would bear with him for a few minutes, he would like to place before it the features which struck him as being fundamentally bad in the measure. In the first place, had such a vague Bill ever been put before the House? The Bill provided that the council of every county should prepare a scheme for delegating to local education committees some of their powers and duties with respect to elementary education. Could anything be vaguer than that? The county council shall devise some scheme to give some people unspecified some powers unspecified to spend some money, again unspecified, for some purposes unspecified. A vaguer Bill could not be imagined. The excuse made for it was that it was the compromise arrived at in 1906. They did not want compromises arrived at in 1906 passed into law without very careful inspection. There were certain powers enjoyed by the county education authorities which they knew were not to be delegated. Those were the powers of making by-laws, of incurring capital expenditure, of paying rent, of engaging teachers, and of fixing salaries of teachers. Those powers were expressly debarred under the Bill from delegation. That left very few powers to be delegated, viz., the questions of school attendance, of hours of opening and closing, of holidays, of supplies and purchase of furniture, of repairing school premises, of purchase of fuel, of cleaning school premises, and finally of medical inspection. Were these matters which could safely be delegated in country districts to the rural district council, or the parish district council? Let them take first the question of school attendance. Was that one which could safely be delegated to what one ordinarily associated with rural or parish district councils? Under the 1902 Bill school attendance had gone up throughout the county of Staffordshire from something like 88 per cent. to nearly 94 per cent. and that rise had been due to the careful and systematic way in which attendance was being enforced throughout the country. If they delegated this question to rural or parish district councillors, who were either farmers or squires or people whose main interest was not in getting children to attend school so much as getting them out to work in the fields, they could not expect the same standard of attendance to be kept up. It was indeed bound to fall off, and they could not expect the attendance officer to press it in the same way as he would under a county education authority with its experts at headquarters. He would venture to urge that in any case, if they accepted the Second Reading of the Bill, the Government should expressly exclude school attendance from the questions to be delegated. Next came the question of hours. Ought the question of the hours of opening and closing schools to be left to these local authorities? It was all very well to say that that did not matter, but when it came to letting farmers decide whether a school should close at noon in harvest-time when there was plenty of work in the fields, and to leaving it to this lax educational authority to decide what the hours of attendance at school should be, they would have exactly the same bad results as would follow leaving the question of attendance itself to the rural district or parish councils; so that both school attendance and the hours of opening and closing should in his opinion be specifically debarred from delegation, and continue to be dealt with at headquarters by experts. The next question was that of the medical inspection of school children. That was a new question since the delegation clauses were originally introduced to the House in 1906. During the last six months they had heard a good deal of debate and correspondence as to how that medical inspection should be carried out. He thought educationists everywhere were united in saying that the inspection of the children, to be carried out well, should be done by whole-time officers, specialists in the work, and under the direct supervision of the county education authority. In his own county they had appointed one senior and three junior inspectors, all whole-time officials, who would correlate and bring together the results of the medical examination and work more or less on a uniform plan, helping each other in arranging a general scheme of medical inspection. The alternative to that method was to leave it in the hands of the local medical officer of health. The common form was to say: "We will pay the medical officer of health 1s. for the inspection of each child, and and then we will wash our hands of the whole concern." That was a bad form of medical inspection. It would do no good to the school children, and it would cost a considerably larger sum, while relieving the county education authority of all responsibility. Was it fair to allow the county education authority to delegate its supervision over the medical inspection of children to rural district or parish councils? If they did they would have those rural district and parish councils employing the local medical officer of health whom they knew well, and giving him a nice little bonus on his year's salary in order to carry out a superficial and wholly useless inspection of children. He therefore hoped the Government would rule out from this delegation Bill not only the questions of school attendance, and of the hours of opening and closing of schools, but also that of the medical inspection of school children. In his opinion—and he trusted the House would agree with him—the case against delegation in these respects was overwhelming. If that were so, what was left over? The only things were the purchase of supplies, the repairs of school premises, the purchase of furniture and fuel, and the cleaning of the school buildings. In fact they were leaving to the rural district or parish councils the supervision of what was usually described as the parish pump. They were giving them the power to buy slate pencils and copy-books at the village shops, of appointing a cousin or aunt as caretaker of the village school, and of employing the local builder to do repairs instead of putting the work out to tender. The whole idea of allowing the rural district or parish councils to deal with these things pointed inevitably to jobbery. He did not mean scandalous jobbery, but mere jobbery of patronage, which always cropped up in those small local bodies. At the same time they were giving them power to reduce expenditure by burning less fuel, by employing cheaper labour, and by cutting down the expense for school supplies. Further than that, they would have the opportunity of giving appointments to their own friends instead of selecting the most suitable persons. They need not object, perhaps, very strongly to the local authorities employing their cousins and their aunts as caretakers, but he thought it rather too much to ask the House to pass an elaborate Bill to compel every education authority in the country to draw up an elaborate scheme for delegating to somewhat uncertain bodies such trivial matters as the appointment of caretakers and school cleaners and the purchase of stores and fuel. It was really employing a steam-roller to crush a fly. Even if it were possible to delegate these very minor powers in order to give the local people an interest in education, he did not think it was right to set up an enormous number of new bodies with offices and clerks, involving endless additional red tape and correspondence, with an extra charge on the rates, which the noble Lord had shown would amount to £6,000 in the case of the county of Kent. The system of appointing more and more officials and more and more local bodies to do work already satisfactorily dealt with was not one which commended itself to business people who desired to see education well carried out. It would be said that the object was to bring counties which did not delegate into line with those that did. But the delegation that took place at present was was wholly different from that proposed by this Bill. It was voluntary and the delegated body owed its existence to the county education authority. It was subordinate to it and worked with it without friction. They had, for instance, a certain amount of delegation in Staffordshire. But the delegation proposed by this Bill was compulsory. The body exercising the delegated powers would owe its existence to Parliament and not to the county education committee; it would be not subordinate to but the rival of the county education authority, and they could not get from a system such as that anything but friction between the existing authority and the rural district and parish councillors who were to be invested with these powers. At present the delegation worked smoothly; but compulsory delegation would not do so. He would like to quote to the House part of the Report of the Committee which his noble friend had not touched upon—the part in which the Committee recommended the counties which at present retained the centralised form of administration to study that portion of the Appendix which showed what had been achieved in some counties where some form of devolution obtained. That was a sound, business-like recommendation; but to drive people to set up rival authorities which would conflict in every point, which would have rating powers, and which would be composed of such material as rural, district and parish councils were, would in his opinion be absolutely detrimental to the cause of education. He would be told that as this Bill was taken from the 1906 Bill of the Liberal Government they were somewhat contradicting themselves by opposing it. But the conditions which prevailed in 1906 were very different from those of to-day. In 1906 the officials of the old school boards and the members of those bodies were numerous and were still in close connection with education. Two years had gone by, and those gentlemen who would no doubt have formed admirable members of the delegated authorities were now further away from their old educational experience or had become managers of new council schools or had travelled back to some part of the educational hierarchy. Besides that, the educational organisation of the country which was revolutionised in 1902 was still unsettled in 1906. But now the county authorities were formally established; they knew exactly how to deal with these questions; they had arranged all details; they had either delegated their powers horizontally to different district councils or vertically to different committees, and every one of the counties worked on a system which, however many minor drawbacks it might have, was understood by the people. He thought it would be disastrous to the education of this country again to revolutionise the authorities and upset a system of delegation which was working smoothly at present.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day six months.'"—(*Viscount Morpeth*).

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

*Mr. A. G. C. HARVEY (Rochdale) said he must confess that he felt rather disappointed at the very strong opposition which the Bill had so far received in that debate. He was not at all alarmed at the epithets hurled at it. The seconder of the Motion for the rejection found fault with the Bill both because it was elaborate and because it was vague; and the mover of the rejection complained that they disliked the measure because there were no powers actually to be given to the authorities in question. He viewed the giving of powers to local authorities as dangerous and yet he would like the Bill better if more powers could be given. He had thought that the Bill would receive the general assent of the House. It contravened no principle of the Act of 1902; in fact it popularised the machinery of that Act; he had hoped, on that account, that it would have been acceptable to Members on the other side of the House, and would have been approved by Members of the Party responsible for the Act of 1902. It was extremely necessary in his opinion—and he spoke with some experience of the business of one of the largest education authorities—it was extremely important and desirable that more local powers should be given for the management and administration of education, and some administrative Act of this kind would be found very necessary unless education was to get into chaos and outside popular interest. He did not think they could have good local government unless they could enlist all forces and all classes of the population. It was only in that way they could get full good out of local government, educational or otherwise. They wanted all the wisdom and experience that could be brought to the administration. Wisdom was the monopoly of no class, and wisdom based on the experience of personal needs was the most useful of all wisdom in administration. The schools were used by the lower middle classes and by the working classes of the country. The county council possessed none of those elements—at any rate, little or none. County administration had all it could do to keep the confidence of the people, for whose benefit, he admitted, it was working. The county centres of government were too far from the homes of the poor people of the county to allow them to participate in the business of the county councils. The distance entailed expense and enormous loss of time to which men in poor circumstances could not submit. He admitted that the Act of

1902 did provide for delegation in certain forms; certain powers might be delegated to managers; and the noble Lord who moved the rejection had told them that in his county, so far as he had gathered, this was the only form of delegation in operation. The noble Lord said that that suited his county, of which, of course, he had experience. All he could say was that it would not suit the county of Lancashire, and he ventured to think that they on the Ministerial side of the House would view with some nervousness delegation exclusively to managers. They still thought that the Act of 1902 gave far too little popular control. If they delegated powers in a wholesale way to managers of only partly-public schools they were cutting down the small modicum of popular control which already existed. The delegation of powers to school managers had all the worst objections which used to be hurled at small school board areas. They did not want to manage the schools, school by school. They wanted to manage education in an area easy of access, convenient, and of sufficient size to make education over that area of some importance and interest to the people of the locality. There was another form of delegation which allowed the county council to split the county into areas over which a separate education authority might reign, but no county council had adopted that plan. Then again, under Schedule 1, education committees were allowed to appoint sub-committees up and down the county for administrative purposes, and that had been done, he believed, in some twenty counties. The noble Lord had said one of his main objections to this Bill was that it would cause an administrative upheaval. He did not think it would in England. They did not propose to disturb existing administration; they proposed to strengthen it and improve it by bringing in an auxiliary administration as a part of it, using local knowledge of the schools and their requirements. The noble Lord had said that the institution of these bodies would delay education and the administration of education. He must beg to differ from him on that point. He believed that properly constituted bodies, with responsibility, would quicken educational administration, because they would be able to bring, day by day, and hour by hour, local and intimate knowledge of the needs of the schools. They knew that in the county areas great delay was often caused by waiting for the county council meeting; then they had to send down some inspector or official to interview the people on the spot, and he had to go back and report to the next monthly meeting of the council. It was this delay they wanted to avoid. The noble Lord had complained that certain extra expenses would be caused by the adoption of the measure. All he could say was that he for one would gladly see more money spent if it would improve education, and he maintained that the existence of responsible committees in different and convenient localities would increase public zeal and interest and hence improve the education of the localities. The noble Lord had said that in Cumberland they had tried to group managers of different schools without success. Of course, that was because they had soon got out of local knowledge. The county centre had no local knowledge to get out of, and that was why he, for one, would bring educational administration nearer the schools. Then again, it was said that these local committees would starve the schools and could do so with impunity, because they had not the county authority over them. Under Clause 1, Subsection 3, the county committee had full power to compel a recalcitrant local committee in the direction of doing its duty by the schools. The seconder of the Motion for the rejection of the Bill was very strongly of opinion that school attendance work should be kept outside these committees if the Bill passed. He thought they might trust local people to a much greater extent than the seconder of the Amendment proposed. The hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme had said that the people who governed these local committees would be interested in getting young children out to work. Lancashire was a county where many young children were employed in the workshops and mills, yet in that county the first thing they did was to delegate full powers to the localities in which school attendance had been worked, with the result that it had gone up by from 5 to 10 per cent. The Consultative Committee was on the whole favourable to the scheme of delegation; so he read it, at any rate. But what they wanted to do was not to upset the county committees which were doing good work, but to bring into line those county committees that were not doing good work in education and administration. They had a good scheme in Lancashire—he did not say it was perfect; it could not be made perfect without more legislation, because any scheme of delegation, liberal as it might be, stereotyped education all over the county area, and that was a thing which ought to be avoided at all costs. This Bill, under Clause 1, Section 3, charged certain expenses on the locality after the county council had provided the minimum for education out of the general county rate; if a locality desired a better class of education, something more in conformity with the special needs of the particular part of the county, it could have that education under special arrangements. That would give elasticity and variety. They had counties which varied in all their characteristics, yet they had stereotyped education. Under this Bill they wanted to oblige reluctant county committees to come before the public of their counties and state their reasons why they objected to delegation, or what form of delegation they might object to. He thought if that were done and conferences were held in different parts of the county, as the Bill provided, there might be in the end agreement upon the needs of the county and the form of delegation that would best suit it. The promoters of the Bill did not desire to discredit county councils nor to weaken them. They desired really to strengthen the county councils by putting into the service of education under the county council bodies of men who knew the requirements of their districts and who would be full of zeal for the promotion of education. He had much pleasure in supporting the Second Reading.

*COLONEL R. WILLIAMS (Dorsetshire, W.), in supporting the Amendment said he regarded the Bill as a retrograde proposal. It was quite true that in matters of administration the locality might well be consulted, but in the larger matters of education it seemed to him that the bigger the area they could get the better it was for education as a whole. It appeared to him that this Bill ran the risk of practically putting the whole administration of education into small instead of large areas, and that would not be to the advantage of the education of the country as a whole. It was said that by the Bill they would be drawing in persons acquainted with education who had now no place in its administration. But a Commission which had been considering this matter reported, after considering all sorts of schemes of devolution, that no one could be safely recommended for universal adoption, and that it ought to be left to the county councils themselves to work out in their own areas the form of devolution which was best suited to their interests. This Bill took away from county councils their elasticity of judgment and tied them down to one form of devolution only. Sir William Hart Dyke, in an interesting Memorandum at the end of the Report, dealt with the question of local committees, and dismissed at once the idea of elective bodies. It seemed to be the strongest condemnation of the proposal of the Bill that a large majority of these proposed new authorities should be elected members, elected for all sorts of purposes, of which education was usually the very last. If they would only let the scheme of delegation grow up gradually and entirely unfettered, it would grow in time as the counties got more into their work and not only felt that they had a grasp themselves which would give them power to deal with the smaller education authorities, but also, which was more important, they would be able gradually to feel that public opinion upon education had grown up so that there were people to whom they could safely delegate some of their powers. He was sure from what he could see in his own county that the class of persons to whom powers could be delegated was growing gradually and whereas four years ago any delegation would have been impossible, some sort of delegation might be quite possible in the future, because the class of persons interested in education was gowing.

Meanwhile to make any hard and fast rule of delegation to certain local bodies only would not only lead to a dissipation of educational force, but in many cases to undue starving of education, would certainly multiply administrative difficulties, and retard and not facilitate the interests of education. Therefore he should vote against the Bill.

*SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe) said that whatever the merits or defects of the Bill, it was a source of satisfaction to the House that a Bill relating to an important portion of education should be able to be debated without the incandescence and hot acrimony which Education Bills as a rule, unfortunately so abundantly generated, and without any partisan controversy. He thought the hon. Member for Wigan was right in his contention that to all intents and purposes, with certain insignificant exceptions suggested by experience, the Bill repeated a clause which was embodied in the Bill of 1906 relating to delegation of powers to minor authorities as that clause emerged after full and free deliberation in another place. He really did not see that anything that had happened since, should lead them to take a less favourable view of the principle and methods suggested in this Bill. He was therefore surprised that it should have received so much opposition on that side of the House. The Report of the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education dealt very exhaustively and comprehensively with the various methods adopted by different local education authorities in regard to entrusting minor authorities with educational power in their geographical areas. The zeal and the minuteness with which the investigations appeared to have been conducted, reflected the greatest possible credit on the permanent officials of that Department. The Board of Education had not had time to consider the Report, which said that nearly all the difficulties that had been suggested had been surmounted in those few counties where devolution had been adopted to the satisfaction of all parties concerned; and that as regarded the general principles which appeared to underlie any successful scheme of devolution, experience showed that local bodies would, as a rule, work better and be better manned if, in the first place, important and interesting duties were entrusted to them and, in the second place, they were given considerable executive powers in carrying out those duties and that this might be combined with the retention by the Education Committee of the ultimate control of the sub-committee's proceedings, although the exercise of that control might seldom be necessary. That successfully did away with the contention of the mover of the rejection that these subsidiary authorities might conceivably starve the schools committed to their care or that they would not carry out the enlightened progressive policy of the central board. They wanted to encourage these local authorities in remote districts, and it was practically certain that by doing so they would create a body of eager, efficient, and interested educationists. Speaking after the event, the reproach, if it was a reproach, that might be levelled at the Act of 1902 was that it rather erred on the side of excessive centralisation. It was true that that Act in reducing the number of education authorities from something like 3,300 to a little over 300 did a great deal to lighten and to simplify the labours of the Board of Education. But that result was only attained at the expense of local interest in education. The county councils, who were the local education authorities, were hard worked and hard working authorities. He happened to meet an alderman of the London County Council that morning who assured him he would be reduced to a skeleton owing to his having to sit up till one o clock in the morning doing committee work. Last year, for instance, by the Small Holdings Act new, and certainly at the outset very heavy and exacting duties had been placed on county councils. If this principle of devolution was considered desirable in 1906 it was all the more desirable now. By Clause 15 of the Small Holdings Act of 1907 local authorities were empowered to delegate powers to sub-committees, and by Clause 36 were able to appoint sub-committees upon which local representation was very much to the fore. What they wanted in order to create real and effective local interest was to give the local committees further power. They wanted to evolve local pride in schools. They wanted them to have a local desire to look after the scholars, to have local patriotism, to see that the scholars gained scholarships and gained success in the world beyond. He very much feared that both local effort and local enthusiasm ran the risk of being considerably stifled by their being given no adequate scope for their activity. They wanted these schools to be known as "our schools" and the scholars as "our scholars" and not as county council schools and county council scholars. He believed the provisions of this Bill would revive all that local interest and local activity which had languished with the larger local efforts made on behalf of the schools. It might be argued that if the Board of Education Bill this year passed, it would so affect educational administration and so lighten the labours of the Education Committees, that this Bill would not be needed. But a slight consideration would show that this was not the case. Let them take it for granted for the sake of argument that a certain number of rural schools by some miraculous interposition of providence escaped the confiscatory proposals of the President of the Board of Education and that therefore the work of the Education Committees would be lightened. That did not touch the case of a solitary county council school where the local education authority was too remote to take any cognisance of local sentiment and aspiration, and the very fact that a certain number of voluntary schools surrounding that council school would get out of the control of the local education authority by contracting out would only tend to make the position of the council school more solitary and more isolated. His noble friend had laid considerable stress on the fact that in his opinion the effect of the Bill would be to increase considerably the cost of education. He might tell his hon. friend that at the present time what conduced very much to heavy rates was the fact that the local education authority had a great deal of cumbrous and tedious detail to attend to, whereas by some intelligent scheme like that proposed by this Bill he believed that by local effort a great deal of the cost of education now thrown upon the rates would be removed from the greater part of the schools. Let them take, for example, the expenses of travelling. They had the expenses of county inspectors and committee-men travelling to remote districts, and a great deal of that expense would be saved under the arrangements now proposed. Again, all those tiresome and tedious delays which occurred under the present system would be eliminated, and all the work and expense which now devolved upon the shoulders of officials swathed in sealing wax and adorned with red tape would be saved. The chairman of the Kent County Council, he understood, was a strong advocate of the spirit underlying this Bill. In his own constituency they had cried their eyes out almost asking to be made an autonomous district. They complained bitterly that at present if they desired to purchase even a box of pencils they had to wait a fortnight in order to get the necessary sanction. That showed that local and county patriotism was being obliterated altogether from the administration of education. All this reminded him very much of the story of the station-master in one of the districts of Bengal who sent to headquarters a message: "Tiger romping about my office; please wire instructions immediately." His hon. friend had spoken about the compulsory character of the Bill. His experience was that unless they made these powers compulsory the local authorities would not formulate a scheme, because they would rather be without the responsibility of supervising its operations. That was one reason why he approved of the Bill. He thought the local authorities ought to go more in the direction of decentralisation than they seemed to have done up to the present. He was anxious to break down the bureaucratic barrier between the school and the people. They ought to try to enlist willing workers in the cause of local schools, and to encourage the people themselves to take more interest in the future of our young citizens. He was convinced that this Bill would carry out all those objects without in the slightest degree infringing or weakening the efficiency of the local education authorities. As regarded finance, the raising of the rates, borrowing money, making by-laws, and dismissing, engaging, or fixing the salary of teachers, they were matters which ought to be excluded from the purview of these subsidiary authorities. He believed that the practical and immediate effect of the Bill would be to give a local complexion, a bracing tone to education which he felt was lacking at the present time, and he therefore accepted this Bill with the greatest possible pleasure.

MR. ROGERS (Wiltshire, Devizes) said his experience was that the real security for education lay with the county council and nowhere else. If any form of delegation was adopted it ought to be the managers of the schools themselves. In this connection, although he did not desire to raise a very controversial subject, he was bound to say that he thought a Bill of this kind making delegation possible ought to follow and not precede the general education proposals of the Government. One of the difficulties they now experienced in the counties, of delegating these powers to managers, was, as everybody recognised, the unrepresentative character of the managers, and the difficulty of giving very important powers to a body which was not elected. A very important paper containing a great deal of valuable evidence had lately been published in connection with this question of delegation. He had been looking through it in order to ascertain how the various systems of delegation now in practice were working, and he found that of the sixty-one counties reported upon twenty were now devolving authority to district local sub-committees, thirteen were devolving authority in regard to school attendance only, and twenty-two were following the practice of giving as much power as was consistent with the case to the managers of the schools themselves. The first criticism he had to make in regard to this Bill, and he ventured to think that it was a most important matter, was that he could not understand why a system of delegation was required in Lancashire or in the West Riding, or why it should be forced upon a number of counties which were doing their work well now, where there was no friction at all, and where the present method of working was best suited to the condition of those particular counties. If the promoters would agree to alter the first "shall" to "may," he would not offer any opposition, but as long as the House was being asked to consider a scheme of delegation which was not required in his county, so long he should oppose the Bill, and he hoped the House would reject it. What were the reasons why they objected to these powers of delegation? The hon. Member for Rochdale had suggested that delegation would bring the number of people who sent their children to schools into a much closer connection with the schools. He could assure the hon. Member for Rochdale and the hon. Member for Middleton, that there were a great many districts where they did not get the parents of poor children on a rural district council, which was very often the preserve of that class which was least of all friendly to education, viz., the tenant farmers. He wished to draw the attention of the House to some of the evidence contained in the Report to which he had referred. Some counties had made a great success of the devolution scheme, and some had found it a failure. Lancashire and the West Riding found it unsuccessful, Hampshire had abandoned it, and Kent was inquiring into it. Everybody engaged in education in the rural districts knew that the question of cost was of the greatest importance in regard to any system of administration. Out of twenty counties which had adopted the system of delegation, twelve had replied indefinitely and made no claim that the system had produced economy; one said there had been no saving, and five that it had increased their expenditure, whilst two only stated that the system had produced any economy. On the general ground as to the success or failure of their schemes, six were satisfied all round, and five were dissatisfied. In the face of that evidence it was by no means certain that any form of delegation produced economy or efficiency of administration, and it appeared to him that the circumstances of counties were so wholly different that they had no right to attempt in any one Bill to force a system of delegation on both counties and boroughs alike. The county council of Hampshire had modified its scheme of delegation on the following grounds stated at page 39 of the Report of the Consultative Committee : (1) The system does not lead to economy or efficiency ; (2) duties are duplicated, and work of central office is increased ; (3) district sub-committees want to control finance, teachers' salaries, and other matters, and chafe at the supervision of the education committee ; and (4) the system tends to put managers at a greater distance from the education committee. The hon. Member for Hythe, speaking in support of the Bill, had expressed the hope that the effect of it would be to create a number of eager, interested, and efficient educationists. If they were going to have an elected authority—urban district council, rural district council, or *ad hoc* authority—consisting of eager, interested, and efficient educationists, it was certain that that body would wish for something to do. They would not be content with the powers proposed to be given to them by this Bill, and they would certainly chafe at the supervision of the education committee. He could not imagine anything more calculated to promote friction than to have two authorities apparently jointly responsible for work which was now done by one, and for which that authority accepted full responsibility and full criticism at the hands of its constituents. What were these local education committees going to do ? The Bill excepted from delegation, first of all, anything relating to the teachers, and he agreed with that. It excepted all powers with respect to capital expenditure or rent on account of the provision or improvement of a public elementary school. In regard to school attendance he understood the Bill to provide that the local education committees would have powers, not only as to the making of by-laws, but also in deciding as to whether they were to prosecute or refrain from prosecuting. He could only say that his opposition to the Bill was greatly increased by hearing that it was proposed to give to these local committees the power to refrain from prosecuting. He strongly objected to the power of prosecuting or refraining from prosecuting for the non-attendance of children passing out of the hands of the county council authority. When all allowance had been made for red tape and bureaucracy, at any rate it could be said on behalf of the county council that it stood outside of the local influence which would affect the judgment of the committees proposed to be set up by this Bill. The county council had taken in the past a firm stand in the direction of securing the proper enforcement of attendance at schools. All over the country, not only in counties where a good deal had been done by delegation, but also in counties where the managers had only been asked to give advice in this matter, there had been a very great improvement in school attendance. In the matter of purchasing articles for the schools he believed that much greater economy was secured by the county council than was ever likely to be secured by any small local authority. If the local authority was to be told that they might order all the articles required, but that they must order them from certain firms, that did not seem to him to be very attractive or interesting work for the local authority to perform. Such matters as the appointment of caretakers, the payment of wages, the provision of fuel and gas, and the ordering of books and pens could, he believed, be more economically and efficiently dealt with by those who had that work to do at the present time. He would point out to hon. Members who were so anxious to secure the establishment of an *ad hoc* authority for educational purposes that if they went to all the trouble of erecting such an authority, they must inevitably give responsible powers considerably greater than those proposed to be conferred by this Bill. If these powers were given to an urban district council, there would immediately arise an agitation for more extended powers. The moment two authorities were set up there would be a division of responsibility, which in his judgment ought to rest on one authority alone. He believed they must either take the county authority for all purposes or take the smaller authority and make it entirely autonomous for educational purposes, just as was done in boroughs exceeding 20,000 inhabitants. He believed that the creation of any delegate authority between the managers and the county authority would be simply adding a fifth wheel to the coach, which in the great majority of cases was not wanted, and which in any case, it seemed to him, it was entirely undesirable that Parliament should impose on counties which did not want it. He had taken much interest in education, and since the passing of the Act of 1902 he had spent a great deal of time doing his best to advance the interests of education in his own county. The twenty-two counties which had not adopted the system of delegation had acted from good reasons; they were quite convinced that the way they were working now was best suited for the cause of education in their own districts.

*MR. ADKINS (Lancashire, Middleton) said he desired to call the attention of the House to the antecedents of this Bill. In the Government Bill two years ago a clause relating to delegation was introduced at the outset, and was frankly stated by the Minster for Education, to be a basis for discussion, and not as the final or complete form of the clause. The clause was modified during its passage through the House, and by an overwhelming majority it was sent to the other House where it was also considerably modified and passed by common consent without a division, the leaders of both political Parties acquiescing. The changes effected in the clause from its inception were those most in accordance with the desires of the county councils of England and Wales. [AN HON. MEMBER: No.] He was not making that statement without having chapter and verse for it. After the Bill had left the House of Lords the Executive Council of the County Councils Association said that it was a most satisfactory termination to the labours of the association in connection with the question of delegation, the clause finally approved by the council forming part of the Bill as it left the House of Lords, and that it appeared as far as possible in the circumstances to have met in a large degree the views of those representing all sides of the question. That was the valediction of the County Councils Association in regard to the delegation clause as it left the House of Lords. The promoters of this Bill had now brought before the House the exact clause which received the imprimatur of Parliament two years ago. They did not, of course, argue that that which everyone agreed to two years ago should therefore be enacted today, but they did say that that which had been acquiesced in by both Houses, and which had been reported on in the words he had quoted by the County Councils Association, might very well receive a second Reading as the basis for further discussion and Amendment in Committee. There was nothing in the Bill to justify the House in refusing to give it a Second Reading, while there was much in it which ought to commend it to the support of educationists on both sides of the House. The hon. Member for Wiltshire had argued as if this were an attempt to force on Salisbury Plain the peculiar methods desirable for the West Riding of Yorkshire. The essence of the proposals of the Bill was that every county council should prepare a scheme for delegation after public inquiry, and that that delegation should have the elements of a representative character. All the rest of the Bill was a matter for Committee. He might go further; the Bill as it stood was in accordance with the judgment of this House and of the other House expressed two years ago, and it specifically excepted certain small counties. Every opportunity would be given in Committee to consider whether these exceptions were to be extended or not, and he thought his hon. friend would appreciate the difference between a county council "may" do a certain thing under a scheme and that it "shall" do such a thing. In reference to the conditions existing in the county of Wiltshire, he would like to know how far those conditions which commended themselves to the hon. Member commended themselves to the people of Wiltshire generally? This Bill had for one object to elicit the fact whether there was or was not a real public interest in the existing scheme in that county. He would like to refer to the very interesting Report by the Consultative Committee of the Board of Education which had been published on the previous day. Many hon. Members regretted that that Report had not been published a fortnight ago, so that its contents could have been more fully digested by Members in all parts of the House before this Bill came up for consideration. He had to thank the Consultative Committee for the trouble they had taken in the preparation of the Report. The classification of the schemes was exceedingly well done and was of the greatest possible value. But there was one part of the Report to which no one would give Pontifical authority until there were some means of testing it—he meant that part which dealt with the success or otherwise of delegation schemes and how far they might meet with public approval or not; for by some unfortunate accident there was nothing in the Report to indicate who were the people from whom they received their information. He understood that some of the questions which elicited the information had never been submitted to the local education authorities at all. He wished to say one word in regard to certain lines of criticism followed by the noble Lord the Member for South Birmingham, and the hon. Member for Devizes. They had been told that the proposals in the Bill would lead to expense. He had looked into the Report of the Consultative Committee in regard to this matter, and found over and over again the statement that the effect of delegation had already greatly decreased the work of the central office, and in view of that fact he did not think that the House would agree with the allegation that delegation would necessarily increase expense, or lead to the over-lapping of machinery. The County Councils Association the other day passed a resolution that they desired to offer no opposition to the Second Reading of the Bill, reserving to themselves full power to consider Amendments in Committee to render it more elastic.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON (Oxford University): By a majority.

*MR. ADKINS said that the majority was eight to five, a proportion which carried most things in this country, and was responsible for a great deal that was done in this House. There was no evidence before the House that the county councils, as such, were opposed to the Second Reading of the Bill, although they retained the fullest right of criticism in Committee, and he wished to say that those who supported the Bill were most anxious that that right of criticism should be exercised. Their position was this. In this Bill they asked for a delegation scheme everywhere unless special reasons could be shown against it. They asked for public inquiry to ascertain how far public opinion was represented and satisfied with the scheme proposed. They asked for a representative element in the delegation body, and they said here as in the County Councils Association, that, while in the Bill as it stood they indicated only three forms of delegation, they would welcome further Amendments to extend the flexibility of the forms of delegation and to bring it into adjustment as far as possible with existing schemes which were working well, provided that they were in accordance with the spirit of the Bill. The supporters of the Bill had been asked by several Members what it was they aimed at delegating. At the present time the matter of school attendance in almost every county in England was delegated in practice, because it was impossible to compel the parents of children to journey twelve or more miles to the county town to make representations on that matter. It was referred in many counties to sub-committees which were technically committees of the county councils, because one or two members' names were upon them, but the meetings of these sub-committees were frequently attended by gentlemen who were not members of the county council, and consequently the clause in the existing Act was unworkable. Under the Bill the county councils were to prepare the schemes of delegation, and could they not trust those bodies not to delegate any matter except in cases in which, from several years experience, they were convinced that it was necessary to do so in the public interests? He would not support a Bill which forced on the county councils a particular form of delegation. What the Bill proposed was to put on the county councils the duty of preparing a scheme of delegation. The county council had a voice as to what was to be delegated. In regard to the working of the Bill, where they were dealing with merely rural districts, the actual delegation to be given at once might well be exceedingly small, but even in rural districts it was surely desirable that the locality should have some voice and some slight power in the control of the buildings, of the caretaker of the playground, and the question of holidays—those little daily incidents which loomed so large in the life of a village, but which theorists described as very petty. They wanted these to be put into the hands of the actual locality so as to increase local interest in educational work. More important would be the work contemplated in counties where there were growing towns. From no fault of individuals local educational interest had died down since the passing of the Act of 1902, not because the inhabitants had deteriorated, or because the county council had not done all that they could do through officials of high ability and great industry, but because mere geographical considerations had interfered with the work. By means of delegation it was proposed to create a local interest in educational matters free from dependence upon correspondence with a far-off official. The rural constitution of England with its small hamlets and villages and growing towns was permanent, and legislation could not alter it; but legislation could recognise the permanent facts of life in the country districts and growing towns and give them the power which would enable them to take a growing interest in and promote the efficiency of education. He asked the House to pass the second reading of the Bill, which would form a basis of discussion in Committee. As he had already said, the promoters would welcome in Committee any Amendment which would make the measure more flexible and more workable.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) earnestly hoped that this Bill would not be allowed to pass. He regretted that the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down did not do full justice to the Report of the Consultative Committee, but, as he said, the Paper was only placed in their hands yesterday. For himself he only got his that morning, and it had been impossible for all of them to master the contents of the document. The hon. Member called it an anonymous document.

MR. ADKINS said he only applied the word anonymous to such phrases as "outside that, it is generally agreed," or "it is open to criticism." He only applied it to expressions of that kind and not to the document.

LORD BALCARRES was glad to hear that. This, however, was not a question merely of facts and statistics. They must have opinions and opinions must be quoted. In this particular document they had the names of the people whose opinions were quoted. They knew in the first place who the members of the Consultative Committee were and the names of some twenty people who were to be consulted. The whole tendency of this Report, although it was drafted in a moderate and discreet spirit, was hostile to the present Bill. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] Well, as he said, none of them had had the time to consider the Report fully, but that was certainly the impression which was left on his mind.

MR. ADKINS inquired if the noble Lord had seen Page 17.

LORD BALCARRES said he could not remember Page 17 without looking it up, but no doubt when he had done so, if any quotations appeared the other way, he could find in other portions of the document conclusions which were against it, but the finding of the Committee was, and the whole tendency of it seemed to be, that local educational authorities should not be forced to delegate any of their powers. An hon. Member had quoted Lancashire as one of the counties in which the operations of this Bill would be specially beneficial. That was entirely a matter of opinion. He also represented Lancashire, and his opinion was that if this Bill passed it would do a great deal of injury and impede the progress of education in that county. There was a large scheme of devolution working there now. In some counties there were two, a fact upon which he offered no opinion, but in Lancashire they had a very large and comprehensive scheme. These schemes some of them were only three years old, some of them only two years, as naturally when the Act was passed two or three years elapsed before the lines of the Act were thought out carefully, and meanwhile machinery was being prepared. All these things took a long time to mature, and it was only in the last two or three years, and he thought four in one case, that the local education authority had given its attention to delegation at all. [AN HON. MEMBER: The scheme has been working five years.] He knew that there was a scheme proposed, but he did not think it had been in operation for more than three, three and a half, or four years. [AN HON. MEMBER: It is five.] He was very familiar with the case and he would say four, but his recollection was three and a half at the outside; but it was not a question of months, because these schemes must have a fair chance. The scheme in Lancashire was working with extraordinary success, and he did not know how it came about that the district of Middleton, which had been referred to, which was very well served with railways and other means of travelling, should find the delegation scheme work badly. It had been said that so far from progress being made there were districts in which the movement was retrograde. Such a state of things was very deplorable, but he did not think that they were going to put it right by scrapping the whole machinery which had begun to work admirably and by starting several local inquiries, because one inquiry was no good. He did not think that by scrapping their machinery, which was good and working admirably, they would effect an improvement. The fact was that the people who were represented on local authorities and the local authorities themselves were desperately keen and in earnest in working successfully any Act which this House passed. But it was somewhat discouraging and disappointing that these schemes should be torn up from year to year, and that as soon as a scheme began to show promise it was altered. He most sincerely trusted that the Government would not accept this Bill. It was drafted as an adjunct of the Education Act of 1902, and when the Bill of the President of the Board of Education had passed, this Bill would become less appropriate than ever, because under it they were going to withdraw in certain boroughs the control of the local education authority over the funds, the management, and the teachers, in the case of 95 per cent. of the school children. In a non-county borough the majority of the schools might be re-transferred to the trustees and become voluntary schools again, and what was the use under those circumstances telling local authorities to make a scheme of delegation? It would be much better to wait until this new scheme was passed before applying such a Bill as this to the Education Act of 1902.

MR. ADKINS said that this Bill could not apply to non-county boroughs of over 20,000 inhabitants.

LORD BALCARRES replied that it applied to sixty or eighty boroughs below that figure. He was quite certain that they ought to wait until the main Bill was passed before they dealt with a part of the question. He hoped the Government would take into consideration the fact that there were counties where they were doing their best to delegate. Lancashire had, he believed, delegated more than was contemplated under this Bill, but they were doing it in their own way. He hoped that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education, even if he accepted the principle of the Bill, would make this concession, that where a local education authority with or without public inquiry satisfied the Board in London that their scheme which was actually in operation was a good scheme the Board would thereupon contract them out of the operations of this measure. Although he had no great admiration for the Board of Education in its administrative capacity, still he thought that power should be vested in that Board to say under such circumstances that the operation of the Act need not apply. He commended that suggestion to the Parliamentary Secretary, and even if the hon. Gentleman agreed to the Second Reading of the Bill, which he personally should not be prepared to support, it would go a long way to meet the genuine opposition to the measure, if he could undertake that some course should be carried out which would provide that this Bill should not apply to cases in which the local education authorities were already doing their utmost.

*Mr. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge) said he would not detain the House many minutes, but having all his life been interested in education and having served on school boards so long as they were permitted to enjoy school boards, which were the most valuable popular institutions in this country, he wished to say a few words. He desired to support the Second Reading of this Bill in the hope that it would be the means of restoring interest in education to the people in the rural districts. He was a member of the county council in the county in which he lived, and in East Suffolk they had 241 schools. He often felt, in sitting upon the education committee of that county council, that they were in a very unfit position to deal with that great number of schools scattered over a large geographical area when the great bulk of the schools they had never even seen. Then taking his position as a local manager of a village school which used to be under a school board, there he found himself in this difficulty, that when as managers they did assemble they had no powers. Their duty was to see that the fires were duly lighted, that the school was swept, and little matters of that kind, but really their powers were so ridiculously small that they hardly thought it worth while to assemble at all, whereas when that school was a board school they had a real interest in it and did their level best to help it and improve it in every way. For his part he was very sorry that the school boards had been destroyed. He regarded their destruction as a great crime committed against the people of this country. He had hoped that when this new Parliament assembled it would restore the school boards and make them universal, but as they had not yet arrived at that happy stage he wished that the educational system that we had now should be so modified as to restore to the people in the villages a living interest in the schools where their children went. If there was some power of devolution and under it some grouping of village schools, they would, by having a group of schools in an accessible area, be able to get a good selection by popular vote of people competent to manage schools and having a real interest in them, and they would also be sufficiently strong as delegated bodies over those areas to have given to them from the central council some real power which would give them some interest in the work. That in his view was the object which would be accomplished by this Bill, and if they gave it a Second Reading and allowed it to become an Act of Parliament they would to a certain extent restore some of the privileges and responsibilities that they had lost. Undoubtedly under the old system many of their school boards were too small, and the area did not afford a sufficient number of people taking a sufficient interest in the school. But now if the county councils divided their districts they could get reasonably sized areas with four or five schools in each, and in that area they could choose a kind of school board eminently suitable for its work, all the members of which would be in close touch with the schools and with the county council members, some of whom would be on each of these groups. When a member went to sit on a county council education committee he would be under those circumstances dealing with a larger number of schools with which he was familiar than he was at present and be able to discharge his duties there with more efficiency. He could not help thinking that if the House would sanction these powers to the county council to make devolution, they should restore some of the old school board spirit in the various districts of the council, and enlist the efforts of all friends of education to make the schools more efficient and so to assist in the work of education in this country.

*Sir PHILIP MAGNUS (London University) said that one interesting feature of the debate was that the discussion had been carried on so far without any reference to different parties. Members on both sides of the House had spoken for and against the Bill, and that was the spirit in which he ventured to think the discussion on educational questions should be carried on in this House. He thought he might say that everyone on both sides of the House was in general sympathy with the principle underlying the Bill. They were all in favour, he believed, of some scheme of devolution and delegation by means of which the children in the elementary schools might be brought more closely under the direction of those who had to conduct those schools. Any difference that might exist between them arose on the question of the necessity of legislation at the present time, and with reference to that point he would like to refer to what the hon. Baronet the Member for Hythe said to the effect that Sir William Hart-Dyke was in favour of this measure. Sir William Hart-Dyke in the Report of the Consultative Committee distinctly expressed himself in favour of the general principle of devolution, but he said that "he believed that it would be most difficult to make any drastic change in administration without risking a considerable increase in expenditure." In his own county he was certain "that it would be an expensive experiment to try devolution at this time, although in principle he was its warm advocate." What Sir William Hart-Dyke said expressed the view of many hon. Members. They were in favour generally of the principle of this Bill, but they felt that there would be great difficulties in working it out and satisfying all those interested. He could not say that the arguments used that day would induce many Members to vote for the Second Reading of the Bill. Its supporters had been most apologetic in urging the Second Reading upon the House; they had expressed their willingness to alter it in nearly every particular, and he always felt that when a Bill was introduced to the House and they were asked to vote for the Second Reading on the understanding that when it got into Committee they might drastically alter all the clauses it contained, making it quite a different Bill from what it was, one naturally asked whether there was any necessity whatever to introduce the Bill, and whether a real case had been made out for the Second Reading. For his own part he did not think such a case had been made out. It was said by the hon. Member for Middleton that the Bill was practically a clause contained in the Bill of 1906, and reproduced that clause with such alterations as were made in it in another place, and although not pressing the argument too far he certainly urged that that might be a reason for accepting the Second Reading now. He would own that he was one of those who gave a qualified approval to that clause in the Bill of 1906 when it was discussed in Committee. Many others did the same, but they expressed their approval of that clause as a part of the Bill of 1906 and not as a separate measure. Having regard to the general clauses of that Bill and to the increased powers it was likely to confer upon local authorities, they were disposed to accept a clause which devolved upon local bodies certain of the powers imposed under that particular Bill on local authorities, but they were not in the least committed thereby to support the present measure. Indeed, the whole of the circumstances were changed. As was pointed out by the noble Lord who moved the rejection of the Bill, during those two years they had gained considerable experience. The Act of 1902 was found to be working generally with considerable smoothness. The officers appointed to carry out that Act had got into the saddle and generally expressed their ability to carry out its provisions without any special difficulty. The Act was working with ease and without any friction, and he believed that if the opportunity could be given for the educational machinery of the country to be carried on under that Act for some little time longer, it would be a very great advantage to the country. But what many of the supporters of this Bill did not appear to understand was that under the Act of 1902 not only could the principle of devolution be carried into effect, but that it had actually been carried into effect, and was operating with considerable success. He would read a few words from page 6 of the Report of the Committee which yesterday came into their hands—

> "Out of the sixty-one councils concerned, thirty-two have appointed local sub-committees. It is evident, therefore, that under the existing law it is possible to frame devolution schemes of great variety and extent. When this is done local bodies are the form which are at once sub-committees of the education committee and bodies of managers."

Having regard to the ease with which devolution was now carried out, one really could not see that any case had been made out for the Second Reading of the measure before the House. On page 19 of that important Report they had a classification of the returns received for those sixty-one counties, and it appeared that twenty had appointed local committees which acted as sub-committees to whom had been entrusted various powers and duties. Whether or not this Bill would have been necessary if the Bill of 1906 had been carried, it was practically certain that it was not essential to the quiet working of the educational machinery at the present time. If they were to introduce this complicated and new machinery at the present time they would be doing a great deal towards upsetting the arrangements by which the administration of education was now being carried on. He ventured to think that during the last six years there had been too much discussion in that House of the administration of education, and too little of education itself, and he firmly believed that our educational work would be more efficient, and that progress would be more accelerated if the Speaker had the power to put his veto upon the introduction in that House of any so-called Education Bill during the next five or seven years. All who took a real interest in education felt that what we wanted was a period of repose—to be left alone for a little while and not to have the machinery of education constantly changed or proposed to be changed by revolutionary measures such as had been introduced. There was plenty of good work to be done in education itself, and what was needed was sufficient rest for the development and advancement of that work on purely educational lines. The Bill proposed in Clause 1 (1), to make it compulsory upon local authorities to prepare schemes of devolution, notwithstanding the fact that a large number of authorities had prepared schemes on their own account, and further that such schemes must be submitted for approval to the Board of Education. It had already been shown that no uniformity of scheme was likely to command general assent. There must be difference as regarded the duties and functions to be delegated, and there must be also variety in the constitution of the bodies to whom such functions were to be delegated. He said, with all respect to the Parliamentary Secretary of the Board who sat opposite him, that he was not in favour of adding to the powers or administrative duties of the Board of Education, and the necessity of determining whether any scheme was satisfactory or not would add considerably to the administrative work of the Board. He would prefer to see the Board relieved to some extent of the administrative functions which it had been called upon to discharge during the last six years, and able to apply itself to some of those important educational problems now awaiting solution. But there was another objection to the clause he had mentioned, and that was that when a scheme had been approved by the Board of Education it became under this Bill practically an Act of Parliament and was to that extent unalterable. At the present moment under the schemes prepared by the several local authorities, the sub-committee and the committee worked together in a friendly spirit, but if a scheme became practically equivalent to an Act of Parliament, he believed that considerable friction would arise between the county and local authorities. It had been pointed out by one of the speakers that under this Bill there would be only one form of delegated body; but that was not the case, because he found that there were alternatives, and that the body to whom these functions were to be delegated might be constituted in one of three ways. In accordance with one of those alternatives the body might be constituted by an election *ad hoc*, and that he considered to be one of the most objectionable parts of the whole Bill, because if they once introduced the system of election *ad hoc* in small parishes they would be reproducing all the disadvantages which attached to the old parochial school boards. For that reason, if for no other, he ventured to think that that they might object to the Bill in principle. Whilst the Consultative Committee did not express any very strong opinion as regarded the necessity of devolution, they distinctly pointed out that there were advantages and disadvantages in any scheme that could be introduced, and he could find nothing from beginning to end of the Committee's Report which would give any support whatever to this Bill, which would make it obligatory on all the local authorities to propound a scheme of delegation whether they liked it or not. That seemed to him to be one of the fundamental objections to the Second Reading of the Bill. It appeared to him that its supporters had not made out any case for its necessity, that they had overlooked the fact that the local authorities under the Act of 1902 already possessed adequate powers of preparing delegation schemes, that those powers had been put into force, and that in very many localities the schemes were working satisfactorily. It seemed to him that the Bill would introduce considerable friction. He thoroughly agreed with the noble Lord the Member for Chorley that if such a Bill as this was necessary at any time it certainly was least necessary at the present time, when they were considering a new Education Bill of a revolutionary character. He could not but feel that if that Education Bill should ever become law, and if under such an Act two-thirds of the existing elementary schools might be removed from the purview and control of local authorities, there would be far less necessity even than there was at present for the delegation of any of the powers now vested in county authorities to subordinate committees. He thought the House would be well advised to defer the further consideration of the Bill until the Education Bill had been discussed, and until they knew whether or not the existing educational machinery was to undergo the vast revolutionary change which it would have to undergo if that Bill became an Act of Parliament. He, therefore, could not support the Bill before the House.

*MR. VERNEY (Buckinghamshire, N.) said he desired to support the Bill, although perhaps in all its details he would not be entirely in accord with it. He considered that the principle underlying the Bill was admirably stated in a part of the Committee's Report which had not been quoted that afternoon. In the last paragraph on page 17 of that most interesting and valuable Report it said—

> "As regards the general principles which appear to them to underlie any successful scheme of devolution, the Committee consider that experience shows that local bodies will, as a rule, work better and be better manned, if, in the first place important and interesting duties are entrusted to them, and if, in the second place, they are given considerable executive powers in carrying out those duties. These might be given combined with the retention by the education committee of the ultimate control of their sub-committee's proceedings, although the exercise of that control might seldom be necessary."

It seemed to him that a great number of those who had spoken on the Bill had not read that part of the memorandum of the Bill which mentioned in the last clause that—

> "Certain powers are specially excluded from delegation, but subject to this proviso and to some qualifications, the county councils will lay down in their schemes what powers they will delegate, what shall be the areas of delegation, and how the local education committees are to be constituted, and the schemes need not be uniform even throughout the county."

It seemed to him that the hon. Member who spoke last could hardly have had that in his mind when he talked of the reconstitution of what would practically be school boards for small, insignificant localities, which he fully agreed came utterly to grief in many cases owing to the smallness of the locality and because the people could not be found to discharge the very important duties which were required even in small localities. He would like to deal with a criticism which had been very generally advanced, and that was the criticism against compulsion in the creation of those schemes. That seemed to him to fall to the ground when they remembered that the county councils under this Bill were under no compulsion to produce the same scheme even for different parts of their own county, and therefore the criticism as regarded compulsion hardly came in with very great force, because it——

SIR PHILIP MAGNUS: I said that the local authorities already had power to make these schemes.

*MR. VERNEY, continuing, said that no doubt they had, but they had not got all the powers given under this Bill. The county councils now had very important powers, but the fact that they had not been very generally exercised pointed to the desirability, not of a revolutionary scheme, but of an evolutionary scheme, such as that proposed in the Bill. He could not understand how the noble Lord the Member for South Birmingham supposed for a moment that nothing would be gained educationally by the Bill. To his mind there was a great educational advantage in getting members of sub-committees in small localities to take that personal interest in education which the old school boards took—a personal interest which gave an enormous stimulus to education all over the country, and he would not allow that that stimulus was given in towns only, as he was a personal witness of the extraordinary stimulus given in some of the county districts by school boards, with eminently successful results. He ventured to say that, because he had regarded with unmitigated dislike, and even disgust, the abolition of the school boards, which he thought did untold harm, and particularly in two directions. In the one direction it did harm because it dismissed without reason and without thanks, many thousands of people who had devoted the best part of their lives to educational interests in their own immediate localities; that was one piece of mischief, and he doubted whether in the history of this country any body of public servants so useful, so extremely energetic and enthusiastic, were ever dismissed in such an uncourteous way, and with so little reason. He believed that no one could find a body of men who on the whole did better service to their country in the cause of education, and never had public servants been dismissed for so slight a reason and in so unchivalrous a manner. In the next place, what did the abolition of the school boards do? It abolished the best form of local machinery for exercising parental control where it was most wanted. The cry went up from the other side of the House for more parental control, but when was it abolished? Why, with the school boards. Those school boards gave an opportunity to the parents in the various localities to have a word, and a very important word, as to how the school to which the law compelled their children to go should be managed in various important particulars. That was the advantage of the school boards, and that advantage they hoped to see revived, and they had very good hope that it would be, because many Members on both sides of the House were united in the desire for more parental control. He rejoiced in that, and he would gladly support any well considered scheme by which parental control would be once more established. That was one of the objects he had in mind in supporting a scheme of devolution. One hon. Member had said: "Take out all the more important and interesting duties which it is proposed under this Bill should be given by devolution, and what have you left? Nothing worth keeping, and so the best plan is to get rid of the Bill altogether." He would quite agree with the hon. Member that if they took out everything of interest and importance and gave no responsibility to the local committee, the sooner they got rid of the Bill the better, but there was no intention of doing that. It was said that they were going to set up a co-ordinate control, but that he utterly and entirely denied. That was not his reading of the Bill at all. He believed that all these bodies would not be co-ordinate but subordinate, and he thought they should be subordinate. At all events the ultimate financial control could never be safely left to the smaller bodies. The rating power must remain with the county councils, and wherever that power remained there must be the ultimate financial control. He thought there was only one sound theory with regard to the appointment and dismissal of teachers. Teachers performed a great national and Imperial service. Surely they would all agree that their great object should not be in any way to diminish the importance of that service, but to make the teaching profession of such a kind that it should enlist the ambitions of the very best of the population, and that they should be able to rise in that profession as men could in any other profession worthy of this great country. There was one thing in the Bill that he was afraid of and that he hoped would be modified. He did not want to see, at all events, the dismissal of teachers put into the hands of any small local body, but he would at least like an appeal to be left to the county council, or even in certain cases, to the Board of

Education. Whoever were the employers of the teachers should be able to dismiss them. He did not so much mind the appointment of teachers being left in the hands of smaller bodies, but he did object to their dismissal being left in any hands but those of the county council itself in the final resort.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is provided for in the Bill.

*MR. VERNEY: Then I apologise for mentioning the matter. Continuing, he said that on the whole he earnestly desired that the Bill should pass Second Reading. He was very far from thinking it as perfect as it would be made after it had gone through Committee, but still he thought the principle of devolution was most important and well worth the acceptance of the House, and he sincerely hoped the Bill would be accepted on that ground.

*SIR WILLIAM ANSON said it had been a very friendly discussion, and he would not enter into the controversy suggested by the hon. Member for Buckinghamshire as to whether the School Board of the Act of 1870 or the new education authority of the Act of 1902 was the better authority to deal with the education of the children of this country. He thought they were all agreed that delegation in some form or other was desirable. He had from the first maintained that unless the local authorities created under the Act of 1902 did delegate their functions freely and largely in many cases, they would not carry out the purpose for which they were constituted and would not promote the education of the children to the best advantage. There were two great objects desired to be obtained by delegation. The one was local knowledge, a knowledge of the local conditions, and the other was personal interest in the education of the children. He did not mean that local knowledge and that personal interest which would lead, as was suggested by the hon. Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme, to the appointment of a jerry-builder to manage the fabric of the school, because he was one's cousin, but the sort of knowledge which enabled the authorities, delegated or otherwise, to ascertain what kind of education was most adapted to a particular locality, and the sort of personal interest which would stimulate the delegated authority to watch the children and see that their education was carried on as far as possible, and that when it ceased every opportunity was found for the children to take advantage of it in after-life. What he feared was that if they did not get that sort of delegation, the organisation of their education would become mechanical, pass into the hands of the secretary to the local authority and become a matter of administrative routine, and that there would be a consequent loss of efficiency, though he was bound to say that, after reading the Report of the Committee, he doubted as to whether he had been right in thinking that there would be a loss of economy. For all those reasons he had always been an upholder of the principle of delegation or devolution. But in framing any scheme of devolution, various features, geographical among others, must be regarded. Anyone who looked at the map would see how differently the different counties were situated as to the form which delegation might assume at one end or the other. It might be rural at one end and urban at the other, and even where a county was wholly rural the conditions of agriculture might be different. Where it was wholly urban the conditions of industry might be different, and therefore they had to have regard to the geographical conditions. They must also look at the means of communication. In certain counties the communication was so good that the central authority could keep a much greater personal control over the smaller bodies than in other counties. They had to consider also all the local varieties of requirements of the different parts of the area, and lastly there was a point as to which the Consultative Committee had called attention, which he thought was too often forgotten and which he was bound to say had passed from his mind until he read the Committee's Report, and that was the educational history and traditions of a particular area. All those things must be borne in mind in working out a scheme of delegation for any particular area. What did that point to? They must avoid so far as possible in any legislation dealing with this subject, insistence on uniformity; they must provide for elasticity to the utmost extent possible consistent with the firm grip which the central local authority ought to have over the whole of the education in its area. What was the existing machinery for carrying out that object? He thought it was too often ignored that the Act of 1902 provided in two ways for considerable powers of delegation. There was, under Schedule 1A of that Act power given to local education authorities to create sub-committees more or less composed of members of the local education authority itself. The only requirement was that there must be some representative of the local education authorities on those sub-committees, and to those sub-committees very large powers indeed had been delegated, and there they had a machinery ready to hand, elastic, capable of being used, and practically used, by a great many local authorities at the present moment. Then again the managers of a council school were the creatures of the local education authority, which might reduce them to absolute nonentity or entrust them with very large powers of management. There again was a power applicable to elementary education and applied, as they learnt from this report, very largely throughout the country. How was the existing machinery working? They found that the local education authorities had applied both those forms of machinery in different ways in different counties and with different results, but no one could read that Report—a most interesting and valuable Report it was—without seeing that the whole matter was still in the region of experiment, and that there was one conclusion which the Committee drew, viz.—

> "They consider that in view of the widely differing circumstances of the various counties it would be difficult, if not impossible, to devise any uniform system which would give general satisfaction throughout the country."

Now uniformity was the cardinal principle of the Bill, and though with its object he entirely sympathised, he took exception to the whole scheme and purport of the Bill. What was the history of the measure? In the course of the long and weary discussions in the summer of 1906, they alighted upon a somewhat crude, if he might be allowed to say so, delegation clause in the Bill of that year. The hon. Member for the Middelton Division produced a very long delegation clause of his own. The Government, although approving of the principle of it, were not prepared to accept its details, and in a day or two they knocked up a delegation clause of their own. It was an impromptu effort, and for an impromptu effort was a very creditable performance, but they had heard that, as in the case sometimes of impromptu utterances, it contained many things which the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education would now wish to have expressed otherwise. This clause with all its defects now appeared as a separate Bill. The defects were many and obvious. It laid a very heavy burden upon local education authorities, who were bound, within a given time, to conduct local inquiries and produce schemes. They could not conduct their inquiries and produce these schemes without considerable expenditure of time, and it had to be borne in mind that several things had happened since 1906; as, for instance, the passage of the Small Holdings Act which had thrown very heavy additional burdens upon local authorities. Then the Act which enforced medical inspection had also thrown upon them additional burdens, and after all, there was some limit to the demands they were entitled to make upon that unpaid labour which was so freely given by those who served upon county councils. He really thought that, at this moment, to call upon local authorities to enter upon a prolonged process of investigation and construction of schemes to be submitted to the Board of Education for approval was throwing too heavy a burden upon them. Then the delegation, when they had got it, was bound to assume one of three forms, to every one of which he thought objection could be taken—indeed, not one of them was so satisfactory as the sub-committees which could be formed under the Act of 1902. What were they? The first was the parish council, which, in effect, would revive the rural school board. With every respect to the school boards which had passed away, he did not think the rural school board was a favourable specimen. He had heard those who were the most strenuous advocates of the school board system say that the extension of the educational area brought about by the Act of 1902 was a really beneficent feature of the Act, and to revive the rural school board as an educational area seemed to him an unfortunate thing to do. What was the next? It was practically the rural sanitary authority. Had it any educational interest whatever? Would not any person say that if there was an elected body whose interests were uneducational, it was the rural sanitary authority? Yet that was the second body to whom the local education authority might delegate its educational powers. What was the third? It was a conglomerate body, a mixture of the parish council, the rural sanitary authority, and outside persons nominated by the local education authority. Presumably that would be a body of some considerable size and influence. There was some risk that it might come into conflict with the local education authority itself, but, at any rate, he could not admit that the composition of any one of the three proposed delegation bodies was at all a promising body to carry out what the hon. Member for the Middleton Division thought would be brought about, viz., the golden age of the development of an educated democracy. There was another objection to the Bill. It would destroy all the existing schemes of the local educational authorities all over the country by which they were working to ascertain how best to economise by delegating some of their functions. All these schemes would be set aside and the local education authorities would be compelled to provide new schemes of delegation to any one of three bodies, every one of which was wholly unfitted for the purpose. There was no doubt that these delegated bodies might add to the expense of education. The letter of Sir William Hart-Dyke, a portion of which had been read by his hon. friend, the Member for the City of London, was very much to the point. Sir William Hart-Dyke was a strong advocate of delegation, but so far as his experience went he dreaded the risk of extravagance arising from the delegated authorities not keeping such a close supervision over the expenditure of the money allotted to them as was exercised by the local education authority. If there was one body of persons to whom they ought to look for the care and supervision of the interests of the children, for information as to what needed to be done, and in what way the interests of the children and education should be promoted, it was to the managers of the schools, but the managers throughout the county were to be superseded, and to supersede managers of schools by any one of the proposed delegated authorities struck him as a singularly unfortunate feature in the Bill. He thought they ought not, under any circumstances, to apply compulsion to the local education authorities who were exercising the powers entrusted to them with energy, with acumen, and with some hope of working out schemes in the interests of education in their areas. If they were to legislate on this subject at all—he would much rather allow the scheme to be worked out, and wait until the local education authorities asked for legislation—it should be permissive and should widen the powers of the local education authorities to constitute delegation areas and bodies for themselves, and in that way to give them the capacity for proceeding more freely than now with the work of delegating educational duties in their areas. In considering this measure they had now what they had not in 1906, they had two more years experience of the Education Act of 1902, and they had information on the subject, accumulated and digested in the report to which reference had been made. He asked the Government to profit by their experience and to profit by the information now before them. He did not for a moment regard it as a party question, and he would ask the Government to allow their second thoughts, which were sometimes, and very often, the best, to take effect in their treatment of the Bill. The clause of the Bill of 1906 was a chicken which had come home to roost, and it did not appear to be very welcome in its domicile of origin. He asked the Government so to deal with this Bill that, if they were prepared to accept the Second Reading at all, it should be subject to the most careful consideration, and with every opportunity of introducing Amendments widening the powers of local authorities instead of narrowing them. In other words, they should be carrying on instead of retarding and sterilising the work done during the last two, three, or four years in the way of devolution. The counties were doing useful work, and might go on doing more useful work if they were not embarrassed and hindered by legislation such as that adumbrated in this Bill.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. LOUGH, Islington, W.): This is the second time, in two successive years, that hon. Members sitting behind the Government have rifled the tomb in which the Education Bill of 1906 was buried, not only for an idea on which some proposal might be framed, but for actually the precise form of words in which the idea was embodied, and they have presented it in that shape again to this House. Now, although this is very complimentary to the Bill of 1906 and to the Government, it is on several grounds an inconvenient practice. One might suppose, for example, that the tomb in which the Bill of 1906 is buried would be considered the property of the Government, and that, if any recourse were to be had to it for practical legislation, the Government alone would be entitled to make it. In the present case, it must be remembered that the section of our former Bill, which my hon. friend now presents to the House, is not in the least like the clause which the Government originally introduced. That Clause was swept aside to make way for a much larger proposal, something in the nature of that which we are considering to-day, and my hon. friend who moved the Second Reading of the Bill no doubt played a very strong card against the Government when he said, "This clause is your own Bill, and surely you cannot refuse the Second Reading to-day." The hon. Member who has just sat down dealt rather delicately with the position. What took place when this Bill was submitted in 1906 is well worth remembering. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition spoke upon it, and said there appeared to be on both sides of the House a real desire to increase the power of delegation. So the Leader of the Opposition blessed the clause [AN HON. MEMBER: No.] Well, he partly blessed the object of the clause. Then the hon. Gentleman who represents the University of Oxford also spoke on the Bill of 1906, and he said: "I have always been in favour of delegation."

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: So I am.

MR. LOUGH: The point is this, that the hon. Gentleman expressed no hostility to the proposal in 1906; he did not divide against it; he accepted the clause then. One step further, to show the inconsistency of hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side of the House. The hon. Member for London University likewise spoke, and though we have ringing in our ears his words of denunciation of the Bill to-day, yet he spoke in favour of it in 1906. What excuse has he? He says circumstances have changed and that it was part of a great scheme of education.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON said he quite admitted that he had said that he was in favour of delegation, but he would like to ask the hon. Gentleman whether they had an opportunity of fully discussing the clause under the closure.

MR. LOUGH: There was a very long discussion on the whole question, and I do not think it was under the closure. Ample opportunity of discussion was given, and hon. Gentlemen opposite in almost every case expressed opinions which they are not willing to make good to-day. I ask for a little consistency on the part of hon. Gentlemen opposite, and I believe that when they have had time for reflection they will become of better mind and vote in support of the Bill. The only other hon. Gentleman opposite I desire to quote is the noble Lord the Member for Chorley, who did not go so far as to offer any opposition to the clause. Then, again, this larger proposal was greatly amended in another place, and the House of Commons never had an opportunity of considering those Amendments. It must also be remembered that the Government approached this question of decentralisation in 1906, under very great difficulties. There had been only about two years' experience of the Act of 1902, and this short period did not enable an exact judgment to be arrived at with regard to what amendments of that measure might be wisely adopted. Now, however, we have had nearly two years' more experience, and in this period the Board of Education has not been idle. It directed the Consultive Committee, which is a most valuable part of the organisation of the Board, to consider and advise what methods would be desirable and possible, under existing legislation, for securing greater local interest in the administration of elementary education, and the Report of the Committee, which has just been presented, must be regarded as a document of the greatest value in considering the present Bill. I recognise the kindly way in which the Report has been received. There has been only one speech conceived in a different spirit. The hon. Member used some very strong words against the Report. He tried to hit it in vital parts and he was particularly unhappy in the precise illustration that he took. He said, "What steps have the Committee taken to acquire information? What witnesses have they examined?" The steps are fully set out in the Report. They sent a form of inquiry to every local education authority. Then the hon. Member mentioned Lancashire and said, "What information did the Committee get from Lancashire?" The chairman of the Lancashire education authority, Sir Henry Hibbert, was a member of the Committee and himself gave evidence. There was also a most valuable witness from Northampton. I will appeal to hon. Members on this side to say whether, when they remember that the chairman of the Committee is Mr. Arthur Acland, one of the greatest educational reformers perhaps in this country, whose work we on this side of the House appreciate and honour, and that the Committee includes gentlemen like Mr. Henry Hobhouse, Sir William Hart-Dyke, and Mr. Ernest Gray, all past Members of this House, and the hon. Member for North-east Lancashire, a fair case has not been made out for recognising that the Board of Education did everything it could to get a useful and valuable Report. The Report speaks for itself. I do not wish to pass away from it without expressing on behalf of the Board of Education its hearty thanks to this Committee, one of those voluntary bodies which form a most useful part of the organisation of the Board, for the lengthy time they devoted to this stupendous work which is only one of two or three large tasks that they have in hand at present, and I should like to say on behalf of the Board that they highly appreciate the way in which the work was done. How far does this Report support the principle of the Bill? The Report says that the best way to assist the House of Commons is to state what is going on at present, and if more attention had been paid to questions of fact which the Report brought forward than to the arguments which appear in the documents or which hon. Members chose to read into it, the House would have benefited more from the study of the Report. What does the Report do? Let me ask the question in connection with the principle of delegation. The Report says that even under the restrictions of the present law there is a great deal of decentralisation carried on. The Bill is a very mild and moderate Bill, which does not propose to delegate any particular duty to any particular body. But the Report says that very onerous and important duties had been delegated with perfect safety in many counties. It proceeds to describe the various bodies that had been set up. Perhaps I may enumerate two or three important ones. It first explains that this necessity of decentralisation has been met in many counties by entrusting large powers to the managers of the schools, and it passes a very high eulogy on the management of schools, which I was glad to see supported by the hon. Member who has just sat down, and with which I entirely agree. It says that the managers must be people who are in touch with the actual life of the schools, and it is essential that they should be regarded with confidence and sympathy by parents and teachers and by the local authority. In many counties you find the bodies of managers have been entrusted with very large powers under the Act of 1902, and the curious thing is that that Act does not state a single power which should be entrusted to the managers of the provided schools. Yet very large powers had been so entrusted. In every case the Committee reports that the result of this decentralisation has been satisfactory.

VISCOUNT MORPETH: I am sorry to interrupt, but I think the hon. Gentleman is going rather far when he says in every case. In four cases out of eight it is an admitted failure, especially in West Sussex.

MR. LOUGH: I do not know whether the noble Lord heard a sentence I used a moment or two ago. I was going to describe the three heads under which decentralisation is carried on at present, and now I am speaking of decentralisation to managers of schools. This exists in twenty-two cases, and I believe that in every case it is found to work satisfactorily. However, as the noble Lord has questioned it, I will state the opinions of a few counties with regard so it. Take Bedford, which has no other form of delegation but this to managers. It is a small county desirous of maintaining a high uniform standard of education, and it finds delegation to the managers perfectly satisfactory. Buckinghamshire, with 245 schools and a population of 179,000, thinks it "best to give considerable powers to managers and deal directly with them. District sub-committees would be a bar to efficiency." Cambridgeshire, with 134 schools, expresses the same opinion. Cumberland objects to interposing a third body, although there are 256 schools and a population of 175,000. Hereford with 130 schools says, "delay and increased cost would be caused by devolution." Leicestershire, Wiltshire, and Middlesex state that, "considerable discretion is given to managers", and Suffolk that "devolution is neither desirable nor necessary" although it has 141 schools. Under the first Schedule of the Act of 1902, it is possible to set up sub-committees in geographical areas, and thirty-three counties altogether have taken this step. Thirteen of these, however. have only granted powers with regard to school attendance, and that strikes me as rather interesting, because we heard to-day that the duties connected with school attendance could not safely be delegated. The answer is that they are delegated at present, largely and successfully in many cases, and I believe in the very county of Staffordshire which was mentioned, the good results quoted by the hon. Member for the division of that county in the increased attendance at the schools have been largely secured by obtaining the assistance of these sub-committees in local areas. You can easily reconcile a wide principle of decentralisation with the retention of control. In the twenty other counties where sub-committees have been set up very wide powers have been given. They not only include the appointment of managers and teachers, and regulations with regard to school accommodation, but suggestions with regard to school affairs, school supplies, the grouping of schools, the renting of school buildings, and the fixing of holidays. I ask the House to think for a moment what the restricted demands of the Bill are in comparison with the powers actually exercised at present. There can be no suggestion made with regard to by-laws by these new bodies under the Bill, no capital expenditure incurred, and no teacher dismissed or engaged. But in the decentralisations in the systems which exist at present, in two counties, Cheshire and Derbyshire, these sub-committees are asked to make suggestions with regard to by-laws. In others they are allowed to spend a good deal of money, and in no fewer than twenty-five counties they are enabled to dismiss and engage teachers. This proves that in the necessary work of education throughout the country it has been found necessary to concede under the present law as wide powers as those asked for under the Bill. Just one word as to group managers. In nine counties they have been set up, and I admit that the Report is perhaps more equivocal about that system than about some others. But in the constitution of these bodies, and, indeed, in the constitution of many bodies that exist at present, the scheme which is suggested by sub-sections (b) and (c) of the present Bill has been approved. This also shows that the proposals of the Bill, whatever faults it may have, do not err on the side of excess, nor go any further than the present practice in many counties. A great deal has been said about the actual conclusion at which the Committee arrives, and conflicting sentences have been quoted. I need not repeat what I said about the excellent work that is done by managers to whom large powers are delegated, nor that the Committee highly approves of the decentralisation that has taken place to district committees, but I may read one paragraph which says that midway between the essential functions of the central education committee on the one hand and of the local managers on the other there are intermediate functions which form the appropriate subject matter of devolution schemes. That is the Report, and I do not think the Bill goes one step beyond that recommendation. The Committee considers "it would be difficult, if not impossible to devise any uniform system," "that there is no necessary connection between the general conditions of the various counties and the schemes which they have adopted," and that "counties whose educational and social conditions appear to be very similar have adopted dissimilar methods." Finally, with considerable naivette as well as wisdom, the Committee recommends to all the counties, and perhaps I may repeat the advice to my hon. friends who have brought forward the Bill, that its Report should be carefully read. I have fairly quoted representative opinions on both sides, and I only claim that the general argument of the Report goes quite as far as the proposal of my hon. friends. I cannot help putting one point which I am surprised had not been put. It appears to be assumed that the Bill would be a blow necessarily to all these experiments going on at present throughout the country. Of course, there is this argument in favour of it. It is assumed that the new bodies created by the Bill would be planted down without regard to the existing bodies, but I think that is rather a harsh interpretation to put on the Bill. We cannot deprive the education authorities of some belief in their wisdom, justice, and moderation. They would set up bodies with care, and if that were done the general tendency of the Report is to justify this principle of decentralisation, which is the central principle of the Bill. Supposing there are thirty or forty counties doing what they ought, what about the minority that remains? Is the fact that most of the population of the country consists of honest men any reason why there should not be a law against rogues? My hon. friends may very well claim that, even if many counties are indifferent in this matter of decentralisation, they should be brought up to the level of the others. That would not be an unfair view to take. It is a difficult Bill to discuss from the point of principle alone, because it leads us into matters of detail. If any county wished to get out of the obligations which the Bill imposes, it could do it by delegating the duty of cleaning the school windows, and this would be a fulfilment of the Act which the Board of Education would be required to sanction. While there is this indefiniteness about duties, it is perfectly clear that a charge must be imposed on the area. There must be expenses and a rate, and perhaps I may remind the House that this is diametrically opposed to Clause 5 of the new Education Bill, the object of which is to repeal that part of Section 18 of the Education Act of 1902, which provides for the separate rating of parishes. The Board of Education has received many indications from all parts of the country that this rate is regarded as a very great burden, and I hope when we get to Clause 5 of the Education Bill, there will be an agreement of opinion that this reform is desirable. But if so, why should we set up a small rating authority under this Bill? I think, undoubtedly, that that question also may require to be considered. The Bill no doubt gives wide powers of constituting a body, but it should be remembered that such an elected body as the parish or urban district council, chosen for a very different purpose, might be placed in control of education in its district, and I quite agree that that would not be a desirable consummation for us to arrive at. But these are matters for committee. The exemption of populations of less than 65,000 would, of course, exclude twelve counties from the purview of the Bill, but it is quite possible that other exemptions may be necessary. Altogether I think the provisions of the Bill are drawn a little too tightly, and that there must be greater liberty if we are to affirm the principle as I hope we may. The House will ask what advice I give with regard to the Bill. I will put two questions to the House. Would this Bill, if passed, tend to increase the efficiency with which the duties connected with elementary education were carried out? If so, then they ought to support it. Would it also contribute to economical administration? Some of his hon. friends seemed to ignore the importance of that question, but it would not be forgotten in the country. The Government were in the same position with regard to the principle of the Bill as hon. Gentlemen opposite, with the difference that there was a strong basis of consistency in the minds of the Government. The essential principle of decentralization was embodied in the clause of 1906, and the Government could not vote against the principle of this Bill.

MR. BUTCHER (Cambridge University) said the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education had been the first in this debate to indulge in Party taunts, arguing that some of the Unionist leaders were, by their speeches of 1906, committed not only to the principle of devolution, but actually to this Bill. Upon that point he desired to correct the hon. Member. The leader of the Opposition, although he approved of the principle of the clause of 1906, criticised sharply some of its details. The Member for Oxford University was also careful to approve only of the principle, and not of the actual clause. The truth was that in 1906 very little was known of the working of devolution under the Act of 1902. That part of the Act was then only just beginning to be put in force, and they were dealing to-day with the question of delegation with a much fuller knowledge than they had then. There was then almost complete ignorance in the House as to the magnitude, variety, and significance of the schemes of delegation which were set forth in detail in the Report of the Consultation Committee which had been just issued. They were all in favour of delegation; they all desired to recreate a living interest in the schools in the localities, and to bring educational questions nearer to the minds as well as to the pockets of the parents and the ratepayers. The only difference between them was as to the precise method that ought to be adopted. On one point, however, all were agreed, that the local authorities should be relieved of much cumbrous detail. The agenda paper was often loaded with trivial bits of business which would be better treated in the localities themselves. On the other hand, if delegation was to be successful, the minor local bodies must not be entrusted merely with details of an uninteresting kind, such as ordering coals or pencils. Powers must be conferred which would excite interest and enlist the services of the best men. The local bodies must either have real authority or real influeuce. By real influence he meant that they should advise upon such questions as the appointment and dismissal of teachers and have a voice in fixing the curriculum. Secondly, they should have some financial responsibility. Under the Act of 1902 considerable financial responsibilities were conferred by county councils on delegated authorities. The hon. Gentleman opposite had argued that this Bill restricted the powers that could be delegated, instead of extending them. In some respects this was so, and to that extent he thought the Act of 1902 was superior to the present Bill. But under one head the Bill conferred on the delegated authority a new power,—the power of framing the curriculum. It seemed to him that the local bodies should not have more than advisory powers as regarded the curriculum; otherwise there was a danger of a lowering of the standard. Greater variety in the curriculum was indeed needed, and many rural districts would be benefited by a curriculum which embraced subjects which were now omitted. But he guarded himself by stating that the powers entrusted to the minor local bodies in respect of the curriculum should be advisory, and nothing more. He said candidly that until he had read the Report he was exceedingly doubtful whether he should vote for or against this Bill. The Report, however, was most instructive and enlightening, and gave them information which very few hon. Members possessed before. What had influenced him was not so much the arguments for or against as devolution on the grounds of administrative efficiency or economy which were contained in the Report, but the facts there recorded, showing that all over the country at this moment, without any compulsion, the local authorities, to an increasing extent, were working out this problem of delegation with extraordinary ingenuity and eliciting a marked interest in education in the several localities. He observed that not only were they delegating powers to subcommittees and to managers representing either single schools or groups of schools, but they had also succeeded in combining those two methods which were specified in the Act of 1902. The impression left on him by the Report was that it afforded singular and instructive evidence of the administrative capacity of the men who were called upon to carry on the local affairs of this country. Now, many of the councils wished to be allowed to carry on those experiments without interruption. At some future time it might be possible to discover what the best of all the competing methods were, but meanwhile they ought not to do anything which would derange this machinery. Rather should they stimulate and encourage further experiments along the same lines. The true lesson of the Report was that compulsion was unnecessary. As regarded the general relations of this Bill to the delegation clauses of the Act of 1902, one of two things would happen, either the 1902 clauses would be displaced by this Bill, or there would be friction, amounting in some cases to actual deadlock. It would, in his opinion, be a great pity to disturb schemes which had been working for only a few years, and by introducing the mechanism of a new Bill to check experiments which already had been fruitful, but were still incomplete. Therefore, he should vote against the Second Reading.

*Mr. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said he could not vote for the Bill, because, instead of giving the county councils real powers of delegation, it actually took away powers of delegation that they already possessed. It had been said by some of the supporters of the Bill that it would confer upon the local bodies the power of making regulations with regard to the attendances of children. On looking up the clause in the Bill, however, he was referred to Section 74 of the Elementary Education Act, and then he found that the power of regulating attendances was not delegated by this Bill. On referring to the section referred to, he found that among the bye-laws which might be made were those as to compelling parents to send their children to school. If he might express an opinion on a matter of law, it seemed to him that the power to regulate attendance was not delegated by the Bill. The Bill limited the existing powers of the county council, and for that reason he disapproved of it. The hon. Member for the University of London had said he did not want any more legislation on education. So long as the Government interfered with education, so long would they have Parliament attempting to alter the law with respect to education. He was quite certain that no law on this subject could ever be made by Parliament which would suit all people. There might be a majority who would approve of the law, but there would always be an important minority displeased with any law that might be passed. The Bill proposed specially to exempt the local committees from exercising the powers with respect to the attendance of children at school. But for that exemption he would not have said anything at all about the measure. He thought the power in regard to compulsory attendance ought to be delegated to some local body who were in close touch and sympathy with the people. Leaving the question to be dealt with by a large central authority under rigid rules created hard cases and made the people hate education. A farmer in his own constituency had a large family of sons, and he had carefully educated them in the way he thought best. He had been repeatedly fined for not sending his children to school, the penalties amounting in all to £19. If a local committee had had to deal with that man, they would have considered whether the children were being properly educated or not, and if that had been done the man would not have been prosecuted. These cases of cruelty were constantly arising in the agricultural districts. He knew of some very cultivated people, a farmer and his wife, whose daughter had passed the sixth standard. They removed to another home, and their daughter was compelled to attend a school where they did not teach above the fourth standard. This girl, who was forgetting what she had learnt, would be much better at home learning housework from her mother. He knew another case in which a farmer had a son, a fine strapping youth of thirteen, who could learn nothing at school who was fond of horses and cattle, but although school education did nothing for him, he was compelled to attend when he could be more useful on the farm. They said that they wanted people on the land, and yet they were depriving boys and girls of the opportunity of learning to work on the land and to do household duties. They were teaching them to be clerks, of whom there were plenty already. If the power with respect to compulsory attendance were delegated to local committees they would exercise a more careful discrimination and consider whether non-attendance was due to the drunkenness, negligence, or cruelty of the parents, or whether it was due to the wise discretion which led them to believe that the school was not the best place for a boy day by day after he had attained a certain age. The sooner the whole system of compulsion in matters of education was swept away the better, for it was entirely destructive of all sound education. They compelled children to go to school, and then the master thrashed them with a cane to learn things which they did not understand. Schools would have to be made pleasanter and more practical places, and education would have to be given in such a way that both parents and children would like education. The present brutal system of thrashing children in schools, and of fining parents who did not send their children to school, was not the way to bring about good education. There was growing up a hatred of schools. The present kind of education, so-called, in elementary schools, was often little better than a farce—one teacher, not of the highest grade, to fifty children; what could he or she do to teach so many? He could not support the Bill, because it curtailed the powers of delegation which the county councils already had.

*Mr. CARLILE (Hertfordshire, St. Albans) expressed regret that the Minister for Education had only been able to attend during a small portion of this important debate. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board was rather ungenerous when he twitted the supporters of this Bill with having taken every word of it from the Bill of 1906. The hon. Gentleman's speech seemed to indicate that everything he desired in the way of devolution, that could make for efficiency, was already in existence, and, therefore, it was hardly necessary that he should rise to support the Bill. The hon. Gentleman claimed that the Bill would make for the efficiency of education. On the other hand, the opponents maintained that it would do nothing of the kind, but rather discourage the local education authority and the local managers. It would discourage county councils, because it put a pistol to their heads and told them how they must act.

Mr. ADKINS rose in his place and claimed to move "That the Question be now put."

Question "That the Question be now put," put, and agreed to.

Question put accordingly, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 196; Noes, 58. (Division List, No. 32.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.
Acland, Francis Dyke
Alden, Percy
Armstrong, W. C. Heaton
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt.Hn.Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury E.)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Beale, W. P.
Benn,W.(T'w'r Hamlets,S.Geo.
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brunner, J .F.L.(Lancs., Leigh
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett,C H (Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crossley, William J.
Dewar, Sir J. A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Elibank, Master of
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Farrell, James Patrick
Ferguson, R. C. Munro
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fullerton, Hugh
Gill, A. H.
Glendinning, R. G.
Grant, Corrie
Gulland, John W.
Gurdon,Rt Hn.SirW.Brampton
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harwood, George
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson,J.M. (Aberdeen,W.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hodge, John
Hogan, Michael
Holt, Richard Durning
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jones,Sir D.Brynmor (Swansea
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Kavanagh, Walter M.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea,Hugh Cecil (St.Pancras, E
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald,J.M.(Falkirk B'ghs)
Maclean, Donald
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh,Charles (Donegal,E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Massie, J.
Meagher, Michael
Micklem, Nathaniel
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd(Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Murphy, N. J. (Kilkenny, S.)
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Nicholson,CharlesN.(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Brien,Kendal (TipperaryMid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Price,Robert John (Norfolk,E.)
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford
Richards, T. F.(Wolverh'mpt'n
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson,Sir G.Scott(Bradf'rd
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rowlands, J.
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Scott,A.H.(Ashton-under-Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon, J.
Shaw, Rt. Hon. T. (Hawick, B.
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie

Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Snowden, P.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, Sir A. (Glamorgan, E.)
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Verney, F. W.
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent
Waring, Walter
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney
Watt, Henry A.
Whitbread, Howard
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Adkins and Sir Francis Powell.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Clark, George Smith (Belfast, N.
Clive, Percy Archer
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham)
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Fletcher, J. S.
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, J.
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Guinness, Walter Edward
Harrison-Broadley, H. B
Hill, Sir Clement
Houston, Robert Paterson
Kimber, Sir Henry
M'Arthur, Charles
Magnus, Sir Philip
Montagu, E. S.
Moore, William
Nield, Herbert
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Rees, J. D.
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall
Rogerts, F. E. Newman
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire)
Warde, Col. C. E. (Kent, Mid)
Williams, Col. R. (Dorset, W.)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Viscount Morpeth and Mr Wedgwood.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time and committed to a Standing Committee.

THE GERMAN EMPEROR AND THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): As no formal Motion for the adjournment of the House is made on Friday afternoon, and as I have received notice of Questions from the hon. Member for the Brentford Division, and others, which seem to call, in the public interest, for an immediate answer, I will, with the permission of the House, make the following statement:—It is the fact that on the 18th of last month Lord Tweedmouth received a letter from the German Emperor. It was a purely private and personal communication conceived in an entirely friendly spirit. My noble friend's answer was equally private and informal, and neither the letter nor the answer was known or communicated to the Cabinet. I may add, in view of some suggestions which appear to be made, that, before the letter arrived, the Cabinet had come to a final decision with regard to the Navy Estimates of the year.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP B).

Sir HENRY KIMBER reported from the Committee on Group B of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Tuesday next, at half past Eleven of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

Whereupon Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 3.

Adjourned at three minutes after Five o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 9th March, 1908.

SAT FIRST.

The Earl of Suffolk and Berkshire—Sat first in Parliament after the death of his father.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The Lord Chancellor acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with: Bristol Tramways [H.L.]. The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

London and Windsor Motor Roads, Tramroads, and Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Presented, and read 1^{a}.

BOGNOR GAS LIGHT AND COKE COMPANY BILL [H.L.].

The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The Orde made on Thursday last discharged, and Bill committed.

AUDENSHAW AND SADDLEWORTH URBAN DISTRICT COUNCILS BILL [H.L.].

The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The Orders made on 19th of February and Monday last, discharged, and Bill committed.

Madras Railway Company (Annuities) Bill. Brought from the Commons, read 1^{a}, and referred to the Examiners.

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway Bill [H.L.]; Metropolitan District Railway Bill [H.L.]. The Order made on Monday last appointing certain Lords the Select Committee to consider the Bills, discharged.

Metropolitan Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, that the Five Lords appointed a Select Committee on the Briton Ferry Urban District Council Bill [H.L.], and other Bills, do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the Metropolitan Electric Tramways Bill [H.L.]; read, and agreed to: All petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

NAVAL WORKS.

Memorandum showing progress and expenditure, etc., on items included in the Naval Works Act.

COLONIES: ANNUAL.

No. 556. Basutoland. Report for 1906–1907.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

List of certified schools for blind, deaf, defective, and epileptic children in England and Wales on 1st August, 1907.

London County Council Syllabus contained in a return to an Order of the House of Lords, numbered (115.–I.), 1906.

TREATY SERIES, No. 6. (1908.)

Accession of Sweden to International Sanitary Convention; signed at Paris, 3rd December, 1903, 20th December, 1907.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Report for the year 1907, by the Director on the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh.

ARMY.

Report of the War Office Committee on the treatment of soldiers invalided for tuberculosis.

INDIA (TRADE).

Tables relating to the trade of British India with British Possessions and Foreign Countries, 1902–1903, to 1906–1907.

PASSENGERS TO AND FROM PLACES OUT OF EUROPE.

Return showing: The numbers and nationalities of the passengers that left

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

or arrived in the United Kingdom for or from places out of Europe; and the net balance of such passengers, outward or inward, in each month of the year 1908.

RAILWAY ACCIDENTS.

Returns of accidents and casualties as reported to the Board of Trade by the several railway companies in the United Kingdom during the three months ended 30th September, 1907, in pursuance of the Regulation of Railways Act (1871), with reports of the inspecting officers, assistant inspecting officers, and sub-inspectors of the Railway Department of the Board of Trade upon certain accidents which were inquired into.

MARRIAGES, BIRTHS, AND DEATHS (ENGLAND AND WALES).

General abstract of marriages, births, and deaths registered in England and Wales in the year 1907.

CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSION.

Fifty-seventh Report from the Church Estates Commissioners, for the year preceding 1st March, 1908.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ARMY (TERRITORIAL FORCE ASSOCIATIONS).

Schemes made by the Army Council for the establishment and constitution of Territorial Force Associations, containing a list of the members, so far as they have been appointed, for each Association.

LEEWARD ISLANDS.

Prison rule regarding the mode of employment of female prisoners.

POST OFFICE.

(Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post (Beyrout, Constantinople, Smyrna, and Egypt))—The Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 14.) Warrant, 1908, dated, 8th February, 1908.

(Money Orders)—The Money Order Amendment (No. 2.) Regulations, 1908, dated, 7th February, 1908.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

AGRICULTURAL HOLDINGS BILL [H.L.].

SMALL HOLDINGS AND ALLOTMENTS BILL [H.L.].

Orders of the Day for the Second Reading read, and discharged.

THE GERMAN EMPEROR AND THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Lord TWEEDMOUTH): My Lords, I understand that there are some Members of your Lordships' House who are inclined to ask some questions about the extraordinary outburst which has taken place in the Press during the last few days. I beg to ask for that consideration which is always given to a Member of your Lordships' House who has to make a short personal statement. I should like to anticipate any questions that may be put in this House. It is a fact that on Tuesday, 18th February, I received a letter from his Imperial Majesty the German Emperor. That letter came to me by way of the ordinary post. The letter was a private and a personal one. It was very friendly in its tone and quite informal. When I received that letter I showed it to Sir Edward Grey. He agreed with me that it should be treated as a private letter and not as an official one. Accordingly, my Lords, on Thursday, 20th February, I replied to His Imperial Majesty the German Emperor in the same sense as his own letter was directed to me—that is to say, in a friendly and informal manner. All I shall say further is this, that I beg to assure your Lordships that I firmly believe the course I adopted was a good one, and that it was calculated to do what we all so much desire, which is to do all that we can to foster a good understanding between the German Empire and ourselves.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My lords, I think that the First Lord of the Admiralty has done well to come to your Lordships' House this evening and to offer to you at any rate some explanation of the remarkable episode which, during the last few days has engaged so much public attention. If the noble Lord will forgive me for saying so, I would observe that what seemed to us most worthy of attention was not so much what he called the outburst of opinion in the public Press as the substratum of fact which provided that outburst. The noble Lord has vouchsafed us not much, but, at any rate, some information with regard to this correspondence. We know, in the first place, that these letters actually passed between His Imperial Majesty the German Emperor and himself. We gather from him further that the correspondence began with a letter addressed to him by His Imperial Majesty —a letter, I presume, therefore, which was unsolicited by the noble Lord and did not form any part of a protracted and continuous correspondence. That, I think, is an important fact, and one which should not be lost sight of. Then we learn further that the letter was in character a private and personal letter, that in form it was wholly unofficial, and that in substance it was friendly in tone towards this country. It naturally occurs to one that a letter of this kind would be very much the counterpart of the kind of communication which might pass by word of mouth between a great Sovereign and an English Minister upon those occasions which, as we know, occur from time to time when our Ministers are brought into contact with the rulers of other countries. No one would, I think, regard a conversation of that kind as denoting any impropriety of conduct on the part of the Minister who took part in it. We gather, also, from the First Lord of the Admiralty that his reply followed upon the lines of the communication which he received—that it was private, personal, and informal in its character. There has been expressed in many quarters an earnest desire that this correspondence should be given to the public, but I infer from the statement of the noble Lord that that is not his intention, and I am bound to say that if that is not his intention we —so far as I and my friends who sit near me are concerned — shall not press him to depart from it. But, my Lords, this incident naturally gives rise to many questions as to the propriety of these extra-official communications. I do not think I shall be challenged when I say that they ought to occur only under very exceptional circumstances. It would be intolerable if alongside of official correspondence, properly recorded, accessible to those whom it most concerns, there should be extra-official correspondence not so accessible, not properly recorded, and hidden away in the private despatch-boxes of Ministers. But, my Lords, I do not wish to suggest that no exception should be allowed to this rule. I think it not improbable that there have been occasions upon which Sovereigns and rulers have found it convenient and useful to unburden themselves privately to the Ministers of other countries, and if these confidences are made, as I believe this confidence was made, with nothing but friendly intentions, I am far from saying that any harm can result from them. But I would venture to lay this down as a principle from which no departure should be allowed, that, if communications of this sort are to take place at all, they should never be allowed to create a diplomatic situation different from the diplomatic situation created by the official and recorded documents.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH nodded assent.

THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: I am glad to see that the noble Lord signifies his assent to that doctrine, and I am sure I may take it from him that this particular letter did not have the effect which I suggest. The noble Lord will forgive me for saying that there is another rule which, I think, should be observed in regard to such somewhat irregular communications, and that is, if they are, indeed, to be regarded as and treated as private correspondence, that privacy should be strictly respected. I am afraid that upon this occasion either the noble Lord has betrayed his own secret or has allowed others to betray it for him. At any rate, there seems to me to have been only that amount of privacy attaching to this correspondence which might be considered to attach, let us say, to the private view of the Royal Academy at the beginning of the season. The result has been most unfortunate. Public opinion has been much moved, and I am sure that all those who earnestly desire, as the noble Lord does and as we do, that the relations between this country and Germany should be of the most friendly description, must greatly regret that this incident should have occurred to excite and disturb the public mind. My Lords, we on this side of the House desire neither to do nor to say anything which can add to that excitement, or which can increase in any way the embarrassment which I am afraid this occurrence must have occasioned to His Majesty's Government.

EARL ROSEBERY: My Lords, I confess I have only one apprehension in regard to this matter, and that is that as a nation we may be making ourselves slightly ridiculous by the fuss which has been made about this correspondence. So far as I know there has been no secrecy about it; in fact, my noble friend complains that there has not been enough. But the facts are sufficiently clear. I gather from the newspapers, which seem to have been singularly well informed of late, that the German Emperor was somewhat disquieted by a letter which appeared in the public prints, in which very pointed note was taken of himself. And if I am still to believe the public prints, he wrote a letter, partly of banter, to my noble friend the First Lord of the Admiralty on this subject, to which my noble friend replied in, I suppose, as near a tone of banter as one in his situation can employ towards as exalted a potentate as the German Emperor. Out of this we have seen a whole world of absolutely insane inferences drawn—that the German Emperor was attempting to influence my noble friend, with a view to cutting down the Navy Estimates, to check the progression of our armaments, to neutralise the defensive activities of our nation, and in some subterranean manner to subvert the whole Constitution of the British Government. Surely that is placing ourselves, our Government, our institutions, in a supremely ridiculous position. The German Emperor is not merely a great potentate, but a potentate of remarkable intelligence, born of an English mother, who has paid many visits to this country, and is intimately acquainted with our political Constitution, and I am quite sure that it never would have entered his head, or the head of any educated person outside of a lunatic asylum in Germany, that by a private communication to my noble friend he could exercise any influence whatever on the progress of British armaments. Now that is where I am afraid we are likely to make ourselves ridiculous in this country. There is a section of the Press which seems to make it its object to seek to create bad relations between this country and Germany, and I am afraid—though I am less perfectly acquainted with the subject—that there is a corresponding section of the Press in Germany which also has for its object to make bad relations between the two countries. Futhermore, there seems to be an impression that because we have arrived—and we are all glad that we have arrived—at a friendly feeling with France, it is necessary, therefore, that we should take up an attitude of some asperity to Germany. And those sections of the Press, both in England and in Germany, which foster these ideas, take up every trivial incident—and, though I am full of respect both for my noble friend and for the German Emperor, I cannot consider this as anything but a trivial incident—and are ready to take advantage of every trivial incident to excite morbid suspicion between the two nations which, in my mind, is gradually developing into a danger to European peace. My Lords, there is no earthly reason that I know—it is true, it is long since I had any direct contact with foreign affairs—why our friendship with France should necessarily entail a hostile attitude towards Germany. Our insular position, our great commercial relations with the entire universe, ought to make our foreign policy as nearly as possible a policy of amity all round. We have further to recollect in connection with that policy this important fact, that our enemies of to-day may be our friends of to-morrow, and our friends of to-day may be our enemies of to-morrow. What then is the lesson I draw from the excitement produced by this very slight incident? It is this—that the responsibility of the Press both in England and in Germany should be realised by that Press, and that they should not lash both nations into a state of soreness which some day may amount to exasperation and may produce the gravest dangers to European peace. There is one consideration that arises from the very constitution of that mighty German Army, numbering some 4,000,000 of men, which should not be overlooked by any thoughtful observer at this time. It is this—that it is an Army which is practically the German nation, and that before any German Government, however powerful it may be, declares war against any country, it must have the support of that nation behind it; and it can only have the support of the German nation in a war against Great Britain when the feelings of that nation have been so exasperated as to render further peaceful conditions impracticable.

House adjourned at ten minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter-past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 9*th March*, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Blaydon and Ryton Water (Transfer) Bill; Dublin and South Eastern Railway Bill; Dartford Gas Bill; Knott End Railway Bill. Read a second time and committed.

Gosport Gas.—Reported, with Amendments. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation: From Appleby; Keswick; Kirkby Thore; Leeds; and Plymouth; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Tanfield Lea; Temple Sowerby; and Wolverton; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

EDUCATION (SCOTLAND).

Copy presented, of Report for the year 1907 by the Director on the Royal Scottish Museum, Edinburgh [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE (FOREIGN AND COLONIAL PARCEL POST).

Copy presented, of the Foreign and Colonial Parcel Post Amendment (No. 14) Warrant, 1908, dated 8th February 1908 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGES, BIRTHS, AND DEATHS (ENGLAND).

Copy presented, of General Abstract of Marriages, Births, and Deaths registered in England and Wales in the year 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).

Copy presented, of Colonial Report No. 556 (Basutoland, Report for 1906–7) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LEEWARD ISLANDS.

Copy presented, of Prison Rule regarding the Mode of Employment of Female Prisoners [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVAL WORKS.

Copy presented, of Memorandum showing Progress and Expenditure, etc. on Items included in the Naval Works Act [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CHURCH ESTATES COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Fifty-seventh Report from the Church Estates Commissioners for the year preceding 1st March 1908 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.

Copy presented, of an Order dated 27th February, 1908, revoking Order No. 5179 of the 19th May, 1894, defining a Foreign Animals Wharf at the Port of Newcastle-upon-Tyne [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

DEER FORESTS (HIGHLAND CROFTING COUNTIES).

Return ordered, "giving the name of each Deer Forest in the six Highland Crofting counties, the amount of its assessment, its acreage for the years 1883, 1898, 1904, and 1908, and showing the increase or decrease in the acreage between the years 1904 and 1908 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 232, of Session 1905)."—(*Mr. Weir.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

British and Foreign Torpedo Boat Destroyers.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the numbers of torpedo-boat destroyers, of under eleven years of age from date of completion, in the Navies of Great Britain, the United States, Germany, France, and Japan, respectively, distinguishing between vessels built and building, and also between the ocean-going and coastal types.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The information is as follows—

	Ocean-going Destroyers.		Coastal Destroyers.	
	Built.	Building.	Built.	Building.
Great Britain - - - - -	107	13	13	23
United States - - - - -	20	5	—	—
Germany - - - - -	58	12	1	—
France - - - - -	42	33	—	—
Japan - - - - - -	53	4	—	—

Evicted Tenants—Reinstatement of Michael Lyons.

Mr. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if he will state whether the Estates Commissioners have effected the reinstatement of Michael Lyons, an evicted tenant, in his holding at Graigue, Shanballymore, County Cork, on the Purcell estate, the sale of which is in process of being completed.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have not, up to the present, effected the reinstatement of Michael Lyons. The case is under consideration.

Rural Public Houses.

Mr. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will furnish a Return showing in respect of every rural parish and every ward of a borough or urban district, and of every borough and urban district not divided into wards, the population per acre and the existing number of on-licences in such parish, ward, borough, or urban district.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) My right hon. friend has asked me to answer this Question. I regret that it is impossible to obtain and tabulate the information for which the hon. Member asks without very great labour, extending over a period which would prevent the issue of any such Return in time to be of commensurate value for the purposes of the discussion on the Licensing Bill.

Purchase of the Home Farm Estate of Sir George Colthurst of Ballyvourney.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether memorials have been received by the Estates Commissioners from the labourers and small landholders on the estate of Sir George Colthurst, at Ballyvourney, claiming that the portion of the estate known as the home farm should be acquired for the purposes of relieving congestion, enlarging the holdings of uneconomic owners, and providing for the needs of the labourers of the locality; is he aware that at several public meetings of all the tenants on the estate resolutions have been unanimously adopted requesting the Estates Commissioners not to declare this property as an estate to be purchased under the provisions of the Land Act until the home farm is acquired for the purposes mentioned; is a portion of the estate actually scheduled by the Congested Districts Board as a congested area, showing that the need for more land for the small tenants is one of undoubted urgency; have the Estates Commissioners received a resolution signed by all the tenants who have not yet entered into purchase agreements, stating they will not sign these until the home farm is vested in the Commissioners; did the Commissioners receive a document from the hon. Member for Mid-Cork, showing that in one instance a sum of money was paid by the estate agents, Messrs. Hussey and Townsend, as an inducement to a tenant to sign his agreement; whether, in view of the Land Purchase Act, this is an invalidating cause in the sale of the estate; and, seeing that the Estates Commissioners have promised the claimants for the distribution of the home farm an opportunity of being heard in support of their contention that Mr. Jeremiah Hegarty has no valid legal tenancy in the place, will there be a public and sworn investigation into all the circumstances surrounding this alleged tenancy of Mr. Hegarty.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have received the memorials referred to in the first part of the Question, but they are not aware whether, at several public meetings of all the tenants, resolutions have been unanimously adopted requesting them not to declare the lands to be an estate until such lands have been acquired for the purposes mentioned. Portion of the estate is situated in a congested district. The Commissioners have received what purports to be a copy of a resolution signed by twenty-seven tenants, stating that they will not agree to purchase until the lands in question are given up for division amongst the landless people of the district. The Commissioners, however, understand that there are more than 100 tenants on the estate who have not yet signed purchase agreements. A letter from the estate agent to the estate bailiff, enclosing a cheque for one of the tenants, has been forwarded to the Commissioners, but they have no information as to the circumstances of the case, and have not formed any opinion in the matter. The Commissioners have not promised to hold a public and sworn inquiry into Mr. Hegarty's title to the holding. When they have received the Report of their inspector the Commissioners will consider the nature of Mr. Hegarty's tenancy, and, having made such inquiries as they consider necessary, will deal with the matter according to law.

Congested District Board's Centre at Castlerea.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board (Ireland) has recently established a centre at Castlerea; what is the average yearly cost of that establishment, including managers, clerks, surveyors, and gangers' fees; what operations have been undertaken by the district centre since it was formed; how many cottages has it erected, and how many are now in occupation; how much land has it bought; and how much has been divided up to the present time.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Congested Districts Board inform me that their centre at Castlerea was established in June, 1905. The administrative cost of the staff is £1,401 per annum, excluding

£2,000 for working gangers employed on the works, whose wages are included in the labourers' paysheets. The operations undertaken at this centre since it was formed embrace the management, improvement, and preparation for resale of thirty estates. The estate improvement works between the date of the establishment of this centre and the end of last month cost £47,346, being expenditure for mearing fences, road making and fencing, buildings, drainage works, and planting. In addition to these works the staff have had the supervision of improvement of the houses and out-offices erected or improved by the tenants, and in respect of which assistance amounting to £1,236 has been paid by the Board to date; the control and supervision of the Board's parish committee scheme in nine parishes in respect of which the Board has made grants amounting to £1,750; the management of the Loughglynn Woods, including a saw mill where some 2,000 tons of timber are annually converted into scantlings for use in the Board's works and for sale to the Board's tenants, and the reinstatement of thirty-two evicted tenants in their old holding. Forty-four new cottages with out-offices have been completed on holdings intended for migrants, and twenty-six are in course of erection. Of this number thirty-nine are now in occupation and three others will be occupied this week. The Board have purchased thirty estates in the district of Castlerea, containing 36,992 acres of tenanted land and 18,604 acres of untenanted land, at a cost of £460,255. About 9,164 acres of the untenanted land are bog. Of the total areas mentioned 1,722 acres of tenanted land and 2,533 acres of untenanted land, representing together a sum of £57,658, are not yet vested in the Board, and therefore no improvement works can yet be carried out upon these lands. Excluding the area of bog above mentioned, the Board have 9,440 acres of untenanted land available for migration and enlargement of holdings, and they have divided up 1,940 acres of this land, all of which is now in the occupation of tenants.

Outrage near Gort.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the night of 19th February, the house of John M'Namara, of Ballyboy, near Gort, County Galway, was fired into; that there were four shots fired from close range, and that the pellets struck the wall over M'Namara's bed; and will he say whether any arrests have been made.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The police authorities inform me that on the night of 19th February three shots were fired, apparently at long range, into the house of John M'Namara. Some marks like those caused by pellets of shot were found on the wall over M'Namara's bed, but no pellets could be found in the room. No arrest has yet been made.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the night of 19th February the house of John Monahan, of Ballyboy, near Gort, was fired into, apparently by the same person or persons who fired into M'Namara's house; and whether any arrests have been made in connection with the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The fact is as stated in the Question. No arrest has yet been made in connection with the occurrence.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the night of 18th February the house of a man named Cahill was fired into at Beagh, near Gort; whether any arrests have been made; and what steps are being taken to bring the perpetrators of this and other outrages of a similar nature to justice.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The fact is as stated in the Question. No arrest has been made in connection with the offence. The police are using every endeavour in this and other similar cases to bring the offenders to justice.

Ardnadooman Farm, near Loughrea.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a farm named Ardnadooman, near Loughrea, lately in the possession of James Palmer, has recently been taken forcible possession of by the tenants of surrounding farms, and that this farm was formerly in the possession of Mrs. W. Duffy, who was evicted from it twenty years ago; will he say whether any application has been received by the Estates Commissioners from any person claiming to be entitled to be reinstated on this farm, either as the tenant or representative of the tenant; what is the name of the person so claiming; and what course have the Estates Commissioners decided to adopt in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The police authorities inform me that for some time past the people in the neighbourhood of Ardnadooman farm have been making use of the farm by driving cattle and sheep on to it for grazing purposes. Mr. Palmer has taken no proceedings of any kind against the owners of the trespassing cattle. The Estates Commissioners understand that these lands were at one time in the possession of a Mr. William M. A. Duffy, who was evicted from them. An application has been received by the Commissioners from the hon. Member for South Galway for restoration as representative of the evicted tenant, but the Commissioners have decided to take no action thereon.

Outrage at Cismona, near Loughrea.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on 17th December last, on the lands of Cismona, near Loughrea, the owner or occupier of which is the hon. Member for South Galway, three stacks of oats were knocked down and scattered, that on the same day a grave was dug on the said lands and a dead seagull tied to a stick was placed at the head of the grave, and that the inhabitants of the district believe that the grave was intended for the hon. Member for South Galway, in case he took a grazing farm in the neighbourhood for which he was supposed to be negotiating; whether any arrests have been made in connection with the pulling down of the stacks; and whether police protection will be afforded to the hon. Member?

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The police authorities inform me that the facts are substantially as stated in the Question. No arrests have been made in connection with the occurrence, but the police are continuing their inquiries in the matter. The police are of opinion that the hon. Member for South Galway does not require protection. Should he do so it will be afforded to him.

Government's Housing Bill—Extension to Ireland.

MR. SHEEHAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Irish Government are prepared to recommend that the provisions of the Bill for the better housing of the working classes, which is to be introduced by the President of the Local Government Board, shall apply to Ireland; whether any steps are being taken to have included, or to suggest for inclusion, in the measure clauses providing for the special conditions which obtain in Ireland; and whether the proposals contained in the Bill introduced by the hon. Member for North Tipperary will be considered in this connection.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Irish Government are not prepared to recommend the extension of the Housing and Town Planning Bill to Ireland. The provisions of the Bill, while no doubt suitable to English industrial centres of population, would not meet the difficulties which present themselves in dealing with the housing problem in Ireland. Moreover the codes to be amended are not the same in the two countries, and the application of the principles of the English Bill to Ireland would present very great difficulties. I am having a careful examination made of the proposals contained in the Bill introduced by the hon. Member for North Tipperary.

Alleged Intimidation of Mr. Bond o Rathowen.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that on Monday, 24th February, a riotous crowd of thirty persons in open daylight overpowered the police protecting the property of Mr. Bond, of Fairy Hall, Rathowen, and forced cattle up his avenue to the windows of his house and destroyed his lawn, flower-beds, and tennis ground; if the sergeant of police warned the crowd that he would hold them responsible; and if it is the intention of the Government to proceed against any of the members of the crowd.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The police authorities inform me that the cattle referred to in the Question were seized for non-payment of rent from a tenant on the estate of Mrs. McEndoo and Mrs. Reid. The animals were sold at Mullingar on 24th February, and were bought in for the tenant from whom they had been seized. A number of people assembled, and after the sale drove the cattle homewards. When passing the house of Mr. Bond, who is the agent of the estate referred to, some of the crowd drove the cattle through his gate and up the avenue leading to the house, damaging the turf, but doing no permanent injury. The police who were present remonstrated with the people and tried to stop the cattle, and at length drove them back to the road assisted by some of the crowd. The question of instituting proceedings is under consideration.

Cost of Maintenance of Insane Prisoners from Armagh Asylum.

MR. MOORE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if, on the expiration of their sentences, insane prisoners from the counties of Armagh, Monaghan, Cavan, and Tyrone, become solely chargeable to the county of Armagh by being treated as if admitted to the asylum as ordinary cases; and, if so, whether he proposes to remedy this state of affairs.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I beg to refer the hon. Member to the Answer given on the 19th February by my right hon. friend the Attorney-General for Ireland to the similar Question of the hon. Member for Mid-Armagh.

Reinstatement of Mary Coyle.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state what steps have been taken to reinstate Mary Coyle, of Kilnalick, County Cavan, whose husband was evicted by his landlord, John Fay, who is at present in possession of the evicted farm; was the inspector authorised to demand payment of arrears due at the time of eviction; was the inspector in possession of private information regarding this evicted tenant and the evicted holding; and will he say from whom the inspector got his information.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have inquired into the case of Mary Coyle and consider her to be a suitable person to work a farm. The Commissioners understand that the holding is at present in possession of the landlord. The matter has been referred to an inspector, but the Commissioners have not yet received his report.

Removal of the Duke of York's School.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether it is intended to remove the whole of the Duke of York's School to Dover when the buildings there are completed, or whether he would be disposed to retain the present buildings, or a portion of them, at Chelsea, where the school is of such interest to the people of London, in order to increase the numbers of soldiers' sons trained and maintained by the State; and if it is decided that no part of the existing school can be retained, how is it proposed to appropriate the site.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane*). It is intended wholly to remove the school from Chelsea to Dover. I am not in a position at present to give any information as regards the appropriation of the site.

The Duke of York's Schools.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland): To ask the Secretary of State for War what the trusts are upon which the Duke of York's School is conducted; in whom is vested the power of appointing the body by whom it is governed; and from what source the present income is derived.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) There are no trusts connected with the

Duke of York's School other than a trust for the Crown. The Commissioners of the school are appointed by Royal Warrant. The income of the school is wholly derived from public funds.

MR. TREVELYAN: To ask the Secretary of State for War in regard to the proposal to remove the Duke of York's School from Chelsea to Dover from what source has the money necessary to purchase the land and erect the new buildings at Dover been obtained; and to what purpose it is intended to put any surplus funds derived from the sale of the present site, if such sale is carried into effect.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The money for the new site and buildings has been provisionally found from the Military Works Loan. The last part of the Question cannot be answered until the disposal of the site has been settled.

Foreign Anti-Gambling Laws.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will obtain particulars from the representatives of the Government abroad and lay upon the Table particulars of the 1907 proposed new anti-gambling bourse laws of the German Government; in addition to the 1903 Austrian Government Bourse Bill; and the proposed Italian, Hungarian, and Greek Governments anti-gambling Bourse Bills.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) His Majesty's representatives in the countries named have been requested to furnish particulars of any legislative proposals on the part of the various Governments of the nature indicated by the hon. Member.

Railway Arbitrations.

MR. WHITEHEAD (Essex, S.E.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade in how many cases during the five years expiring on 31st December, 1907. the Board of Trade has appointed arbitrators under the Provisional Order Confirmation Acts of railway companies (and under which section and sub-sections) to decide disputes between railway companies and traders; and whether the Board of Trade has in all cases appointed the Railway Commissioners to act as such arbitrators.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) 196 such appointments were made in the five years 1903 to 1907. Of these, one appointment was made under Section 6 of the Schedules to the Acts (Dentention of traders' wagons), one under Section 2 (*b*) (Reduction of rate where trucks are provided by a trader), and one under Section 5 (i.) (Services at private sidings) and 7 (Charges for use of special structural accommodation). The remainder were made under Section 5 (iv.) (Occupation of accommodation beyond a period reasonably necessary for the delivery of traffic); and, although the actual number of appointments was 193, many of the disputes related to accommodation at the same town, different traders being concerned. The total number of towns involved was twelve. In all cases the Railway and Canal Commission was appointed arbitrator.

Harbour on the North Devon or Cornwall Coast.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade whether the Harbour Grants Committee have yet made their Report on the question of the provision of a harbour of refuge on the coast of North Devon or Cornwall; and, if so, whether such Report can be laid upon the Table of the House.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I have receved the Report in question within the last few days, and it is still under consideration. It is not usual to present the Reports of the Harbour Grants Committee to Parliament, and I see no reason to make an exception in the present case.

The Railway Inquiry.

MR. FIELD: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Government will consider the advisability of appointing a Commission to inquire into and report upon the nationalisation of the railways in Great Britain and Ireland, and to inquire into and report upon the system of preferential through rates for imported goods and produce.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) As I informed the hon. Members for the Stowmarket Division and Stockport on the 4th instant, an informal Railway Conference is now considering a number of questions affecting railways, including amalgamations and working agreements, and preferential rates on imports. Until some progress has been made with the proceedings I am unable to say whether it will be necessary to institute any other machinery for inquiry such as is suggested by the hon. Member. As regards Ireland a Vice-Regal Commission is at present engaged in a comprehensive inquiry relating to railways.

Food Imports and Consumption.

MR. MENZIES (Lanarkshire, S.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he can state what proportion the food imports into the United Kingdom in 1906, consisting of wheat and wheat flour, meat and dairy produce, bear, in quantity and value, to the total consumption of these articles by the people in that year; what are the relative figures for the United States, Germany, and France; what was the quantity and value of all the wheat and wheat flour imported from British Possessions and Foreign Countries respectively in that year; and what was the amount grown in the United Kingdom and used for food by the people.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) In 1906 the imports of wheat and wheat flour into the United Kingdom were 78 per cent. of the total supply. In Germany the imports in 1905 (the latest year for which Returns are available) were 35 per cent., and in France, in 1906, 3 per cent. of the total supply. It is not possible to state precisely what proportion of the total supply was directly consumed by the people, but the deduction for seed and for use other than for bread-making is comparatively small. No official Returns of the Home supply of meat or dairy produce are available, but accepting the best available estimates it may be calculated that in the United Kingdom in 1906 imported supplies were of meat about 47 per cent., of butter 57 per cent., and of cheese 61 per cent., of the total consumption. For France the latest Returns relate to 1892, and in that year the imports of meat were 3 per cent., and of cheese 5 per cent., of the total supply. Of butter there was a surplus exported. In Germany in 1905 the imports of meat were 11 per cent. of the total consumption, but the figures in this case include lard, which is not included in the other cases. No figures are available for the German production of butter and cheese. The United States has a considerable exportation of all these commodities. It is not practicable to give accurate comparative figures of values. The imports of wheat and wheat flour into the United Kingdom in 1906 were:—

	Cwts.	Value.
	—	—
From British Possessions -	35,077,861	£12,352,917
From Foreign Countries -	77,598,089	£27,140,481

The quantity of wheat grown in the United Kingdom in 1906 was 32,474,164 cwts., of which probably from 85 to 90 per cent. was directly used for food by the people.

Prohibitions of Hay and Straw Imports.

MR. WILES (Islington, S.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether it is proposed to prohibit imports into this country of European hay and straw; and, if so, on what date the prohibition will come into force.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) An order for this purpose was issued last Wednesday, and comes into operation to-day.

Loss of Registered Letters for New York.

MR. CHARLES ROBERTS (Lincoln): To ask the Postmaster-General, whether the Post Office have any news of certain registered letters posted to New York per "Celtic," sailing on 22nd January, and arriving on 30th January, which letters are undelivered and are missing; and what steps are being taken to trace the same.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I regret to find that certain registered letters sent to New York by the packet "Celtic" on 22nd of January, have failed to be delivered. There is every reason to believe that the letters were duly forwarded from this country, and I have already made urgent representations on the subject to the Post Office of the United States.

Pay of Telegraphists.

MR. GILL (Bolton): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the fact that the maximum pay of telegraphists at Bolton previous to 1905 was 50s. per week, that since that period the maximum of the scale has been fixed at 48s., and the Hobhouse scheme keeps the wages at that sum, and that at Manchester and Liverpool the maximum is 56s. per week; and whether, seeing that the Board of Trade Returns published recently show that while the cost of living in Manchester and Liverpool is 86 as compared with London at 100, that of Bolton is 82, and that there is a difference of 4 per cent. on the cost of living, he proposes to take any steps to deal with the difference of maxima of 48s. and 56s. per week.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) My attention has been called to the facts mentioned. The classification of Bolton under the revision recommended by the Parliamentary Committee is at present in suspense. The final position of Bolton in the new classification will, as recommended by the Committee, depend not only upon the cost of living at that town, as ascertained by the Board of Trade, but also on the volume of work performed there.

The Constitution of the Isle of Man.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether any decision has been arrived at respecting the petition presented to him on 13th February by the House of Keys, asking for certain reforms in the constitution of the Isle of Man.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) I have had the advantage of consultation with the authorities of the island and the representatives of the House of Keys, and I am not yet in a position to decide what ought to be done. The matter requires very careful consideration.

The Walker Trustees and Knighthood Fees.

SIR WILLIAM BULL (Hammersmith): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether, in view of the advice the Treasury has received as to the Walker Trustees' claims, the Government will take measures to protect the baronets and knights from whom these fees have been demanded under a threat of legal proceedings, and apply for a return of the amounts paid by certain of them under a misapprehension of the true facts of the case.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I am not aware of any measures which the Government can take to protect baronets and knights from the demands of the Walker Trustees, but I have not heard that any legal proceedings have yet been taken. I see no ground on which I could apply to the Trustees for a return of fees paid to them, whether under a misapprehension or otherwise.

Money-Metal Producing Countries—Suggested Union.

MR. FIELD: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether his attention has been directed to letters addressed to the Treasury Department respecting a proposed union of money-metal-producing countries to control the money-metal wealth of the three Kingdoms and the Colonies, in conjunction with the United States of America and the Republic of Mexico; and whether he would consider the advisability of forming such a union, with a view of producing greater stability in the money markets and providing sufficient metal currency for commercial wants.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I have had the letters referred to in the Question before me, but I do not think it advisable to take any steps in the direction suggested.

Stock Exchange Gambling.

MR. FIELD: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he is aware of President Roosevelt's message to

Congress respecting speculative gambling; whether he is aware of the measures then adopted by the Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Cortelyou, and the Association of New York Bankers to check the financial panic under threats of prohibition of bear sales and of bull gambling in fictitious stocks and shares; and whether, in view of those facts, he will confer with the American Government to consider co-operatively some united action to prevent gambling in options and futures.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) I have followed very carefully the history of the recent financial crisis in America, but I do not think there would be any advantage in conferring with the United States Government in the manner suggested.

Ballyseedy Estate, County Kerry.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.)): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether his attention has been directed to the claims of Mr. Thomas O'Connor and Mr. William O'Neill in reference to lands on the Ballyseedy, County Kerry, estate; and will he say what action the Estates Commissoners, who are in possession of the facts, intend to take regarding the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that they have inquired into the application of William O'Neill, who was evicted from a holding on the Blennerhassett estate, and that they consider him to be a suitable person to work a farm. The case has been referred to an inspector with a view to providing O'Neill with a holding. The Commissioners are unable to trace the receipt of any application from Thomas O'Connor.

Claims of Transition Teachers.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he has received from teachers in Ireland, known as transition teachers, a statement embodying their claims; whether he is aware that in the issue of the National Board's Rules, 1902, it was stated that special consideration would be given to the cases of those teachers and their claims dealt with as if they were in the service before the issue of the new rules of 1900; whether, seeing that no consideration has been given but that injustice has been inflicted, he will cause an inquiry to be made into the whole facts and circumstances connected with the payment of those teachers.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I beg to refer the hon. Member to the Answer which I gave on the 3rd instant to the similar Question put by the hon. Member for South Down.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Gibraltar Docks.

MR. LEVY LEVER (Essex, Harwich): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the dry docks at Gibraltar are of sufficient size to take in a vessel with a compartment damaged and full of water of the "Dreadnought," "Invincible," and improved and larger "Dreadnought" type.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. LAMBERT, Devonshire, South Molton): The reply is in the affirmative so far as the two largest docks are concerned.

New Armoured Ships.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the designs for the armoured ships of the programme of 1909–10 will be so far advanced this financial year as to enable the Admiralty to lay the ships down at the beginning of 1909–10, if it is found necessary through the advanced construction of armoured ships by the two strongest naval Powers forming the two Power standard.

MR. LAMBERT: The designs of vessels about to be laid down will be prepared in sufficiently good time to admit of their construction being taken in hand when required.

Destroyers at Devonport.

MR. BELLAIRS: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty how many of the forty-five fully-commissioned destroyers in home waters were stationed at Devonport in the first fortnight of December, 1906; how many of the forty-five destroyers were under repair or in dock at that time; and how many were attached to instructional training establishments.

Mr. LAMBERT: Nine destroyers were tenders to the gunnery and torpedo establishments, fifteen were based on Devonport, and eight were lying at that port at the period in question. Nine boats were in hand for repairs, but only one was in dock.

Established Dockyard Workmen.

Mr. MALLET (Plymouth): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the list of established workmen in His Majesty's dockyards is now indefinitely suspended; and, if not, whether he can state when the advantages of the establishment will again be thrown open to the men.

Mr. BRAMSDON (Portsmouth): At the same time may I ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will state when the list of established men now temporarily suspended in the Royal dockyards will be again opened, or if their Lordships have under consideration the question of permanently discontinuing such establishment.

Mr. LAMBERT: The question of the establishment is under the consideration of His Majesty's Government at the present time.

H M.S. "Cæsar" Gunnery Practice Accident.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Admiralty have yet decided on the compensation to be granted to the young girl who resides with her widowed mother at Saltburn, Ross-shire, and who was injured and permanently crippled by gunners from H.M.S. "Cæsar" during gun practice in the summer of 1906.

Mr. LAMBERT: The question of the amount of compensation to be paid to the injured girl is at present under consideration.

Mr. WEIR: Has any offer been made to the girl?

Mr. LAMBERT: Yes, but the parents refused it and the matter is now under consideration.

Mr. WEIR: Was it an offer of 1s. or 1s. 3d. per week for life?

[No Answer was returned.]

The Beresford-Scott Dispute.

Mr. LEA (St. Pancras, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will communicate to the House the official correspondence between the Lords of the Admiralty and Admirals Beresford and Scott respecting the signal made from H.M.S. "Good Hope"; which Admiral was to blame in the matter; and what action has been taken by the Admiralty.

Mr. LAMBERT: The Admiralty would deprecate publishing official correspondence relating to the discipline of the Fleet; but I am authorised to say that they directed the Commander-in-Chief of the Channel Fleet to convey to the Rear-Admiral commanding the first cruiser squadron an expression of their Lordships' grave disapprobation of his signal to the "Roxburgh" on the 4th November last.

South African War—Royal Artillery Batteries.

Mr. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War how many batteries of Royal Artillery were despatched from this country to South Africa during the course of the war.

The SECRETARY of STATE for WAR (Mr. Haldane, Haddington): Fifty batteries of Royal Artillery were sent from this country to South Africa during the war in 1899 to 1902.

The Special Reserve.

Mr. COCHRANE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state from what sources the 4,000 men of the Special Reserve, who are to be included in Section A of the Reserve, will be drawn; what will be the nature and amount of their training prior to taking the field with the Regular Army; and to what arm or arms of the service are they to be attached.

Mr. HALDANE: The 4,000 men of the Special Reserve in Section A will be composed as follow: Royal Artillery, 520; Infantry, 3,030; Army Medical Corps, 450. The Artillery and Infantry will be drawn from the Special Reserve. The Medical Corps men will be drawn from the Territorial Force and will be supernumerary to the establishment of their Territorial units. The men of Section A Special Reserve will receive the same amount of training as other Special Reservists. On being called out they will at once form part of the Regular Army and may possibly take the field without further training.

Mr. COCHRANE: Does the Reserve exist?

Mr HALDANE: The training brigades of the Artillery are working all over the country; the new depot battalions are also working, recruits are coming in, and, moreover, a good many of the disbanded Militia are coming over. But, of course, there is nothing like the complete establishment yet.

Indentured Labour for the New Hebrides.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies how many men, women, and children have been exported from the New Hebrides during the six months ending 31st January, 1908, under the indenture labour arrangements concluded by His Majesty's Government, and particularly how many were shipped to the French settlements.

The UNDER-SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES (Mr. Churchill, Manchester, N.W.): The hon. and gallant Member will probably have seen from the Report, a copy of which has recently been placed in the Library of the House, that the New Hebrides Convention, to which I presume he refers, only came into force on 2nd December last, and has not therefore been in operation six months. He will also have seen, from the despatches printed on pages 33–42 of Cd. 3876 of 1908, that the French Government are, as they always have been and must remain, solely responsible for the recruiting of New Hebrides natives for New Caledonia, just as His Majesty's Government remain similarly responsible for recruiting for Fiji. The Question of the hon. and gallant Member is, therefore, not one for His Majesty's Government, so far as it refers to New Caledonia; so far as it refers to Fiji, I may say that there is no reason to suppose that during last December and January there were any more natives recruited for that Colony than during the two corresponding months in the many previous years for which Fiji has obtained labourers from the New Hebrides. During the five years 1902–6, inclusive, the total number of New Hebrides natives recruited for Fiji was eighty-seven. If this average of about seventeen a year has been maintained the total number recruited during December and January would be nearly three. Natives are not recruited for any other places outside the group.

Nyassaland.

*Mr. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government contemplates taking any such action in respect of Nyassaland as was taken by the Government of the Dominion of Canada to advertise its resources in the early days of its development.

Mr. CHURCHILL: The conditions of Nyassaland are very different from those of the Dominion of Canada, and the Secretary of State does not propose to take any steps to call attention to its resources except by the publication of the Annual Reports, and such special reports on the industries and resources of the country as may be received from time to time.

Steamship Communication with British East Africa.

*Mr. REES: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government of the British East Africa Protectorate is moving His Majesty's Government to subsidise a British line of steamers to serve the East Coast of Africa; and whether, in the event of this proposal being entertained, due regard will be given to the requirements of Beira, Chinde, Guillimane and Nyassaland.

Mr. CHURCHILL: No, Sir; we have not received any recent communications in this sense from the Government of the East Africa Protectorate.

*MR. REES: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that for communication between the Protectorate and Europe settlers are absolutely dependent on subsidised foreign lines?

MR. CHURCHILL: I am aware that there is a deficiency of steamship communication between this country and East Africa.

South African Customs Unification.

*MR. REES: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether a Commission has been appointed, or whether a Conference will take place, regarding the federation or unification of the customs of South Africa; and, if so, whether Nyassaland will be duly represented.

MR. CHURCHILL: A Customs Conference of the South African Colonies is expected to meet shortly, but it is not proposed that Nyassaland, which is not a member of the present South African Customs Union, should be represented at the Conference.

Northern Nigeria—Land Tenure and Taxation.

MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether, now that Sir Percy Girouard has arrived in England, he will lay before the House Papers relating to land tenure and land taxation in Northern Nigeria.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Memoranda are not yet in final form, but Lord Elgin hopes it may be possible to present them to Parliament.

Malagasy Labour for the Transvaal.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies upon what date the Transvaal Government first inquired of the Secretary of State whether the French Government would be prepared to sanction the recruitment of native labour in Madagascar.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Governor's despatch forwarding Ministers Minute was received on 18th January, but there was a missing enclosure for which we telegraphed and which did not arrive till 22nd February.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether His Majesty's Government have yet received from the Transvaal Government the particulars of the conditions upon which they have proposed the recruitment of Malagasy labour for the Transvaal mines; and, if so, when Papers will be laid.

MR. CHURCHILL: Yes, Sir; upon the 22nd of February. It is not proposed to lay Papers at present.

MR MITCHELL-THOMSON: Is there no prospect of Papers being laid; is there no intention of acquainting the House with the demands made by the Transvaal?

MR. CHURCHILL: The terms on which the Transvaal Government propose recruiting shall take place in Madagascar are exactly the same as those which obtain for Cape Colony in Portuguese territory; and nothing more nor less. I think it better before Papers are laid to wait until a complete statement can be made.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): What is the difference in principle between recruiting in Madagascar and recruiting in China?

MR. CHURCHILL: There is all the difference in the world between recruiting under the special conditions of the Chinese Labour Ordinance and recruiting under the conditions that obtain now. [Cries of "What are they?"]

EARL WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham): Will the right hon. Gentleman say what those conditions are?

MR. CHURCHILL: I must refer the noble Lord to the Chinese Labour Ordinance, a copy of which will be found in the library.

EARL WINTERTON: But what are the conditions?

MR. CHURCHILL: The conditions proposed for the natives of Madagascar are those which prevail in South Africa for the recruiting of natives. There is no difference whatever. No special law is needed.

Treatment of Native Labour in South Africa.

SIR BERKELEY SHEFFIELD (Lincolnshire, Brigg): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies what proportion of coloured Native labour is at present living in compounds in South Africa.

MR. CHURCHILL: I am not able to calculate the proportion, but most of the natives employed on the Witwatersrand Mines live in compounds. Only the Chinese live in them under the special restrictions of the Chinese Labour Importation Ordinance.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): Does the right hon. Gentleman say that the Malagasy and the natives are to be recruited under the same conditions?

MR. CHURCHILL said the views of the Government had often been put forward, and they had always been directed to the conditions under which the Chinese were employed.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: But will the Government establish the same conditions for the natives as for the Chinese?

MR. CHURCHILL: I do not shrink from debate on the subject, but debate cannot be conducted by Question and Answer.

SIR GILBERT PARKER said he would take an opportunity to call attention to the subject.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): Will the labourers imported from Madagascar also live in compounds?

MR. CHURCHILL: No proposal has yet been made in a definite form for sanctioning the importation of labourers from Madagascar, but the proposal that has been made is that they should be recruited on exactly the same terms as the natives of the South African Colonies.

LORD R. CECIL: But will they live in compounds?

MR. CHURCHILL said that, so far as his knowledge went, all the natives lived in residences called compounds, but the question was as to the restrictions under which they lived.

SIR JOHN RANDLES (Cumberland, Cockermouth): Is there any difference between compounds in which the Chinese reside and those in which the natives reside?

COLONEL SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby): Is it not a fact that the Chinese live under special restrictions of a very stringent nature, whereas all the natives live under the ordinary law?

MR. CHURCHILL: The controversy is very familiar to the House, and, so far as the Colonial Office is concerned, we welcome debate.

*MR. R. DUNCAN (Lanarkshire, Govan): Is this application of the term "compound" another instance of terminological inexactitude?

[No Answer was returned.]

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if his attention has been called to the fact that the repatriation of the Chinese from the Transvaal mines is causing a large increase in the total number of the yellow and black workmen employed in the mines, and to the fact that the death rate among the blacks in the compounds is much higher than among the Chinese in the compounds; and if, under the circumstances, the Government will communicate with the Transvaal Government with a view to allowing the Chinese to remain, and so save the heavy loss of life that follows from their replacement by larger numbers of black natives.

MR. CHURCHILL: My attention has constantly been called to all sorts of matters connected with the mining industry upon the Witwatersrand; but I see no reason for making the communication to the Transvaal Government which the hon. Member suggests.

MR. FELL: Is it the fact that it takes three black labourers to do the work done by two Chinese?

MR. CHURCHILL: That is a conundrum which I cannot answer without notice.

MR. FELL: But do not the figures in the possession of the Colonial Office show it?

MR. CHURCHILL again asked for notice.

MR. FELL: I will put a Question down.

Transvaal Mines—Imported Labour.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Transvaal Government have requested His Majesty's Government to approach any other Government than the French Government with a view to the securing of a supply of imported labour for the mines.

MR. CHURCHILL: No, Sir.

SIR BERKELEY SHEFFIELD: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any negotiations are taking place by the Transvaal, either directly or through the Colonial Office, for the recruiting of labour in the mines of South Africa with the Portuguese authorities.

MR. CHURCHILL: Yes, Sir; negotiations have been frequent between the Transvaal Government and the local Portuguese authorities, both before and since the establishment of responsible government.

MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the statement made by Mr. Rissik, at Pretoria, on the 5th instant, with regard to recruiting natives from Madagascar for the Transvaal mines; whether any reply has yet been received from the French Government upon the subject; and, if so, what are the terms on which the recruiting is proposed.

MR. CHURCHILL: I have seen a Press telegram regarding Mr. Rissik's statement. No communication has yet been made to the French Government.

Natal Public Debt.

MR. LEHMANN (Leicestershire, Market Harborough): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what is the present amount of the public debt of the Colony of Natal and of its increase during the past ten years; what is the amount of that debt per head of the white population of the Colony; and what is the present annual liability of the Colony for interest on the debt.

MR. CHURCHILL: The public debt of Natal on the 30th of June last was £20,597,870. It had increased since the 30th of June, 1897, by £12,578,727. The amount of debt per head of the white population is approximately £212, and the annual liability of the Colony for interest approximately £710,000.

MR. BELLOC (Salford, S.): May I ask whether any proportion of the interest on debt is guaranteed by the British Government?

MR. CHURCHILL: I cannot state that.

MR. WEDGWOOD: May I ask how much of that debt represents railways and other valuable assets?

MR. CHURCHILL: I cannot say offhand, but the debt of Natal, like the debt of other Colonies, is largely represented by public works, and is trustee stock.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): May I ask whether by using the words "trustee stock" the right hon. Gentleman means to imply that the trustee stock is guaranteed by the Government?

MR. CHURCHILL: Nothing of the sort; but I should like to have notice of these Questions.

Natal Finance.

MR. LEHMANN: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state whether, and, if so, by what amount in each year, the expenditure of the Colony of Natal exceeded the revenue during the past three years; and whether any additional sources of revenue are open to the Government of Natal.

MR. CHURCHILL: The expenditure of Natal exceeded the revenue for the year 1904–5 by £644,738, for the year 1905–6 by £4,619, and for the year 1906–7 by about £210,000. Various proposals for additional taxation have been introduced into the Natal Parliament during the last two sessions, but none of them have become law.

MR. LEHMANN: Is it in contemplation in the Colony of Natal to issue a new loan, and will that necessarily be a trustee stock?

MR. CHURCHILL: I have no knowledge of the intentions of the Natal Government on the subject.

MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Natal Parliament was prorogued last year without any provision having been made to meet the deficit in the Colonial revenue; whether the taxes proposed by the Ministry to meet that deficit failed to pass the Colonial Assembly; whether, in consequence, Mr. Brunner, the Treasurer, resigned his office; and whether any other Treasurer has yet been appointed to take his place.

MR. CHURCHILL: The facts are, I understand, as stated in the Question. On Mr. Brunner's resignation Mr. Hitchens, the Minister for Railways and Harbours, was appointed to hold in addition the office of Treasurer.

Dinizulu.

MR. MACKARNESS: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he can state for how many weeks Dinizulu has now been subjected to a secret examination without any definite charge being made against him, and for how long these proceedings are likely to be continued; whether the Secretary of State has received from anyone on behalf of Dinizulu any record of what has taken place; and, if so, whether he will place a copy of it in the Library of the House.

MR. CHURCHILL: The preliminary inquiry was opened on 23rd December. In view of the long interval which has elapsed since the inquiry was begun the Secretary of State telegraphed recently to inquire when the decision of the magistrates might be expected, but the reply has not yet been received. A statement from Mr. Jellicoe has been received, and it is proposed to include it with other papers in the next Blue-book, which it is hoped to issue shortly. The Secretary of State has also received Mr. Jellicoe's notes of the proceedings between 23rd and 31st January, which were attached to his letter to the Governor of 7th February, but Lord Elgin does not feel able to give them Parliamentary publication until he has heard further from the Governor on the subject.

MR. J. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): May I ask whether, having regard to the fact that after the Jameson Raid the Government appealed to the South African Republic to send the raiders to England to be tried, in view of the probability of prejudice in South Africa, the Government will consider the advisability of making representations to the Government of Natal in favour of a change of venue for the trial of Dinizulu.

MR. CHURCHILL: I cannot answer that Question on the spur of the moment, but I think there are other representations we make from time to time to the Government of Natal which might possibly be more suitable.

East African Great Game Reserves.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he is aware of the feeling held in East Africa that the great game preserves established there by the Foreign Office are inimical to settlement, and that any money spent in game preservation or on soldiers employed as gamekeepers would be much better spent in developing the great agricultural resources of the country; and whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

MR. CHURCHILL: I assume that the hon. Member's Question has reference to the game preserve in the neighbourhood of the Uganda Railway, for the northern reserve is so distant from the settled areas of the Protectorate as to be scarcely in question. I am aware that some of the settlers are opposed to the preservation of the great game; but others again are in favour of it, and it must be remembered that the Protectorate derives considerable benefit from the game both directly in the shape of fees for licences and customs dues on articles imported by shooting parties and indirectly through the money brought into the country by those shooting parties. The Secretary of State has, however, no objection to taking the opinion of the Governor on the question.

*MR. REES: But are soldiers employed as gamekeepers?

MR. CHURCHILL: I am not aware that they are, but certainly the proceeds for the game licences more than cover any expenses incurred.

Jubaland.

MR. GUY BARING (Winchester): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Jubaland province of British East Africa has been thrown open to trade; if so, whether any concessions have been given to private individuals or companies; and whether navigation on the River Juba is being carried on as far up as the scene of the recent disturbances on the Italian bank at Lugh.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Jubaland province is not yet under regular administration, and traders are accordingly not allowed to enter it without the special permission of the Governor. Such permission has recently been given in two cases, but no concession has been granted. I do not know whether the river is now being navigated as far as Lugh.

Mozambique Labour for the Transvaal.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Transvaal Government on its own behalf, or this Government on behalf of the Transvaal Administration, has entered into negotiations with the Portuguese Government concerning the recruitment of native labour in Mozambique for employment in the Transvaal mines; whether this Government has approached the Government of France, either by correspondence or through the French Minister in London, concerning the recruitment of natives in Madagascar for the Transvaal mines; and, if so, what reply has been given by the French Government.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Transvaal Government recently approached through Lord Selborne the local Portuguese Administration upon questions connected with the recruitment of labour in Mozambique. His Majesty's Government has not so far made any communication to the French Government on the subject of recruitment of labour in Madagascar.

Probation of Offenders Act, 1907.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if the rules issued under the Probation of Offenders Act, 1907, can be laid upon the Table.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): These rules have already been published and are on sale, but as the hon. Member desires it, I will lay them on the Table, together with a Memorandum which I circulated with them to the authorities concerned.

Juvenile Beggars.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will say how many of the twenty-six persons committed in 1906 to reformatory schools for begging, and of the thirty-nine persons so committed for sleeping out, were of an age to be committed to an industrial school; and whether he will move to add to Clause 96 of the Children Bill a sub-section to prohibit persons under the age of fourteen being committed to reformatory schools for such offences as begging and sleeping out.

MR. GLADSTONE: I regret that I cannot accept my hon. friends suggestion in the last paragraph of the Question. Of the young persons sent to reformatories in 1906 for vagrancy, which includes sleeping out, six boys, and of those sent for begging, one boy and one girl, were under fourteen. The remainder were over that age. I have no doubt that the magistrates, when choosing the class of school to which a young person should be sent, that is to say, whether he should mix with children bigger or smaller than himself, take into consideration other things than the actual charge, and a certain amount of discretion must be left to them.

Vehicular Fatalities.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, in consequence of the increasing mortality caused by mechanically propelled vehicles, he will instruct the chief constables of every county and borough in the United Kingdom to send in half-yearly returns to the Home Office of all accidents, fatal and otherwise, caused by motor cars, cycles, and omnibuses, and by horse-drawn vehicles, respectively; and that an annual report of such accidents shall be made to the House of Commons, as in the case of railway accidents.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The Registrar-General furnishes complete returns of fatal accidents caused by vehicles, and particulars of all accidents of this kind which come to the knowledge of the police in the Metropolis are supplied by the Commissioner of Metropolitan Police. I will make inquiry to see whether and how far it would be possible to obtain from provincial forces information similar to that furnished by the Metropolitan Police.

Phosphorus Poisoning.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR (Liverpool, Scotland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if, in view of the deaths from poisoning of women and children from consuming phosphorus taken from match heads, he will state whether any record of these cases is kept; and, if so, how many deaths have occurred during the year 1907 from this cause.

Mr. GLADSTONE: The deaths returned by coroners' juries as resulting from poisoning by phosphorus from matches are shown in the Registrar-General's Annual Reports. The figures for 1907 have not yet been ascertained. The Registrar-General informs me that in 1906 six deaths were attributed to poisoning from phosphorus matches, five of the victims being children under three years of age, and one a girl of twelve years.

Mr. BYLES (Salford, N.) asked if any record was kept of the proceedings at the inquiries?

Mr. GLADSTONE'S reply was inaudible.

Licensing Compensation.

Mr. MACKARNESS: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the proportion of compensation money, under the Licensing Act, 1904, which, up to the end of 1907, has gone to the licensees as compared with that which has gone to the other parties interested.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Of the total compensation money paid in the year 1906, the licensees received 11·22 per cent.; and in 1907 the proportion was 10·93 per cent. The figures are not available for 1905.

Phosphorous Matches from the Continent.

Mr. T. P. O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has any information to the effect that the sale of phosphorous matches is strictly prohibited in Norway and Sweden, but that the manufacture in those countries is still permitted for export to this country.

Mr. GLADSTONE: My information is that the sale of lucifer matches containing white or yellow phosphorous is forbidden in the two countries mentioned, but not the manufacture for export.

Mr. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the advisability of imposing a tariff on foreign matches?

[No Answer was returned.]

Mr. BYLES asked if British matchmakers were not perfectly prepared to do without white phosphorous, and could he not prohibit its importation.

Mr. GLADSTONE: Communications are taking place with the manufacturers. I do not think they are ready at the present time to discontinue the use of white phosphorous, and in any case legislation would be required to stop its importation.

Dangerous Performances by Women.

Mr. LEA: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has yet finished considering whether it is desirable to extend the provisions of the Dangerous Performances Acts, 1879 and 1897, to dangerous performances by women of any age; if so, what the result of that consideration has been; and whether we may expect any legislation on the subject, and when a Bill on the subject is likely to be introduced.

MR. GLADSTONE: The Bill which was introduced in 1906 proved to be highly controversial, and it would be useless to proceed with it this session.

Hamstead Colliery Disaster.

MR. ALBERT STANLEY (Staffordshire, N.W.) asked the Home Secretary if he could give the House any information as to the cause of the Hamstead colliery disaster, the number of workmen still imprisoned in the burning mine, and the steps being taken to rescue them.

MR. GLADSTONE said he was not able to state at present how the fire originated in the disastrous and lamentable accident at Hamstead. He was informed that at present there were twenty-six persons still below ground. There appeared to be some faint hope that some lives might be rescued. The only information he had at the moment was a telegram from the inspector of mines on the spot, sent two hours ago, which ran:—"Existing fans started to reverse air current at 12.15. The delay was due to cutting shaft-lining to form communications. The effect appeared satisfactory. Expect rescue cage to descend in an hour."

Trade Marks Act, 1905—Rules of Court.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state whether the Rule Committee has met or has been convened to meet to consider the necessity or propriety of making rules of court for the purposes of The Trade Marks Act, 1905.

I beg also to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the fact that rule 121 of The Trade Mark Rules, 1906, is *ultra vires*, in so far as it purports to regulate proceedings in the High Court of Justice; and what action he proposes to take in the matter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE, Carnarvon Boroughs): The rule in question was settled by an eminent counsel. It has worked well in practice and without question by the Courts. I have, of course, no objection to bringing before the notice of the Lord Chancellor as head of the Rule Making Committee the points raised in my hon. friend's Questions.

Savilles Level-crossing, Colwick.

MR. ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the Great Northern Railway have not yet replaced Savilles level-crossing, Colwick, by a footbridge, as intimated by him on 30th July, 1907, in reply to a Question, would be the case; and, having regard to the public danger constantly arising, will he put pressure on the company to do the work at once.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I am informed that tenders have been obtained for the construction of a footbridge crossing the lines of both the Midland and Great Northern Companies, but that some difficulty has arisen with the local authority as regards the diversion of a footpath and with the owners of the land, which may cause some delay.

Return as to Seamen.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state if the figures given at pages 2–3, Table 2, of the Return of the number, ages, ratings, and nationalities of seamen recently issued by his Department are correct, in so far as they affect firemen and trimmers employed on all steam vessels in the home and foreign trade; and whether he is aware that the table referred to gives the total number of men employed, including lascars, as firemen and trimmers on those vessels as 46,767.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: I have no reason to doubt the correctness of the figures referred to by my hon friend. I would point out that the total of 46,767 merely shows the number of men employed on a given day—4th April, 1906—and, further, that it includes firemen and trimmers in the coasting and fishing trades, as well as in the home and foreign trades. The total includes lascars.

Lascar Firemen.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if any report has been received by his Department with regard to the suicide of a lascar fireman named Mara Bun Houra on board the British steamer "Indrasambra" during a voyage from India to New York; whether he is aware that the lascar fireman in question became demented, and, seizing a carving-knife from the galley, ran along the deck slashing right and left, and whether the other lascar seamen were afraid to descend to the stokehold; if he can say that Mara Bon Houra jumped overboard the same day and was drowned; whether he is aware that five days before this vessel's arrival in New York another lascar fireman named Mohammed became demented also and died; and if it is his intention to hold an investigation in this case.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: No particulars of the occurrence mentioned in the Question have been received by the Board of Trade. I have communicated with the owners, who report that no such occurrence as is described has occurred on their "Indrasamha" within the last few years. I have asked the Consul-General at New York, where the vessel arrived on the 15th ultimo, for his report on the matter, and on receipt of his reply a communication shall be sent to my hon. friend.

Parisian Octroi Duties.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade what is the amount of the octroi duty on wheat and flour entering within the walls of the city of Paris.

MR. GUY BARING: At the same time may I ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any octroi duties are charged on bread stuffs entering Paris.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: There is no octroi duty on wheat or wheat flour entering Paris.

Hampstead Borough Officials and Vaccination.

MR. BOWERMAN (Deptford): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can say how many of the employees of the Hampstead Borough Council have been vaccinated within the past six years; whether he is aware that the fee charged for each employee was 5s., and that they were vaccinated by a doctor who is, and was, a member of the council at the time; and whether, seeing that the council employed a member of its own body to do this work, he proposes to take any, and what, action in the matter.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD, (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): I am informed that the borough council have never made any conditions as to the vaccination of their employees, and they have no record of the number vaccinated during the past six years. I find, however, that during the last epidemic of smallpox in 1901 one of the employees, who had not been vaccinated, died of the disease, and hence three of the committees of the borough council thought it desirable that the staff of their respective departments should be vaccinated. This opinion was conveyed to the employees in these departments, but it was stated that the committee in no way desired to compel them to be vaccinated against their own wishes. Thirty-three persons have as a result been vaccinated, eight by the public vaccinator and twenty-three by the deputy public vaccinator. The deputy public vaccinator was and is a member of the borough council, but he was not employed by the borough council in this matter, nor has he received from them any fees in respect of it. The employees were at liberty to go to any medical man they pleased; and they went to the public vaccinator or his deputy because by so doing they were vaccinated free of charge. The usual fee in respect of the operation would be paid by the board of guardians of the parish.

MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Is it within the recollection of the right hon. Gentleman that at the time of this epidemic several men who were vaccinated died as the result of the operation in a terrible condition of corruption?

MR. JOHN BURNS: No, Sir; it is not within my recollection.

Main Roads National Charge.

MR. BENNETT (Oxfordshire, Woodstock): I beg to ask the President of the

Local Government Board whether, in view of the fact that the Royal Commission on Local Taxation recommended that the maintenance of our main roads should be a national charge, he can hold out any hopes that this question will receive the consideration of His Majesty's Government at an early date.

Mr. JOHN BURNS: The Government have promised to consider this matter when the general question of local taxation comes to be dealt with. I cannot, however, hold out any expectation of legislation on the subject being introduced during the present session.

Housing of the Working Classes Bill.

Mr. MACKARNESS: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he can say when the Housing of the Working Classes Bill will be introduced.

Mr. JOHN BURNS: I cannot at present fix a day, but I hope to introduce the Bill at an early date.

Scottish Milk Supplies.

Mr. WATT: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether, in the forthcoming legislation dealing with milk supplies, the Bill will include Scotland.

Mr. JOHN BURNS: This point has not at present been settled. It will be a matter for my right hon. friend the Secretary for Scotland.

Swansea Education Dispute.

Lord ROBERT CECIL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether the Board have received any reply from the Swansea local authority to the Board's letter of the 10th February, which requested the local authority for a prompt reply with reference to the teachers' salaries in the Oxford Street School; and, if not, what steps he proposes to take.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of EDUCATION (Mr. McKenna, Monmouth, N.): The Board have been informed that the letter referred to will be considered by the education committee of the town council at a meeting which takes place to-day.

Lord R. CECIL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the clerk to the council has been informed there is no urgency, and that they need take no steps and consider the matter?

Mr. McKENNA: No, Sir; that is the first I have heard of that.

Canadian Education Rate.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he will state, for general convenience, the system in Canada under which rates are allocated for educational purposes to public and denominational schools.

Mr. McKENNA: The rating system in Canada is so different from that in force in this country, that I do not think any useful suggestions for solving our difficulties would be derived from any statement of the Canadian practice.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether in view of the general and widespread interest felt in this matter, and the approaching debate on the education question he cannot at the general desire arrange that some information on this subject shall be placed in the hands of Members of Parliament?

Mr. McKENNA: I will make inquiries on that point. I find it would be impossible to obtain the information asked for in so short a space of time as that suggested. It would require some months to get it.

Lord R. CECIL: Is not the information contained in the statutes now in force?

Mr. McKENNA: No; the practice of rating in Canada varies so much in different parts of the Dominion that it would be necessary to send a commissioner out to obtain it.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Is it not the fact that in certain parts of Canada the system of rating is so arranged that the money paid is earmarked for the particular denomination? In the form I have seen it is so. Is it not the fact that the ratepayer in filling up the form indicates whether he desires his rate shall go to the public school or to any denominational school; are not all the moneys collected for a particular denomination pooled together, and in the event of any deficiency does not the denomination have to make it up?

MR. McKENNA: Generally speaking, I believe that is so; but still the practice varies in Canada, and any information the Government might give on the subject would have to be complete, and it would necessarily take considerable time to get it. Still I will do my best to get it.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Does the right hon. Gentleman seriously tell us it would take months to get this information? Surely it would be obtainable from Canada by return of post.

MR. McKENNA: Some information I could so get no doubt, but all the information which this House requires cannot be obtained quickly.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman get information on the point I have indicated as to the allocation of rates—the ear-marking of the money to particular denominations?

MR. McKENNA: I have stated I will do my best to get it. I cannot promise, however, that it will be delivered as quickly as the hon. Member wishes.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Will the right hon. Gentleman make application to the High Commissioner of Canada, who I am perfectly sure will give it when he knows it will be for the convenience of Members of this House?

MR. McKENNA: That is one of the steps I should propose to take.

Voluntary School Houses.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, in the case of a voluntary school transferred to the local education authority, the control of the school house after school hours will be vested in the local education authority; and whether meetings in connection with religious, parochial, and church matters can be held in the school-house as formerly.

MR. McKENNA: The point raised by the hon. Baronet involves matters of interpretation which can, I think, be better dealt with in the course of debate on the Bill.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: Will there be an adequate opportunity of discussing this point.

MR. McKENNA: I assume so.

Contracted-out Schools and Scholarships.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether children attending a contracted-out school will be excluded from the benefits of the scholarship schemes administered by the local education authority and maintained solely out of public money.

MR. McKENNA: No, Sir, not necessarily. The Bill in no way limits the liberty which the local authorities now enjoy in making schemes for their own scholarships.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON: Will the right hon. Gentleman indicate that to the authorities so as to prevent any injustice being done?

MR. McKENNA: The existing law is not changed on the subject. The liberty the authorities now enjoy they will continue to enjoy.

Elementary School Buildings.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he will state in detail what are the requirements of the Board of Education with regard to the design and structure of the buildings of public elementary schools in connection with the possibility of fire; what are the prescribed extent and possibilities of exit; what provision for extinguishing fire is supplied; and what fire drill is given.

MR. McKENNA: All plans submitted to the Board are carefully scrutinised with a view to securing adequate safeguards in case of fire. It is impossible to lay down detailed rules applicable to schools of all sizes and types, urban and rural alike, but my hon. friend will find the general requirements of the Board set out in the building regulations, of which I will send him a copy. The code lays down that the scholars of any school not situated wholly on the ground floor should be practised in fire-drill.

Education Grant.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, in relation to the maximum grant of 47s. per child mentioned in the Education Bill, there is any minimum grant which the Board of Education will be obliged to pay to managers or trustees of such voluntary schools as are duly certified as efficient elementary schools.

MR. MCKENNA: The new grant will be administered on the same lines as the block grant of 22s. at present in the Code.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London) said it would be convenient if the managers of voluntary schools were able to form a conjecture as to the amount of the average grant. The maximum grant was 47s., but there was no minimum grant. What was it anticipated the average grant would be?

MR. MCKENNA: The form adopted in this Bill is the ordinary form. The grant in every case will be presumably 47s., just as 22s. is now the block grant. Of course the 47s. will be subject to deductions for fines. Under the Bill as it now stands the general grant will be 47s.

LORD R. CECIL asked whether 47s. would be the universal grant; or whether the grant would be generally 47s. and sometimes lower.

MR. MCKENNA: I safeguard myself by saying it will not be a universal grant. As in the past, individual schools will, I regret to say, suffer fines; but the ordinary grant will in every case be 47s.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) asked whether there would be any obligation on the Board of Education to pay to efficient voluntary schools any particular sum, or any sum whatever.

MR. MCKENNA: If Parliament votes the money, it will be the duty of the Board to pay it.

LORD BALCARRES: Under the Bill?

MR. MCKENNA: The Bill does not provide the money. The money will have to be voted every year by Parliament. When Parliament votes the money, the Board of Education will pay it.

LORD R. CECIL: Will it be provided in the Vote that so much money is to be paid to each voluntary school?

MR. MCKENNA: It can be so provided, if it is considered necessary.

Ventilation of the House.

*SIR PHILIP MAGNUS (London University): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether having regard to the prevalence of influenza among Members of the House of Commons, he will reconsider the advisableness of a daily adjournment of the House for a half-hour between the hours of seven and nine in the evening, with a view to the better ventilation of the House by the admission of fresh air through opened windows.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, Rossendale): The opening of windows would be a distinct hindrance to the efficient ventilation under the new and improved system. The absence of Members might be of advantage at any period of the sitting, but even during their presence the whole air of the chamber is changed every five minutes, and it is possible though not comfortable to do this in three minutes. The more rapid change is invariably effected during divisions when both Members and air are in movement.

*SIR PHILIP MAGNUS: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he has tried the experiment of flushing this chamber with fresh air for a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes during a late sitting of the House?

MR. HARCOURT: Yes, the experiment has been tried, but not successfully.

*SIR PHILIP MAGNUS: Will the right hon. Gentleman say what were the effects—were they more or less influenza

MR. HARCOURT: The effect of opening the windows to admit fresh air was to prevent any air being delivered through the floor.

*SIR PHILIP MAGNUS: Does the right hon. Gentleman consider it a disadvantage that fresh air should be received through the windows, rather than through the matting of the floor, over which scores of Members tread with dirt on their boots?

MR. HARCOURT: The fresh air admitted by the windows is received only by the exhaust fan in the ceiling, and not by Members on the floor.

SIR PHILIP MAGNUS rose to put a further Question.

*MR. SPEAKER: This can be raised on the Estimates.

Foot-and-Mouth Disease and Raw Hides.

MR. T. DAVIES (Fulham): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, what precautions are taken to prevent the introduction of foot-and-mouth disease through the importation into Great Britain of the meat, hides, and offal in a raw state of animals which have been landed and slaughtered at Continental ports, but which are prohibited by the Orders of the Board from being landed and slaughtered at the foreign animals wharves in Great Britain.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden; for Sir EDWARD STRACHEY): This subject has been frequently considered, but the adoption of precautionary measures in the cases of the articles in question has always been considered to be impracticable.

Disinfection of Cattle Steamers.

MR. T. DAVIES: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he will lay upon the Table a copy of the regulations of the Belgian Government with regard to the disinfection of the vessels employed in carrying to Antwerp for slaughter animals which are prohibited from landing in Great Britain, which vessels frequently proceed direct to British ports from Antwerp; and whether the Board of Agriculture are satisfied that the regulations and precautions of the Belgian Government afford a sufficient safeguard against the introduction of foot-and-mouth disease into this country through the landing of persons and cargo from possibly infected vessels.

MR. J. A. PEASE: We do not know whether the arrangements made by the Belgian Government with regard to the disinfection of vessels have been embodied in any formal regulations, but inquiry will be made on the subject. The fact that foot-and-mouth disease exists in Belgium and that animals from infected countries are imported into that country constitutes a certain element of danger so far as we are concerned. It would scarcely be practicable, however, to institute any further precautionary measures. The importation of animals from Belgium is prohibited, and the new Order with regard to foreign hay and straw extends to that country.

MR. T. DAVIES: Is the importation of hay from Algeria prohibited, and is there any foot-and-mouth disease in that country?

MR. J. A. PEASE: Yes, it is prohibited, but I am not sure if foot-and-mouth disease prevails there.

MR. T. DAVIES: Will the hon. Gentleman get information on that point?

MR. J. A. PEASE: If the hon. Gentleman will put a Question down I shall be glad to answer it.

MR. T. DAVIES: Why is the importation prohibited from Algeria?

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member had better give notice. This Question refers to Antwerp and not to Algeria.

Milk Blended Butter.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he can say whether the Board of Agriculture received a letter from the Scottish Provision Trade Association, dated 21st February, enclosing a leaflet of a certain firm in which milk-blended butter is described as a mixture of butter and milk, and stating that such a practice is contrary to the provisions of The Butter and Margarine Act, 1907; if so, whether it is the intention of the Board to allow this practice to continue; and if he can say whether the Board still approve of the firm of Pearks and Company advertising this article as Pearksown, and as being better than the best butter, and being only obtained at their stores.

MR. J. A. PEASE: The Board have received the letter to which the hon. Member refers. They have no reason to believe that any contravention of the law has taken place in respect of the article in question. The Act of last session regulates the name under which mixtures or blends of butter and milk are dealt with, and it also provides that they shall be delivered to the purchaser in a wrapper bearing an approved description of the article setting out the percentage of moisture or water contained in the article. But it does not interfere with the right of a vendor to advertise the article as he thinks fit provided that the general requirements of the law applicable to the sale of goods are not infringed.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: Is not this article described milk blended butter, and is not that contrary to the law?

MR. J. A. PEASE: That is merely a description of the article—of its constitution. The Board of Agriculture cannot interfere with that. It can only interfere with the name under which it is sold.

MR. BYLES: Is it a truthful description of the mixture?

MR. J. A. PEASE: It may be. But the public have full opportunity of knowing what they are buying. The vendors may not use the word "butter" in connection with the name of the article.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: But does the word "butter" appear in the description, and does not that tend to deceive the buyer?

MR. J. A. PEASE: It may occur in the description, but it does not in the name of the article.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: How are the public to discriminate?

[No Answer was returned.]

Scottish Milk Supplies.

MR. WATT: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will introduce some system of inspection which will enable the large towns of Scotland to inspect the farms from which their supplies come.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): I cannot give my hon. friend any assurance at present as to the attitude of the Government, but he is aware that a Bill dealing with this question has been introduced by a private Member, and it is hoped that some opportunity for discussion may arise which may help to mature it.

MR. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs): Will facilities be given for the discussion of that Bill?

MR. SINCLAIR: That Question should be addressed to the Prime Minister.

MR. GULLAND: Will the right hon. Gentleman use his influence in that direction?

MR. SINCLAIR: I will consider the point.

Dumbarton Drainage into the Leven.

MR. R. DUNCAN: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware that the local authority of the Burgh of Dumbarton are at present engaged carrying out into the bed of the stream of the River Leven the sewage pipes within their control, with the effect of intensifying the pollution of the stream with crude sewage; and is he prepared now to lay upon the Table the Report of his expert advisers, dated 22nd October, 1907.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am aware that the local authorities have extended certain sewerage outfalls to below low water mark as recommended by the expert advisers in the Report referred to by the hon. Member. The inspectors were of opinion that the burgh sewers on that part of the foreshore exposed at low water on the western side of the river between the passenger and railway bridges were causing a nuisance through not having been carried sufficiently into the stream so as to have their outlets at all times under water. The Local Government Board accordingly drew the local authority's attention to this matter, and were informed on the 24th ultimo that the sewerage outfalls had been extended, that this had the effect of removing the nuisance, and that the whole of the foreshores are now in a clean condition. The Report was laid before Parliament on the 19th February.

Outrage in the Moray Firth.

CAPTAIN WARING: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he can state the result of the inquiries into the outrage committed in the Moray Firth on the fishing boat, "Paramount" on the 9th February.

MR. SINCLAIR: The legal authorities in Scotland are considering this matter with a view to deciding what steps, if any, should be taken.

Barra.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, whether he is now in a position to say when the correspondence regarding Barra will be published.

MR. SINCLAIR: The Inverness-shire County Council have been good enough to furnish me with further Papers, which I propose to include with the Papers to be laid. I have intimated this to the county council in order that if the documents have not already been published their consent to publication may be given. Otherwise the Papers are quite ready.

Scottish Fire Brigades.

MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that in certain counties, notably in Stirlingshire, in which there are numerous scattered industrial centres, destructive fires are not infrequent, and that in these landward centres there is no regular organisation of fire brigades or fire-engine equipment, but only a haphazard system of volunteering which often proves inefficient; and whether, in view of the circumstances above stated, he can see his way to give facilities this session to one or other of the two private Bills entitled Local Government (Scotland) Bill, in which county councils are empowered to make a rate for the organisation and equipment of fire brigades and fire-engines, or, if not, whether he intends to introduce a Bill containing similar provisions.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am aware of the desires for some further facilities for the extinction of fires in country districts. The question whether either of the alternatives suggested by my hon. friend can be adopted is at present engaging my attention, but I am not as yet in a position to give any undertaking on behalf of the Government.

MR. YOUNGER (Ayr Burghs): Cannot clauses be introduced into the Local Government Bill to be brought in this session?

MR. SINCLAIR: Certainly.

Highland Deer Forests.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will consider the expediency of issuing a circular to deer forest proprietors in the Highland crofting counties, urging them to fence in their forests in such an effective manner as to prevent the deer from straying on to the adjoining lands and ravaging the crofters' crops thereon.

MR. SINCLAIR: The matter referred to by my hon. friend can only be dealt with by an amendment of the law, and without that I do not see my way now to take the steps suggested.

MR. WEIR: Although the right hon. Gentleman gave a promise last year nothing has been done.

MR. SINCLAIR: I gave no undertaking.

Sheep Runs on the West Coast of Lewis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he has received from the Crofters' and Cottars' Association, Carloway, Island of Lewis, a copy of a resolution passed at a recent meeting at Carloway, stating that, in view of a survey of the sheep farms at Dalbeg and Dalmore, and the Uig ranches, and sheep runs on the west coast of Lewis, the people consider that these lands are admirably suited for the formation of new holdings; and will he state whether the lands would be available in the event of the Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill now before Parliament becoming law.

MR. SINCLAIR: The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative; but until it passes into law, it is not possible to indicate more precisely than has hitherto been done, the powers which will fall to be exercised by the authorities established under the Bill.

Carloway Herring Fishery.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he has received from the Crofters' and Cottars' Association, Carloway, Island of Lewis, a copy of a resolution passed at a meeting at Carloway on 20th February urging that, in view of the disastrous effect of whaling on the herring-fishing industry, steps should be taken to suppress whaling on the West Coast of Scotland; and will he state what action he proposes to take in the matter.

MR. SINCLAIR: The resolution has been received, but no action is contemplated at present.

Scottish Whaling Stations.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland if he is aware of the decision with reference to the establishment of a whaling station at Burtonport, Ireland, and also the attitude of the Board of Trade towards an application for a whaling station at Arranmore; and, in view of the practically unanimous opinion in Shetland, and by the entire fishing population in Scotland, that the restrictions imposed by the Whaling Act will still preserve some of the worst features of the operations, if he will reconsider his position with reference to the proposed Amendment.

MR. SINCLAIR: I am generally aware of the information to which my hon. friend alludes, but I have nothing to add to my reply of 5th instant.

Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill.

MR. SMEATON: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether having regard to the fact that the Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill was read a second time in the House *nemine contradicente*, and having regard also to the fact that, as experience has proved elsewhere, tobacco cultivation on small holdings is highly remunerative, he will consent to add clauses in another place to the Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, authorising and encouraging, by the offer of gifts or loans of money, the cultivation of tobacco.

MR. SINCLAIR: I must ask my hon. friend to postpone this Question until Parliament has dealt with the Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill to which he refers.

Coercion Act Convictions in Ireland.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland whether he is aware that several persons in Ireland are disqualified for election to public bodies in Ireland under the Local Government Act, owing to the fact that they have been imprisoned with hard labour, under the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887; and whether he will take steps to remove this disqualification.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): Under the Local Government Act, 1898, and the Schedule to the application of Enactments Order of 22nd December, 1898, persons convicted either on indictment or summarily of any crime and sentenced to imprisonment with hard labour are disqualified for election to county or district councils in Ireland for a period of five years. The Government have no present intention of introducing any Bill to alter the law in this respect.

Carrickfergus Harbour Loan.

MR. J. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Treasury has received a memorial from the Carrickfergus, county Antrim, Urban District Council and the Carrickfergus Harbour Commissioners, praying the Treasury to grant a reduction of the balance due on the loan advanced to the Harbour Commissioners, or a reduction in the rate of interest charged on the loan; whether, in view of the special circumstances recited in the memorial, the prayer of the memorialists will be acceded to; and whether the use of the dredger of the Board of Works will be authorised for the purposes mentioned in the memorial.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury): I presume that the hon. Member refers to a memorial which was received by the Treasury in 1906, praying that the balance of the loan due to the Board of Works might be remitted. The Treasury were unable to accede to the petition and my predecessor announced this decision to the hon. and gallant Member for East Antrim, who was supporting the memoralists. No later memorial has been received. Since that time the Urban District Council of Carrickfergus has sold certain lands upon which this loan has been secured, and the proceeds of the sale are, I understand, to be applied to extinguishing an earlier loan from the Public Works Loan Commissioners and to reducing by a considerable amount the debt outstanding to the Board of Works. In this way the harbour revenues will become largely available for purposes of improvement of the harbour, and I see no reason for making the concession prayed for. As regards the Board of Works dredger, I understand that if the Harbour Commissioners apply to the Board of Works, the application will be considered along with others and on the same terms.

MR. J. MACVEAGH: Was not the memorial received by the Treasury last week?

MR. RUNCIMAN: No, Sir.

Ruin of Irish Cottage Industries by Imports.

MR. MOORE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he is aware that, owing to the importation of foreign work in the last few years from Japan, Germany, and Switzerland, Irish cottage industries, such as crochet and embroidery, are being steadily ruined; and what action, if any, he proposes to take.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: No doubt the industries referred to have, in common with many others, been detrimentally affected of late years by the competition of machine-made products, but I am not aware that such competition has been exclusively or even mainly from foreign countries. I have no power to interfere with the increasing use of more effective machinery in manufacturing processes.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the harm is done by the fact that machine-made goods are sold as hand-made?

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: If anything of that kind occurred the sellers would be liable to prosecution, I think.

The Children Bill.

MR. WEDGWOOD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will endeavour to arrange to take the Second Reading of the Children Bill at an early date.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): We hope to take the Second Reading of this Bill as soon as possible after the necessary financial business has been concluded this month, unless, as I indicated in my statement on Thursday last, it is found possible to take it to-morrow.

Hague Conference and Naval Policy.

SIR RANDAL CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I beg to ask the Prime Minister, if he will state whether the Government have done anything to give effect to the statement made by Sir Edward Fry, the chief British representative at the Hague Conference, on 18th August last year, viz.: The Government of Great Britain will be prepared to communicate annually to Powers which would pursue the same course the programme for the construction of new ships of war and the expenditure which this programme would entail. This exchange of information would facilitate an exchange of views between the Governments on the subject of the reductions which it might be possible to effect by mutual agreement. The British Government believes that in this way it might be possible to arrive at an understanding with regard to the expenditure which the States which should undertake to adopt this course would be justified in incorporating in their estimates; whether, in accordance with the terms and spirit of the offer made by Sir Edward Fry, any communications have passed between any of the Governments represented at the Conference; and, if none of the Powers have approached each other upon the subject, whether His Majesty's Government is prepared to take the initiative in opening up communications with naval Powers with a view to a common understanding in regard to armaments, especially the Powers whose reputed increase of armaments has led to uneasiness in the public mind.

MR. ASQUITH: I must refer my hon. friend to the Answer given by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs on the 13th ultimo to the hon. Member for King's Lynn. So far as we are aware no communications of the nature specified have passed between any Powers on the subject, but the offer of His Majesty's Government is known to all of them, and no useful purpose would be served by our initiating further action until some other Power intimates its willingness to receive and exchange any such communication.

MR. BOWLES (Lambeth, Norwood): Does this involve a proposal that our building programme and its cost should be communicated to foreign Powers before it is communicated to this House? If so, did the Government authorise such a proposal?

MR. ASQUITH: I think the language of Sir Edward Fry speaks for itself. If the hon. Gentleman wishes for further explanation he had better put down a Question.

The King's Tour.

MR. LEA: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether any Member of the Cabinet will accompany His Majesty on his present foreign tour, and be present when His Majesty interviews Foreign Sovereigns or Heads of States and their respective Ministers for Foreign Affairs.

The hon. Member, on rising to put the Question, said he wished to raise a matter of privilege.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member is not entitled to raise a question of privilege in the middle of the Questions, as it would prevent anybody else having a chance of asking Questions.

MR. ASQUITH: No Minister of the Crown has gone with the King to Biarritz, and I cannot say what arrangements will be made after His Majesty leaves Biarritz. But in any case I must refer the hon. Member to the Answer given on the 2nd May last year, on the constitutional practice in the matter, to which I have nothing to add.

Central Licensing Commission.

MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Members of the Central Licensing Commission under the Licensing Bill will hold office during pleasure or during good behaviour; and under what Vote in Committee of Supply will it be possible to criticise or call in question their acts or decisions.

MR. ASQUITH: The tenure will be during pleasure, subject to the duration of the time limit. The other point raised by the right hon. Gentleman is one of considerable importance, and, after consultation with my right hon. friend the Home Secretary, I have come to the conclusion that, in order that the proceedings of the Commission may be effectually kept under Parliamentary criticism and control, it will be desirable so far to modify Clauses 12 and 14 as to enact that the remuneration and expenses of the Commission shall be paid out of moneys provided by Parliament. The Secretary of State for the Home Department will remain as heretofore the Minister who will deal in Parliament with matters relating to the administration of the Licensing Laws.

The German Emperor and Lord Tweedmouth.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: We understand that the First Lord of the Admiralty in another place is going to make some further statement with regard to an incident which has been much talked about during the last few days. I rise to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, if that statement is going to embody any information which was not put by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in possession of the House on Friday last, he will on the present occasion supplement his then statement so as to give us all the information which is about to be given in another place.

The following Questions were on the Paper on the same subject.

Mr. H. C. LEA: To ask the Prime Minister whether the German Emperor has recently addressed a letter to the First Lord of the Admiralty, in which he attempts to influence in German interests the Minister responsible for the Naval Estimates of this Country; whether such a letter has been received; and, if so, whether it is authentic, and whether a reply to it has been dispatched; and, having in view the number of persons to whom this letter has been shown and the interest it has to the country at large that under the circumstance full publicity should be given to the matter, will he consent to lay the whole of the Correspondence upon the Table and explain fully the circumstances and facts connected with this proceeding.

Mr. RIDSDALE (Brighton): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether a letter has or letters have passed between H.I.M. the Emperor of Germany and the First Lord of the Admiralty dealing with matters of British naval policy; and, if so, whether, in view of the misconstruction to which such an incident is liable, he will make the correspondence public.

Colonel LOCKOOD (Essex, Epping): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, if his Majesty the German Emperor has recently addressed a letter to the First Lord of the Admiralty on the subject of British and German naval policy; and, as such a letter, if written, would refer to matters that have formed the subject of debate in the House of Commons, whether he will lay the letter before Parliment without delay.

Mr. ASQUITH: I think that is a most reasonable and proper request. In answering the right hon. Gentleman I shall answer also the Questions on the Paper. First of all, I would refer the hon. Members who put those Questions to the statement I made on Friday, to which I have nothing to add, and to which, so far as I know, my noble friend will add nothing, except this, that Lord Tweedmouth, immediately on receipt of the Emperor's letter and before replying to it, showed it to my right hon. friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who agreed with him that it had no official character and should be treated as a private communication. It is clearly out of the question to lay upon the Table private and personal correspondence.

Colonel LOCKWOOD: The only question I wish to put to the Chancellor of the Exchequer is if he considers that a communication on so highly important a question and between the German Emperor and the First Lord of the British Admiralty can possibly be looked upon after publication as in any way "private"?

Mr. ASQUITH: Yes, Sir; I do consider it so. I see nothing in that to modify or to qualify in any way the answer I have given.

Colonel LOCKWOOD: Will the Chancellor of the Exchequer give us an opportunity of discussing the conduct of the First Lord of the Admiralty in this matter?

[No Answer was returned.]

QUESTION OF PRIVILEGE.

Mr. LEA said he desired to raise a question of privilege. Last year, in order to draw the attention of the House to a departure from constitutional practice he put down a Question asking the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government adhered to the constitutional rule that in every interview between the Sovereign and a foreign Sovereign or Minister, relating to matters of State he should be accompanied by a Minister of the Crown responsible to Parliament. Neither the Question nor the Answer, however, appeared in *Hansard*, and being now referred to the Answer then given on 2nd May by the Foreign Secretary, he wished to ask how he could obtain the reply.

*Mr. SPEAKER said the matter was hardly one of privilege. The hon. Member was clearly out of time. He should have raised the Question last year. He was afraid he could not give the hon. Member any assistance. He was not responsible for what appeared in *Hansard*, but doubtless the Department would give the hon. Member a copy of the Answer referred to.

Mr. LEA: I did not know on 3rd May it was about to be left out.

*Mr. SPEAKER: And still less was I aware.

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Francis Edward Meehan, esquire, for the County of Leitrim (North Leitrim Division.)

STANDING COMMITTEES.

Ordered, That all Standing Committees have leave to print and circulate with the Votes the Minutes of their Proceedings and any amended Clauses of Bills committed to them.—(*Mr. Eugene Wason.*)

TOBACCO GROWING (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Reported, without Amendment, from the Standing Committee on Scottish Bills.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 84.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 84.]

Bill to be taken into consideration upon Friday, 26th June.

FATAL ACCIDENTS (DAMAGES) BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time To-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 145.]

NEW BILLS.

ELECTION OF ALDERMEN IN MUNICIPAL BOROUGHS BILL.

"To amend the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882, with respect to the right of Aldermen to vote in the Election of Aldermen," presented by Mr. Burns; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 146.]

LONDON PAVING EXPENSES BILL.

"To relieve places of religious worship from liability to contribute to the Expenses of Paving new streets in London," presented by Mr. Burns; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 147.]

SUPPLY [1ST ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1908-9.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That 128,000 officers, seamen, and boys be employed for the Sea and Coast Guard Services for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1909, including 18,463 Royal Marines."

*THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee) said that on the assumption that a general discussion would be permitted, he would proceed to answer some of the questions addressed to him, which were summed up in handy form by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition. The right hon. Gentleman's first question related to the effective strength of the Home Fleet. The allegation was that ships were brought home from foreign stations for extensive refit and then placed in the Home Fleet with nucleus crews, and as soon as the refit was completed the ships were again commissioned and returned to some other station. The strength of the Home Fleet was thus artificially inflated. The questions asked had involved a good deal of inquiry, and there was nobody, either inside the Admiralty or outside who knew the whole of the Navy Estimates. He had made full inquiries on a matter which did not concern his own Department. Ships in foreign stations were usually relieved a few months before their big refit was due. This big refit was due at the end of two or three commissions. He had found it impossible to get a certain answer to that question, but the most precise information he could get was that the big refit became due at the end of two or at the outside three commissions. Those ships were then placed in the Home Fleet with a nucleus crew of one-half full complement. When the dockyard was ready to take them in hand, and the extent of the refit necessary had been determined, the Admiralty decided whether the nucleus crew should be allowed to remain on board whilst the ship was in dockyard hands. That, it would be obvious, was purely a question of naval administration in which neither he nor any one of his civil colleagues could for a moment interfere. If it was likely to take more than five or six months the ship was usually paid off and placed under the control of the Admiral Superintendent with what was called a skeleton crew of thirty men. As long as a ship was under the control of the Admiral Superintendent she was not part of the Home Fleet. If the nucleus crew remained on board, the ship, of course, continued in commission, because a nucleus crew was a real crew, and a ship in commission must belong to some division. For disciplinary reasons, the ship remained under the command of the Admiral of the Home Fleet; but she was not regarded as ready for mobilisation until the repairs had been completed in the dockyard. For administrative reasons the dockyard authorities preferred the nucleus crew to remain on board during the refit. As compared with other fleets, the Home Fleet was at this disadvantage—that it might have to replace vessels withdrawn from other fleets owing to some unforeseen casualty. But these relief ships were never taken from the Nore Fleet or the Cruiser Squadron. Again it must not be supposed because a ship in one of the other fleets was relieved and went into the Home Fleet, and some months afterwards was taken in hand by the dockyard for a big refit, that in the interim she was not capable of carrying out ordinary fleet duties. The refit was not postponed until those duties were incapable of being performed any longer. Nor was it to be assumed that a ship coming for repair had been waiting in an inefficient condition. The programme of dockyard work was liable to some modifications owing to unforeseen casualties, but it was so arranged as to provide that every ship should be taken in hand as soon as she ceased to be fit. The Home Fleet really consisted of three entirely different elements. There was the first, the Nore Division; next, the nucleus crew divisions; and lastly, the special service vessels. The last were a reserve, and could not be described as anything else. The Nore Division was fully manned and fully equipped in all respects. It would shortly consist of twelve of the latest battleships and armoured cruisers. Any ships which did not answer this description would be replaced in a few months. The destroyer flotilla at the Nore was of the same character. This division was constantly ready for war. The nucleus crew divisions consisted of older ships, still efficient, and handicapped only by age and not by want of repair. For instance, the "Majestics" were just about to join these divisions. This fine squadron would have attached to it some nine modern armoured cruisers; the nucleus destroyer flotillas were of older type. These divisions could be ready, at the outside, in twenty-four hours. There was no justification for the aspersions made the other day by the hon. Member for Fareham. The number of vessels under repair on a given date was only 30 out of 208. The Home Fleet was a real fleet in being, and its officers and men had the same *esprit de corps* as the rest of the Navy. He had good reason to know that the campaign of calumny and disparagement which raged all last year had wounded them deeply. It was much to be regretted that the hon. Member had suggested the Home Fleet was a fraud and a fleet of lame ducks; because for the first time it gave some kind of ex-official sanction to these statements. He did not believe that his predecessor in office would have adopted this tone; and that was one more reason why he regretted the absence of Mr. Pretyman from the House. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition had asked for information as to the number of fast cruisers, torpedo-gunboats, and torpedo craft in home waters. The only vessels included in the following comparative table were, excepting submarines, vessels with a speed of 18 knots and over:—Cruisers (excluding armoured cruisers): Great Britain, 47; Germany, 25. Torpedo-gunboats: Great Britain, 14; Germany, 0. Torpedo-boat destroyers: Great Britain, 124 (of which 107 were under twelve years of age); Germany, 56. Torpedo-boats (ex-coastal torpedo-boat destroyers): Great Britain, 13; Germany, 10. Torpedo-boats (first class): Great Britain, 54; Germany, 47. Torpedo-boats (second class): Great Britain, nil; Germany, 27. Submarines:

Great Britain, 41; Germany, 1. The right hon. Gentleman had asked for information as to the expenditure on guns, ammunition, and torpedoes in the coming year compared with the provision two years ago. All three items showed a considerable reduction, and the explanation was that all three were dependent on the new shipbuilding in the period concerned. On 1st April, 1906, there were under construction sixteen armoured vessels, as compared with eleven on 1st April, 1908. Besides, the simplification and reduction in the number of types of guns involved a large diminution in the ammunition required. As to the torpedo item, a number of small vessels had to be brought into account, but the result would be the same. Mines were also included, and as to them, for a reason which the right hon. Gentleman would appreciate, no statement could be made. The reserve of torpedoes, like that of guns and ammunition, was fully maintained. The right hon. Gentleman had suggested that the present Estimates were not a fair average, and that succeeding years must show a great increase. The foundation of much criticism on this point was his statement made by way of warning to his hon. friends below the gangway that the automatic increases which had swelled the Votes this year were not going to end this year. As his warning of two years ago passed unheeded he thought it best to be explicit on this point. Of course this increase would have to be met somehow; but surely the right hon. Gentleman would never suggest that it was the duty of the Government to provide this year for the automatic increase of next year. When he warned his hon. friends that there would be further automatic increases of the same general character as those which would burden the Estimates of the coming year, he did not mean to imply that the Navy Estimates for the year following would show necessarily that amount of increase. There would, he hoped, be something to set off. It was unreasonable to expect him to give next year's Estimates now, and he could not do so, nor did he know when he would be able to do so, as it took some time to make a forecast. The Estimates they were now discussing were arrived at some time ago. But apart from the automatic increases, a great deal of the argument addressed to him the other day was founded on the assumption, first, that this year's programme was very small, and secondly, that the amount they were taking in the new Estimates to commence it was unusually small.

Mr. WYNDHAM (Dover) said the point he had made was that the usual allowance ought not to be taken under unusual circumstances. It was rather to be hoped that they were unusual circumstances.

*Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the point certainly was made, he did not remember by whom, that this was not only a small programme, but that the small amount taken made it a sham programme. He thought it worth while, therefore, to give the figures to the House, and in so doing he was giving more information as to the cost of the new programme than was usual at this stage. He would give the full information as to the new programme in terms of money as being more easily measured than in any other form. There was no doubt that the new programme was the crux of every year's Estimates, it was the one malleable and plastic part of the Estimates, and on the new programme in any given year depended ultimately in future years the total expenditure. More important than the Shipbuilding Vote, or than new construction, was that part of new construction provided for the first time in the existing Estimates, which he called the new programme. He hoped hon. Gentlemen would understand that he was referring not to the position of new construction to cover ships laid down this year, last year, and the year before; but he was dealing with that part of it which was announced for the first time in these Estimates. Measured in money, the new programme of the present year exceeded the new programme of last year by £825,000; it fell below the last new programme for which hon. Gentlemen opposite were responsible, and which was taken over by the present Government, by only £470,000. The provision they made this year rather exceeded the usual provision. It was all very well to say the circumstances were exceptional, but the regular rule was to lay down ships towards the end of the year. Ships must be laid down in some uniform way; but the provision made in any one year for the new programme of that year had been on the average 9·45 per cent. Their provision for 1908–1909 was 9·6 per cent. In the last Estimates for which the Opposition were responsible, those of 1906–1907, it was 7·8, and in 1901–1902, when a new programme calling for an expenditure of £10,500,000 was produced, the amount taken to commence the new programme was £537,850 or 5·1 per cent. He thought that was sufficient explanation of the new programme from the money point of view; but from the other point of view, of the types, substance, and contents of the new programme, he had a few words to say.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Before the right hon. Gentleman comes to that, may I remind him what our contention was on which we were anxious to have an answer, for his answer, it seems to me, does not really touch our position. We understand that in view of what is being done abroad there will have to be a great augmentation in the number of our most costly ships. The Shipbuilding Vote this year is lower than it has ever been, I believe, in the last ten years.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: New construction?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes. What we want to know is this. Considering that we have in front of us these immense obligations, to which the right hon. Gentleman made no reference, and which are not affected by what you are laying down this year, ought not the Government, if they wished to defer the building of new ships to meet the new necessities, at all events to have equalised Naval Estimates as between year and year, considering how much requires to be done at Rosyth and elsewhere?

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the point, then, was the equalisation of Estimates, according to the practice of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: In view of the obligations, to which the right hon. Gentleman has made no reference in his speech.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he was coming to that. He would give the variations in new programmes. In 1901–1902 the new programme was £10,500,000; it dropped the next year to £6,500,000; in 1903–1904 it rose to £12,000,000. Then it dropped next year to £7,600,000; rose in 1905–1906 to £9,900,000; and dropped next year to £8,200,000.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I was talking of the Navy Estimates as a whole.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the Navy Estimates as a whole depended on this Vote; they were automatic and consequential.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would give the total figures for new construction in the years he had mentioned.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he had not got them with him, but would give them to the right hon. Gentleman. But more important, as he had shown, than new construction, was the new programme. That was the real question.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: That is not my question.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that that was the real question. The right hon. Gentleman said that whatever the programme produced by the Government that was not enough, and that they should lay down more ships this year. After what had been said outside and inside the House on this subject, he thought he might be permitted to repeat himself. The real question always was the question of standard, and relative strength was the real *crux* of the question. He had said on behalf of the Admiralty that the Admiralty disclaimed any right or title to fix what the relative standard ought to be. That was not an Admiralty question at all, it was a question for the

Government, for the Cabinet, and, in the last resort, for Parliament.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: You speak for the Government.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the Admiralty had no authority of itself; but when the two-Power standard had been accepted and determined by both sides of the House, he claimed for the Admiralty the right to say whether a given standard, in this case the two-Power standard, was maintained or not; and he repeated, that in the opinion of the Admiralty, this new programme was amply sufficient to maintain the two-Power standard. The Admiralty said that the programme now proposed was adequate. At all events the new programme announced in the First Lord's Memorandum was in substance the same programme which he outlined to the House nine months ago. It had not been altered, certainly had not been reduced since that time. This was the old programme outlined in July last which had not been modified, except in details, and certainly it had not been reduced since that time.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis) asked what was the nature of the programme. They knew there was one "Dreadnought" and another armoured cruiser. Was the latter to be an "Invincible"?

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that was just the sort of question he could not answer. He did not know that anybody knew. One would be a "Dreadnought" and the other probably a large armoured cruiser, but types still wanted great consideration. No statement of this sort was usually asked for until they came to Vote 8, which came on towards the end of the Session, when the intentions of the Admiralty with regard to the whole of the programme were given. He begged hon. Members to allow them to pursue the ordinary course. The right hon. Member for Dover demanded increases; he had to tell him on behalf of the Admiralty that the Admiralty wanted no increase and thought the present provision adequate. There was often a certain advantage to be gained by waiting to see what the other side were doing. This advantage had been lost up to the present time. He was not going to raise controversies between the two Boards of Admiralty, but at all events the present Board did advise that the programme asked for was certain to maintain a two-Power standard, and the Government did not think it necessary to ask Parliament to supplement it. The hon. Member for Fareham had also asked him for some statement as to the comparative strength of Great Britain and Germany in battleships and destroyers. As to destroyers he had already given the figures. As to battleships he did not think he could add anything to the statement he had already made, except on one point. Briefly put, it amounted to this—that with regard to battleships of what might be called the pre-"Dreadnought" type, this country was in a position of undoubted superiority. That was the statement already made by him on the authority of the Board of Admiralty. With regard to the newer ships of the "Dreadnought" type, the position in the autumn of 1910 would be this: Great Britain, nine battleships and three cruisers; France, two battleships and no cruisers; Germany, four battleships and two cruisers. But, to be perfectly frank, he should say there were certain possible accelerations—only possible, but possible—which might affect the result at the end of 1910. Germany might have seven battleships and three cruisers completed. This would leave France and Germany combined with a total of twelve battleships as against twelve British battleships. In these he included the "Lord Nelson" and the "Agamemnon" which were still uncommissioned. That, he was advised, was the very worst that could happen. He took no account of the two new ships of 1908–1909. These new ships would be ready for completion as soon as, if not sooner than, the additional German ships. So the result would be that in the early part of 1911, Germany and France would have twelve ships as against Great Britain's fourteen. If that was not satisfactory he did not know what was, and he should despair of bringing conviction to the mind of anybody who doubted it.

There was another point in regard to stores as to which information had been asked by the hon. Member for Fareham and the right hon. the Member for East Worcestershire. It was said that in the last three years of the late Government the average annual outlay for new stores was £3,700,000, and the annual average issue of stores was £3,600,000; and that during the three sets of Navy Estimates of the present Government the average purchases of new stores had been £2,350,000, and the average issue £2,600,000. This showed that the issue had been more than the Estimates in the last case, and less than the Estimates in the former case. It also showed a drop of £1,000,000 per annum in the issue of stores to ships. He had to admit that these figures were accurate, and make the best explanation he could. They related only to naval stores provided for under Vote 8, Section II, and were evidently abstracted from the stock statement printed in the Estimates at the end of the shipbuilding programme. But he had nothing sensational to say in explanation of them. The simple explanation was that a change had been made in the form of the Estimates. Since 1905–1906 the provision for armour for dockyard built ships had been made under Vote 8, Section III. Sub-head D., and that accounted for the difference of £1,000,000.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: Is there a note to that effect in the Estimates?

*Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I cannot say.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: It would be a great convenience to be able to compare one item in the year with the same item in another year; but if the plan is now wholly different that would be impossible.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Yes, but the note ought to have been inserted at the time the change was made. If there was anything wrong about the change it was made in October, 1905, by the then Board of Admiralty, of which the hon. Member for Fareham was a member, and communicated to the Treasury in November. Whether or not a note was made in the Estimates at the time he could not say. Abating the amounts taken for such armour in Vote 8, Section II., for the years of 1903 to 1904–1905 the average for those years become, payments £2,644,206 and issues £2,560,578, as against £2,358,467 payments and £2,630,037 issues for the three years 1906–1907 to 1908–1909. The fact that during the three years ending 31st March, 1909, the issues would exceed the payments was due to the utilisation without replacement of surplus stores returned from closed establishments and ineffective ships. The Government were living on a redundancy of stores which had accumulated owing to the concentration of the Fleet and the closing of certain naval establishments abroad, these accumulations being due to their predecessors. If allowance was made for this from 1905–1906 inclusive by adding to the payments the value of stores available for issue without replacement the comparison would be as follows: 1903–1904 to 1905–1906 payments, etc. £2,723,637, issues £2,560,578; and 1906–1907, to 1908–1909, payments £2,789,134, and issues £2,630,037. It had also been said that the Estimates involved a new construction Vote of £8,000,000 without a single new ship being laid down. That was a speculative calculation. He had had the exact figure worked out and the result showed that if no new ship was laid down the Vote would only be £7,182,000.

*Mr. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham) said the right hon. Gentleman had prefaced his remarks by delivering a carefully prepared attack upon himself for the remarks which he had made in the course of the debate on Tuesday last, and was kind enough to couple with that some advice as to his Parliamentary deportment, contrasting it with the manner in which his late colleague Mr. Pretyman had discharged his duties when he was in the House. He entirely shared the right hon. Gentleman's enthusiastic opinion of the abilities of his late colleague, but there was one point of difference between the position in which Mr. Pretyman used to find himself and the position in which he now found himself, and that was that when his late colleague was last in this House he was in office and the right hon. Gentleman was in opposition. If Mr. Pretyman had been in opposition while the right hon. Gentleman was in office he thought he would have found occasion to criticise the right hon. Gentleman and the naval policy of the Government perhaps in a more graceful manner, but with equal strength to that in which he had felt it necessary to indulge. The right hon. Gentleman had tried to confuse the issue and to arouse the sympathy of the House in a wrong direction by treating his speech as an attack on the officers and men who were now serving in the Home Fleet. If the right hon. Gentleman would take the trouble to read the remarks which he had made on Tuesday, he would see that he had gone out of his way to say that the state of affairs he had described in the Home Fleet, however the Admiralty might be to blame for it, reflected the utmost credit on the officers and men of the Home Fleet. Judging from communications he had received, he did not believe for a moment that the officers of the Fleet resented in any way, as far as they were concerned, the remarks which he had felt it his duty to make. But after all, the only serious point was the right hon. Gentleman's attempt to refute what he had put forward. What did the right hon. Gentleman's answer amount to? It amounted to an absolute endorsement of his statement with regard to the composition and condition of the Home Fleet. The right hon. Gentleman, going into much greater detail than he had ventured to do, had explained the matter quite clearly. He himself had particularly excluded the Nore Division; and the right hon. Gentleman had just explained that the other divisions of the Home Fleet did in fact consist, partially, at any rate, of ships sent home from other fleets, because they were about due for a large refit. If the refit took a period exceeding five or six months, the right hon. Gentleman said that they were taken off the strength of the Home Fleet, but if the refit occupied a period of less than five or six months they remained on the strength of the Home Fleet during that time. That was exactly the statement he himself had made. The further statement which he had made was that on the completion of the refit, if it lasted less than five or six months, those vessels went back to the sea-going fleets. That also had been corroborated by the right hon. Gentleman. He really did not know why the right hon. Gentleman should call his statement of the fact an "allegation"; it was a plain fact, and one which the right hon. Gentleman had admitted and explained most clearly to the House. He had also said that he had no objection to the policy of the Admiralty in dealing with those ships that came back from foreign fleets; but what he did object to was the showing of these ships in the Navy List as forming part of the strength of the Home Fleet, and, therefore, naturally supposed by the taxpayers of this country to be ready for war. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the ships not undergoing refit could be ready in twenty-four hours, but in the case of the Portsmouth Division, the ships which were thus undergoing refit were, at the time of his visit in January, two-thirds of the battleship strength, and they could not possibly be ready in less than two or three months. His objection was to the inclusion of these ships in the strength of the Home Fleet, as shown in the Navy List. Really, when the right hon. Gentleman saw fit to lecture him upon the propriety of his language in that House he would like to say that there were some things, particularly in the mouths of officials of the Admiralty, which were more important even than choice of language, and one of these was accuracy of statement. The Civil Lord of the Admiralty had denied the statement which he had made with regard to the situation and readiness of the battleships of the Nore Division. He had asserted that of the six ships which formed the battleship division at the Nore, there were on the occasion of his visit there, on 27th December, only three battleships, while the other three were in the dockyard hands at Chatham. He had also stated that when the Nore Division proceeded to sea on 9th March, only three battleships would be ready to go out with the Fleet. A fourth was, indeed, to be brought round from Devonport, but the other three were to be left behind.

The hon. Gentleman had denied his statement and said there were no less than five of these battleships at the Nore on 3rd March, and gave their names.

*THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. LAMBERT, South Molton): I gave the names of the ships that were at the Nore at the time I spoke. I had the information from officials of the Admiralty, and I gave it in reply to the hon. Gentleman.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said he was unfortunately not able to accept the hon. Gentleman's information as accurate. He had taken steps to ascertain whether it was accurate or not, and he found that, two days after the hon. Gentleman had spoken, the ships which he had mentioned were in Chatham Dockyard, and he presumed it was not suggested that they had gone to the Nore in the interval and come back again. At any rate on the 5th, the ships he had mentioned, the "London," the "Magnificent" and the "Victorious," were still in the dockyard, and would be unable to go with the Nore Division on 9th March.

*MR. LAMBERT: I said there were at the Nore five battleships, eight cruisers, and twenty-four torpedo destroyers, ready for instant emergency. That is a fact.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said the hon. Gentleman had certainly given him the names of the ships, but he had ascertained that they were not at the Nore but in Chatham Dockyard two days after the hon. Gentleman had spoken. After all, the point was not one of supreme importance; but when the right hon. Gentleman undertook to lecture him upon the remarks he had made in that House, and upon Parliamentary decorum, perhaps he would allow him to suggest that accuracy in the mouths of officials was even more important than urbanity. He wished now to deal with one or two points which the right hon. Gentleman had raised that afternoon. One point hadregard to the reserve of ammunition and guns. He was aware that these were confidential matters, and he did not wish to press for details. He wished, however, to ask whether the standard of reserve of guns and ammunition in existence during the period of the late Administration was still in existence to-day. He was glad to gather from the right hon. Gentleman's assent that that was so. The right hon. Gentleman had said a good deal about the new programme of construction, and had given figures which went to show that the amount of money provided for new shipbuilding was about the average. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the First Lord in his statement had pointed out that it was the smallest for the last ten years.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the total provision for new construction, meaning thereby for new building, which was begun last year, the year before, and the year before that, was the lowest on record for ten years. That was true. The demand which would be laid upon next year in respect of the total cost of the building programme would be rather above than below the average.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said the point he wished to make was this. The Secretary to the Admiralty spoke of the average but the Leader of the Opposition had pointed out that the circumstances were exceptional. But in addition to that there was the pledge which the right hon. Gentleman had given, he thought it was last year, when he pointed out that the shipbuilding programme was being put off unusually late as an inducement to the Hague Conference.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I do not remember that.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said he had the right hon. Gentleman's speech with him, and in it he said—

> "The amount to be taken for new vessels laid down in 1907–1908 is to be limited to a small sum, and they are not to be commenced until a late period of the year in order to emphasise to the Hague Conference the good faith of the British Government in its desire for a reduction of armaments."

He thought it might be inferred from this that as far as this year's programme was concerned the Government were bound to forestall rather than to postpone their programme, as they had done in the present Estimates. He might also observe that although the total of £770,000 which they had provided was possibly the average, £100,000 of it was taken up by the construction of tugs and lighters, which did not materially add to the fighting strength of the Navy. In addition, the amounts provided for two classes of small ships, of which he believed we were particularly short—small cruisers and destroyers—were certainly abnormally low. Those vessels would practically be postponed out of the next financial year altogether. The right hon. Gentleman had not explained that point. As regarded the gunnery of the Fleet, there had been recently a number of attacks made in the Press against the methods of gunnery now practised in the Navy. He could not but feel that these attacks had been captious and to some extent unfair, and that they ignored the undeniable and enormous improvement that had been made in recent years in the gunnery of the Fleet. He thought it would be a good thing if the right hon. Gentleman would give some assurances and explanations under that head, in view of the fact that there appeared to be a widespread feeling that something was wrong, though personally he believed that excellent progress had been made. Of course, no one suggested that the Navy in this matter had reached perfection. They must learn to walk before they could run; but he thought when the critics said that the results were illusory because the actual conditions of warfare were not reproduced, they were asking a little more than human nature could possibly perform in times of peace. No doubt it would be very interesting if ships could be shot back at during practice, and he saw that one critic said the Navy should have night practice at rapidly moving and indistinct objects such as torpedo destroyers. He had served as a range officer during artillery practice, and he could fully sympathise with the view of the Admiralty that it was not possible to reproduce these conditions of warfare without incurring the greatest risk to officers and men of the Fleet. It occurred to some of them that there had been a little too much advertisement of the results of the gunnery of the Fleet. Whilst it was necessary to have a certain amount of advertisement in order to excite emulation, they might excite emulation to such a point that there would be a disinclination to reproduce, even as far as possible, war conditions when carrying out these practices.

Some years ago he remembered there was a very distinguished officer in command of one of our fleets who was attacked hotly in the Press because the ships of his fleet had not achieved quite such high results as some others, whereas the facts were that he had carried out his practice under more like service conditions, using the guns in a heavy seaway, and yet under the system, by which the results were so extensively advertised, he incurred at any rate a popular censure which he did not deserve. Moreover, by this advertising the results of our shooting, we excited the emulation of foreign navies as well as our own, and he did not think that necessary or desirable. The question of oil fuel was very important in view of the increasing dependence of the new types of ship upon this variety of fuel. There were negotiations pending before he left the Admiralty, and he wished to ask whether everything possible was being done to ensure the securing of a sufficient supply of oil fuel within the British Empire, to which he attached the greatest importance. He hoped the negotiations in this matter were now nearing a successful issue. It was stated in the First Lord's Memorandum that the Cunard subsidies had now been earned. Could the Secretary to the Admiralty tell them if the "Mauritania" and "Lusitania" had yet come up to the full conditions of sea speed, and so forth, upon which alone that subsidy was to be paid? There had been no record of it as far as he was aware. He was glad to see that there was an increased provision for repairs this year. He noticed that certain ships, particularly the "Terrible," "Niobe," and "Diadem" were put down for large repairs. Had it been fully considered whether these ships were worth the large amounts which it was proposed to spend upon them, they being largely unprotected and having very little offensive capacity? The right hon. Gentleman had made some interesting speculations with regard to foreign shipbuilding programmes, and had said that if certain accelerations took place there would be an increased number of battleships in commission in Germany at the end of 1910. Had he reliable information with regard to the question of comparative speed of building in different countries? There had been many statements and counter-statements in the Press. They had seen statements by the Prussian Minister of Marine to the effect that they were now able to build as quickly in Germany as in this country. They had seen in the last few days the first German "Dreadnought" launched, and due to be completed in much less time than was anticipated. Had the right hon. Gentleman any reason to believe that now, and in the future, German ships of this class could not be completed within the two years which was now set down as the normal period for the construction of our ships of the "Dreadnought" class? If the German period of construction was not greater than two years the right hon. Gentleman must revise his figures with regard to the programme of 1908–1909, because German ships were as a rule laid down in June or July, and, therefore, if the period of building did not exceed two years, the four great armoured ships which were to be laid down in Germany in 1908–09 would be ready before the end of 1911. In that event the Germans would actually have thirteen "Dreadnoughts" and "Invincibles" to our twelve in the autumn of 1911—a sufficiently alarming contingency. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give them some assurance that they would not have to face the increased strength on the date he had mentioned.

*MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis) said he would like to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty why, seeing that £200,000 had been spent on refrigerating machinery, a Supplementary Vote had not been introduced? Last year an additional £200,000 had been spent on armour, and the Government brought in Supplementary Estimates for it. The right hon. Gentleman had said that this new item could not possibly have been foreseen, but seeing that the Dutch Navy had had refrigerating machinery for magazines for over ten years, and that Germany had had it for all magazines for all ships for seven years, the Admiralty might very well have foreseen the necessity of it. There was another point which had arisen in the debate last week. The Leader of the Opposition had once asked a question in reference to a statement he (Mr. Bellairs) had made that, at a particular period of December 1906, the Germans had ready in full commission in the North Sea more destroyers than this country. That statement, in spite of what the Admiralty had to say, he maintained was accurate. The Admiralty had never met the matter on the floor of the House, but had sent paragraphs to certain newspapers stating that there were forty-five British and thirty-three German destroyers in full commission in that period. Fifteen of the British destroyers were at Devonport and if they had entered the North Sea would have had to coal again. Nine were instructional craft attached to the torpedo and gunnery ships, notoriously unfit for blockade work in the North Sea. Finally, the Admiralty included in the forty-five, nine destroyers which were under repair—in full commission, but not available. We had, therefore, a less number than the Germans. It was a small point and only affected the accuracy of answers given in that House. He had been told by many officers that at the time the Admiralty stated that all the destroyers were ready in July last year, there were no fewer, according to the list compiled in the Home Fleet, than 45 per cent. awaiting repairs, and that the Admiralty now recognised the necessity of carrying out repairs promptly could be seen by the First Lord's Memorandum. He found that in 1905 the Admiralty only put two destroyers down for repair. In 1906 they only put one down. In 1907 the number shot up to fourteen and this year it had gone up to twenty-four, showing that the Admiralty now acknowledged that their contentions in regard to the necessity for carrying out repairs to these small craft were right. The right hon. Gentleman, however, had not dealt with the central point of their contentions. We were now building destroyers against a different nation altogether from that against which we built a few years ago. We built our destroyers then for war with France. We now built them for the possibility of war with Germany, and the two things were not at all on the same footing. In the case of a blockade of French Channel ports, we had the Channel Islands as a convenient base close to the French coast. In the case of a blockade of the Elbe, our destroyers had to steam the whole distance, and with these sixteen destroyers we were laying down this year there were only sixty-three available for that sort of work as against eighty-four for Germany. The forty 27-knot destroyers were acknowledged to be obsolete. Then there were sixty-eight 30-knot destroyers which it had been proved by actual trials could in fine weather steam to the mouth of the Elbe, would have enough coal to remain there for one day, and then would have to steam back to coal again, there being no island in the vicinity belonging to us available for coaling. We had therefore sixty-three, including the sixteen we were going to lay down, and Germany had eighty-four, including the twelve she was going to lay down. He excluded one destroyer that we captured from the Chinese and one that the Germans captured from the Chinese. Two days would be consumed in conflict, two days in going backwards and forwards and two days resting of crews and necessary repairs. This country had only sixty-three destroyers to oppose eighty-four possessed by Germany, and it was quite clear that the British Navy had not the necessary number of destroyers. He noticed that this year the building of the destroyers was being deferred until the end of the year. During the last seven years the British Admiralty only laid down fifty-three destroyers to Germany's sixty, when they ought to be building at the rate of two to one. Our destroyers, it should be remembered, were not in the same position as German destroyers which would be waiting to strike with crews on board whilst our destroyers would have to maintain themselves outside the German ports. They all knew what happened in the South African War, when it was estimated that if we provided an equal number of soldiers to the Boers it would be ample; but that calculation turned out fallacious. The same applied to destroyers, of which we wanted a large margin. This year the Admiralty were taking £835,000 for repairs, which was the largest amount since 1903–1904. They brought the Fleet to an efficient state by the year 1903–1904 but since then they had been living on those repairs. Even on 6th December Lord Tweedmouth said the ships were kept constantly in repair. If so, what was the necessity for this huge increase? On a former occasion he contended that the Admiralty were not building enough cruisers and that they were wrong. Now they were going to build six. He also asked the right hon. Gentleman what type of armoured cruiser was going to be laid down. The Secretary to the Admiralty knew what was going to be spent upon them and surely he must be aware of the type of vessel. He might add that a newspaper correspondent, who was very much favoured by the Admiralty and connected with the *Daily Telegraph*, told them on 5th February the exact type of the new cruiser. He said that she was to be a good deal smaller than the "Invincible" and would therefore cost much less to maintain. That was written by a favoured journalist to whom the Admiralty habitually handed over their information. They now knew through this favoured journalist that the new cruiser was not to be of the "Invincible" type, and would not be fit to lie in the line of battle. The British Admiralty were building only one large armoured ship in the year, if this gentleman was right as he had been hitherto, whilst Germany was laying down four. The right, hon. Gentleman, a few days ago, stated that there was not one single armoured ship of the 1904 programme yet in commission. In the autumn of 1903, when the late Government formed their 1904 programme, they had therefore to consider the situation which would arise at the middle of 1908, and in their 1903 programme, framed in the autumn of 1902, they had had actually to safeguard the country right up to the present moment, when some of the ships of the 1904 programme were about to be commissioned. Now they had a plan of building two years from the date they were laid down. It should not be overlooked that the 1908 programme would have to safeguard the position of this country until they completed the 1909 programme. If we followed our hitherto invariable practice, the 1909 programme would be laid down in the period November, 1909, to March, 1910, and would, therefore, at our very best estimates of building, not be available until November, 1911, to March, 1912. Adopting the same speed of building which the Secretary to the Admiralty adopted in his calculations to the end of 1910, it was perfectly certain that Germany would have nine ships of the "Dreadnought" and "Invincible" class in commission by 1911, and she might have thirteen. To meet this certain nine or this possible thirteen which Germany would have on the completion of her 1908 programme this country would have eleven if the *Daily Telegraph* was right as to the armoured cruiser, or twelve if she turned out to be an improved "Invincible." Those figures were incontrovertible. It was absolutely certain they would either have to introduce a large supplementary programme this year or else arrange a large early programme for 1909. Large programmes disarranged the finances and industries, and they had generally to be put out at high prices. He knew the Admiralty were getting their "Dreadnoughts" cheaper this year, and the "Vanguard" had just been contracted for at the Vickers establishment 10 per cent. cheaper. Supposing next year that prices rose 10 per cent. which might easily be the case seeing how much bigger the new "Dreadnoughts" were. The effect of that would be that in each ship of the "Dreadnought" type, they would have to pay one-fifth more than if they had ordered an extra "Dreadnought" or two this year. That was why he urged the Government to go in for regular programmes instead of these great jumps. The Secretary to the Admiralty had told them that this programme was settled in substance six months ago, or, in other words, before the German Navy Bill and before the German Estimates revealed more rapid building, and showed that the "Nassau" laid down on 22nd July 1907 was launched on the 7th of the following March without resorting to any overtime. Therefore we had no advantage whatever over Germany in rapidity of building. The figures given in the German Navy Bill for the average since 1900 showed that we had a slight advantage of one-tenth of a month over Germany in battleships, but in armoured cruisers, we were 5·8 months to the bad. The Government gave them an assurance last May that they would maintain our relative naval strength, but he had not been able to discover that they had done so. What had they done up to now? Between 1886 and 1895 Great Britain launched twenty-five battleships to Germany's four, or a proportion of six to one. Between 1896 and 1900 Great Britain launched sixteen battleships and Germany six, or three to one. Then came the great change made by the German Navy Bill of 1900, and during the late Government's term of office Great Britain launched twenty-four battleships and Germany fourteen, or two to one. The present Government since taking office had provided seven battleships of the "Dreadnought" and the "Invincible" class to Germany's nine. That constituted an enormous change, and the relative position of this country must go back under those circumstances, The special reason given for reconstructing the British Fleet before 1900 was the muzzle-loading gun ship and there was a special reason for building armoured ships now. They would not find a single ship in the French or German Navy which had unarmoured ends or ships with no armour at the water line at the bow or stern. These ships with unarmoured ends even built at a time when telescopic sights were not used and shell fire was not nearly so destructive, and thus it came about that, in Lord Tweedmouth's list issued last year, of thirty-nine of the most efficient British battleships there were fifteen with half their water line unarmoured. Everything was different now, and at 6,000 yards it was quite easy to riddle the unarmoured ends of British ships, and there were no less than fifteen battleships in the British Navy of this type. The effect of a big shell on the unarmoured end of one of these vessels was to tear a hole about 10 feet square. Probably the Admiralty would eventually take one of these ships and as an experiment fire at her with 6-inch guns and she would sink, and then they would probably accept that as a reason for striking the lot out. They had got their inefficient 12-inch guns which could not go half-way through an action. If they were good ships we should immediately re-arm them, but it was not worth while to reconstruct any ship that had unarmoured ends; that was to say "soft ends." The Cawdor Memorandum issued by the late Government referred to the unarmoured ends of battleships as vulnerable to second class cruisers. He had noticed that in the comparison of battleships there had been a great number of classifications based on tonnage. Lord Eversley classed as first class every ship of 14,000 tons, and in that way he proved that our position was overwhelming. If that were to be taken as the test, he could go back a few years and prove that there was only one navy in the world and that was the British. In 1900, for example, Great Britain possessed thirty battleships built and building of over 14,000 tons, and no other Power possessed one. But ships could not be classified in that way, for it should be remembered that our ships carried more stores and more coal, and these were included in the 14,000 tons. He desired the right hon. Gentleman to direct his attention particularly to the continual comparisons which were being made between the "Dreadnought" and the ships of foreign nations. The truth of the matter was that we were the only nation in the world which had been building "Dreadnoughts. "Dreadnought" was the name applied to ships which carried big guns only. There was not another nation in the world building ships to carry big guns only. The Germans equipped these big ships with a quick-firing battery of 6·7 guns in addition to the heavy guns and these small guns could be fired very much faster than 12-inch guns. He noticed that the Secretary to the Admiralty classed the "Lord Nelsons" as "Dreadnoughts," but he would point out that they were not of the same type. The "Lord Nelsons" were equipped with ten 9·2 guns in addition to four 12-inch guns, whereas the "Dreadnought" had ten 12-inch guns and nothing else. In looking over the Report of the annual practice of the Fleet he found that the 9·2-inch guns poured in five times as many hits as the 12-inch guns. That was an immense advantage. He shared the views of the hon. members who had criticised the policy of building "Dreadnoughts." He believed it was the view of the Leader of the Opposition in 1906 that it was a mistake to have commenced them. We had great superiority in the previous type of battleships. The "Lord Nelson" was superior, and it attracted no attention whatever. When we built the "Dreadnought" we said that it made the battleships of all the other Fleets of the world obsolete; we advertised it for all it was worth, and we so alarmed all the other nations of the world that there had been a deplorable race of armaments ever since. As to dock accommodation, there were few docks that would take in the "Dreadnought," but there were seven additional docks in the United Kingdom which would take in ships of the "Lord Nelson" type. The "Dreadnought" was largely an untried ship. She had been tried as to the capacity of her engines by being sent to the West Indies and the Mediterranean, but she had never been manœuvred with battleships of her class. He wished to emphasise a point with respect to the utility of small guns in certain circumstances as compared with big guns. At the battle of Tsushima, which was won by the Japanese, they had a superiority of smaller guns while the Russians had a decided advantage in big guns. He did not say that the result would not in any case have been the same owing to the superiority of the Japanese *personnel*, but the fact remained that the victors had a preponderance of small guns. It had been stated in the Press, and the statement had been confirmed to him by an important official, that the German 11-inch gun was superior in ballistics to our 12-inch gun. He knew that was so in respect of muzzle velocity. The Germans had had the advantage of considering our designs and they had gone one better. Taking the eleven "Dreadnoughts" and "Invincibles," which we had so far provided, it would be found that the British ships carried 106 heavy guns, while the nine German ships carried 104. If the new cruiser was an "Invincible" we must add eight to the British total, but he assumed she was not. That was a heavy gain of armament in the nine German ships built, or about to be built. But the

Germans, as was generally known, had twice the heavy gun reserve we had, so that after a naval action their ships could go into port and be re-armed with better effect than ours. The Germans, in addition, had over 106 6·7 guns which could be fired with great rapidity, and these would be disconcerting to the men on the British ships on which we had no small guns to reply to them. They would be able to rain a hail of projectiles on our ships, and probably to disarm some of our heavy guns by hits on the muzzle, while disorganizing their fire-control arrangements. He thought the idea of having big guns only was wholly wrong. The "Dreadnought" with her large guns was not capable of stopping the attack of torpedo craft. As to cruisers, which were for the purpose of defending our commerce against the attacks of small craft, they were also used as scouts and acting as the eyes of the Fleet. They fulfilled that office when acting as links between battleships and destroyers. We must have a superiority of cruisers in order to back up the destroyers. The right hon. Gentleman had given the House certain statistics as to the 18-knot cruisers. Everybody knew that speed efficiency in modern cruisers was not a matter of 18 knots but of 24 and 25 knots. The Germans had nineteen fast cruisers, with a speed of 22 to 25 knots, whereas we had only six of older date. These were unarmoured cruisers, and now we were about to add one "Boadicea" and to lay down six more. He understood that the armament of the "Boadicea" was only six 4-inch guns. If so, our cruisers would be unfit to stand against the German armoured cruisers, which were being built at the rate of two a year, and which had ten 4·1 guns. Even in the scare years of 1884, 1889, and 1893, we had had a great preponderance of fast unarmoured cruisers. In 1906 the Admiralty organised manœuvres for the defence of trade, and gave the British preponderance as nearly four to one in unarmoured cruisers, and, in saying so, they said they were putting conditions at their worst. He left it to the Admiralty to reconcile that statement with the facts of the case. No Admiral would in time of war be willing to spare armoured cruisers to do the work of unarmoured cruisers. In the manœuvres last year the Admiral of one Fleet not having unarmoured cruisers detached armoured cruisers to do scouting work, and they were captured by the enemy. The contention of the Admiralty was that wireless telegraphy had lessened the necessity for a large supply of cruisers, but he did not think that was true. The only thing that wireless telegraphy did was to enable them to keep the Fleet further off, but it did not lessen the number of eyes required. Their eyes only covered a given distance and they were in exactly the same position now in regard to sighting the enemy as they were before the invention of wireless telegraphy.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.) said there had been for some time a serious complaint as to the position and prospects of the Navy medical service. He urged that there should be some revision of the pay of the members of that service with the view of attracting the higher graduates of the medical schools of the country. Another more immediate point was the necessity for giving Navy medical officers when on leave encouragement and help to study and take courses in hospitals on shore in surgery and public health. We were rather lacking in that respect, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give the Committee some assurance in regard to meeting this growing want. Then, as regarded the coastguard, he was glad to think that wiser counsels had prevailed and that the question of the proposed abolition of that body was at any rate in abeyance. But there was some lingering doubt in regard to the matter from the statement of the Secretary to the Admiralty that there was to be a still further reduction of what were called redundant stations. He did not see that there were many redundant stations, and he would like to get at what the right hon. Gentleman meant by that phrase. Last July six to eight stations had been abolished, and they were led to believe that since then three more stations had been closed. He wanted to know what further reductions was actually contemplated and were any of them rocket-stations? If so, what provision was to be made for working the rocket apparatus? On the general question he agreed broadly with the position which the right hon. Gentleman had stated, subject to certain reservations. He referred to the pre-"Dreadnought" period. In the first place it was hardly fair from the point of view of experts and cost that the "Lord Nelson" and "Agamemnon" should be placed on all-fours with battleships. In the second place, they could not count the "Invincible" class in two ways—sometimes as equivalent to battleships and sometimes as first-class cruisers. In the third place, the right hon. Gentleman had said in regard to the Home Fleet—he did not refer to the Nore Fleet—that it was in instant readiness for sea service. The excuse the right hon. Gentleman made was, no doubt, very accurate—viz., that when ships came in for refit, nucleus crews would be kept on board while refitting was going on, if they were in commission. But if the ships were in commission, they had to be attached to some fleet and that was the Reserve Fleet. Therefore, when those ships were refitting it could not be said that they were in readiness for war. The same thing applied in a lesser degree, but still applied, to the case of ships with nucleus crews. It was all very well for the right hon. Gentleman to say that these vessels would be ready to go to sea within twenty-four hours, but it could not be alleged seriously that a ship with a nucleus crew could go to sea as an effective fighting force ready for war in relation to other vessels which were in continuous commission. As to battleships and cruisers, it was not only in regard to readiness in time of war that cruisers were required. The Committee should remember—as had been pointed out by the hon. Member for King's Lynn—that no Admiral would risk the employment of those large and valuable cruisers on ordinary cruiser service, not only in time of war, but in time of peace, in the outer parts of the Empire. He urged the point as to the importance of showing the flag in our distant possessions, because he did not know whether there was any likelihood of an immediate fulfilment of half hopes held out last year in regard to the matter. Members who had lived in the outer dominions of His Majesty beyond the seas, as he had, or had visited them, knew the deep feeling, not wholly sentimental, which existed; therefore some such provision as this should be made. He fully recognised that it was more difficult, as the result of the policy of concentration, than it used to be for diplomatic and other reasons to show the flag. From the point of view of the Admiralty in case of emergency or the outbreak of war, they could not afford to have large ships of fighting force in widely extended parts of the Empire. Another objection was that they could not afford to have on the fighting list ships, which in case of emergency or war, would not form an effective fighting force. These propositions were true, but they pointed the moral that the Admiralty should seriously consider the expediency and necessity of arranging for a new type of ship or a reversion to the old type of ship with a comparatively light armament and provision for carrying a considerable complement of marines. He maintained that these patrol services were necessary; and if considerations of expense and strategy forbade the employment for that purpose of highly valuable and efficient fighting ships which might be wanted in the area of concentration, the only way to carry out these services was by a new type of ship. He asked the right hon. Gentleman if, when he replied, he would be able to give an assurance that some steps would be taken in that direction, or that the problem would be seriously considered. In regard to new construction, he could not add usefully to the speeches already made further than to say that the Secretary to the Admiralty and his advisers were relying largely, and were entitled to rely, upon the relative superior quickness in construction which we possessed compared with other Powers. But he thought it was possible to over-emphasise—as was shown in the case of the "Nassau"—the superior advantages which we were alleged to possess. Moreover, it was impossible to minimise the disturbance, both financial and industrial, which would be caused by having a construction programme carried out by a series of jumps—slow in one year and at an alarming rate in another year. Subject to that general proposition he would point out very earnestly that a similar remark did not hold good in regard to the construction of Naval bases. In that regard we had no superior advantage; we were rather at a disadvantage because owing, he ventured to think, to the financial prudery or financial righteousness of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the cost of these works had now to be borne as a charge on the Estimates and was, therefore, subject, or might be subject, in any given year to the pressure of political partisans. German charges of that kind were not borne on the Navy Estimates. For instance, the charges for the widening of Kiel Canal amounting last year to £754,000 and this year to £978,000, were not borne on the German Navy Estimates at all. That fact was often omitted in estimating the comparative naval expenditure of Germany and this country. He wished to express great satisfaction that the Government had now decided to proceed with the works at Rosyth, although he regretted that it had not been found possible to proceed at a faster rate, as the Admiralty were only spending this year £35,000. The hon. Member for Stoke-on-Trent had raised a suggestion that there were serious engineering difficulties in the way, but he had been unable to get any substantial confirmation of the hon. Member's statement. He thought that the Committee would be glad if they could get some assurance from the Civil Lord that progress would be made as rapidly as was possible. While it was true, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean had said, that the change in centres of strategy, and the terror which was added to naval warfare by floating mines, had made a base in the North Sea absolutely necessary, it was possible that there might be changes of centres of strategy in years to come, and that in the near future, say in ten or twelve years, with the completion of the Panama Canal, we might have to consider whether we should not require, not a place of arms, but a *point d'appui* or a jumping off place in the Carribean. He thought that these points were likely to be overshadowed by questions of shipbuilding, and yet they were even of more importance, because they required more prudence in laying down and initiating, and more foresight, in order that the work might be begun in a sufficient margin of time to allow of its completion in case of necessity. The hon. Member who represented the Admiralty, was understood to say that "sufficient for the day was the programme thereof." That was not an old doctrine, but it was a very pernicious one, and one which if it was worked out to its ultimate fulfilment meant not only possible danger in the immediate future, but, as the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean had pointed out, the absolute certainty of more expenditure in the long run. And when the Civil Lord attacked his hon. friend the Member for Fareham for his use of the phrase "disastrous cheeseparings," he would remind the Committee that if these cheeseparings, which were not denied, were going to be continued, and next year, and in the years to come made up by corresponding outpourings, then the possibility of disaster might be brought home to them, and in a manner which they must all recognise it would be exceedingly unpleasant to contemplate.

*MR. NUTTALL (Lancashire, Stretford) said that he had to ask for the indulgence usually accorded to Members speaking within those walls for the first time. According to the remarks which had been made by the hon. Member for King's Lynn the Navy was in a very sad state indeed, and he should go away from the House very much depressed if he did not know that other competent persons held opinions of an entirely opposite character. They all desired to maintain a strong and efficient Navy, but he thought they were entitled to ask the Government for a more clear and definite statement of the nation's requirements and the contingencies they were likely to have to meet than they had yet had. In past times it was the custom to reduce the number of men on the conclusion of peace, and he trusted that this might be done, coupled with keeping a very firm hand on new construction, which, as the Secretary to the Admiralty had informed them, was where retrenchment must begin. Alarmists in their periodic panics, he might almost say their chronic panics, seemed to forget that the Powers of Europe were too much engaged with

Continental affairs to be at liberty to trouble us very much, and that, he held, had been our safeguard in the past, ever since we had withdrawn from armed intervention in the affairs of Europe. Ten years ago this country was third on the list in total expenditure on armaments, but in 1907 our expenditure was larger than that of any other Power, and this was exclusive of £20,000,000 spent on the Indian Army. Various analyses showed that we possessed a naval strength equal at least to any three Powers of Europe put together, and in one direction it was asserted that we had a strength of four to one. It had been shown in great detail by various experts who had studied the question that in regard to the number and tonnage of ships, the age of ships, and in various other ways, we possessed that superiority. That was confirmed he thought by the statement of the First Sea Lord, who said that the fleet assembled in the North Sea last year was the most powerful one in the world. Lord Brassey in his statement prepared for the London Chamber of Commerce confirmed this by stating that we had more warships in commission in 1906 than the whole of Europe put together, and no attempt had been made to disprove those calculations or to analyse them. On introducing the Navy Estimates last year the Secretary to the Admiralty told them that in the spring of 1909 we should have six battleships and three cruisers of the new type afloat, and at that time neither France nor Germany would have a single ship to meet them. In 1910, he said, we should have nine battleships and three cruisers of the new type, against a total of France and Germany of six battleships and two cruisers. That would be eight against twelve, which would be equal to a three-Power standard. The Secretary to the Admiralty told them this year that in 1910 France and Germany might possibly have twelve, which would make us equal to a two-Power standard. It must be remembered that the German programme was at present a paper one, and he thought a study of past history would lead to the conclusion that in view of the complications which were arising in various parts of the world the tendency of events was more likely to be in our favour than against us. Who, two years ago, would have believed that differences would arise between Japan and the United States? Capital was said to be timid, but surely—if we had not become enfeebled by our enormous accumulations of wealth—we might feel safe with a smaller preponderance than three or four to one. This country had been continually accelerating the pace, but there was no evidence that we should have to meet three or even two Powers. What crimes had we committed that we should anticipate such a combination against us? Our relations with all the Powers of the world were never so satisfactory as they were to-day, and there were no outstanding differences with any nation. He submitted that here was an opportunity which should not be lost of taking an important lead in checking the competition in armaments. The Naval Estimates, however, showed an increase of 19,400 men since 1899 and provision was made in Vote 8 for six new protected cruisers. According to the Dilke Return for 1907 England had twenty-one first-class protected cruisers while Germany, France, and Russia had only fourteen; of second-class protected cruisers England had forty-five, while France, Germany, and Russia had only thirty, which equalled a three-Power standard in those ships. The hon. Member for Gravesend in the course of a recent debate had spoken of our building against Germany and the United States, but we must remember that they had a population of 150,000,000 against our 42,000,000, and if we endeavoured to compete with them we should soon come to ruin. It would be far more sensible, instead of setting the pace in new construction, to agree to a convention exempting private property from capture at sea in time of war, and to cultivate amity with our English-speaking cousins in the United States. It was not surprising that foreign Powers desired to strengthen their fleets while we opposed such a convention and built commerce destroyers. It had been said that such a convention might be broken, but he thought England and America together could guarantee its maintenance. Such a convention was supported at the Hague Conference in 1889 and again last year by all the Governments of the world except those of England and France, and it had the support of 164 Members of that House, who presented a memorial to several Cabinet Ministers, urging that reform before the Conference was held. This was not generally known at the time, because they did not wish to embarrass the Government. The peoples of the world, he believed, were in advance of the Cabinets of the different countries, and he held the opinion that if an international *plebiscite* of all the manufacturers, merchants, shipowners and workmen in the world were taken there would be an overwhelming majority in favour of such a convention. The economic bearing of the question of armaments on our general prosperity was most serious, and the would only be fully realised when we reached the next periodic depression of trade. There would be a smaller revenue, and any foreign complications might carry the present income-tax of 1s. to 2s. In its particular application the question was most important to the more prosperous classes. Old-age pensions had been promised, and the cost of them would extend and grow. How would the money be raised?

*THE CHAIRMAN reminded the hon. Gentleman that they were not discussing the Budget.

*MR. NUTTALL said he wished to show on what class the large extension of expenditure was likely to fall.

*THE CHAIRMAN said they could not deal with questions of taxation now, but only with questions of expenditure.

*MR. NUTTALL said the people were awaking to greater interest in public affairs of which there was evidence in the establishment of the new party on the Benches opposite, below the gangway. He thought the House would find that interest would grow and make itself felt more in the future than it had done in the past, both in regard to expenditure on armaments and on other questions. Reasons could always be found for piling up combustible material to the danger of the peace of the world. He trusted the Government would reduce the number of men and hold new construction severely in check as they safely could do for a year, and then reconsider the position.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): In all his aspirations for diminished expenditure and continued peace the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken has the hearty sympathy of every Member of the House. But I listened in vain throughout his interesting remarks for any of that close calculation of the dangers that we may conceivably have in future, and of the ways of meeting them, which would seem to be the only relevant argument in the debate at the present moment. I cannot derive consolation like the hon. Gentleman from the reflection that the Continental Powers have so much to do, are so concerned in quarrelling with each other that they have not time to quarrel with us. At all events, they have time to spend vast sums of money on ships of the most recent form of construction, and they have the time and money to frame their Budgets upon calculations which certainly do not omit the future of the British Fleet from their purview; and I think the House will require from the Government some more explicit calculation of the dangers we have to deal with than that which is supplied by any number of generalisations, however amiable in intention or unexceptionable in statement. I rise to deal very briefly with such points as were touched upon in the debate with the Speaker in the Chair, and which have been raised again in more elaborate form by the right hon. Gentleman who represents the Admiralty in the House, and by other gentlemen who have spoken. The first point is one of nomenclature—I refer to the constitution of the Home Fleet. The right hon. Gentleman who represents the Admiralty has told the House that the Home Fleet consists of three divisions—the Fleet at the Nore which is fully manned, the Fleet at Portsmouth and elsewhere which has nucleus crews, and the Reserve Squadron, with which I have nothing to do to-day. What I wish most to refer to is that portion of the Home Fleet which is at Portsmouth and other Channel ports. The right hon. Gentleman claimed for this portion of the Home Fleet that it could be ready for sea in twenty-four hours or not much more. If that is his view he ought not to count in the Fleet the ships which come home from foreign stations, and which are kept undergoing repair, though with nucleus crews, for some months, because manifestly, even with a nucleus crew, if a ship requires to be under repair for some months, you cannot count it as being potentially ready for sea in twenty-four hours.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Hear, hear!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Well, then, why does the right hon. Gentleman count them?

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: No, no!

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Did not the right hon. Gentleman say that all the ships of the Home Fleet had nucleus crews and that they would be ready for sea in twenty-four hours?

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he had distinctly stated that each of the ships in the Home Fleet that had nucleus crews must be counted as in commission. There must be some misapprehension altogether. Ships in repair were no more fit for the Home Fleet than they were for the Channel Fleet or for any other Fleet. The fact whether a ship under repair was to be one of the Home Fleet was determined by this consideration, namely, was it desirable to have a nucleus crew on board. As to nucleus crews it was a mere matter of administrative convenience. The nucleus crew was a real crew, and must be in commission, it must be under orders, and must be under the commander-in-chief. Therefore, for purposes of convenience, ships which were under repair, but which had nucleus or skeleton crews, were regarded as belonging to the Home Fleet. He had never pretended that ships in the Home Fleet, or any other fleet, which were under repair could be counted as ready for war or ready for sea in twenty-four hours. They would not be counted as ready until the repairs were completed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Take that, and how does the matter stand? I am dealing with that portion of the Home Fleet which has nucleus crews. When the right hon. Gentleman on certain occasions deals with them he describes them as an effective part of the Reserve Fleet. He now tells us that those ships which have nucleus crews are, in accordance with one of the mysteries of the Lords of the Admiralty, counted as in commission, although not fit to go to sea.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Yes.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Very well. Observe that by that method all the ships which come home from foreign stations for repairs, or a certain proportion of them at all events, may be within this category, and the result of that is that there is a very much larger proportion of ships in commission in the Home Fleet which cannot go to sea than there is in any other Fleet. In other words, two out of every three battleships at Portsmouth at this moment, which have nucleus crews and count as part of the Home Fleet, are ships which cannot go to sea, and cannot be counted, therefore, as part of our available strength. I hope that the right hon. Gentleman will not think that I am charging the Admiralty with erroneous administration in this matter. I have not the least doubt that that is the best way of dealing with ships. They have to be brought home to repair, and it may be right that they should have nucleus crews upon them, and, therefore, it may be quite proper that they should be regarded as ships in commission. But are we to be in the habit of describing this Home Fleet, with nucleus crews, as being a part of our actual available resources? If it be true, as my hon. friend the Member for Fareham says it is true, that two out of three of the Portsmouth battleships are under repair, does not that require us to qualify the sanguine statements for which I think the right hon. Gentleman is in part responsible, but which I quite admit do not at all reflect on the Admiralty though it might reflect on the Admiralty exposition of the facts? Although I think that this is relatively an unimportant matter, yet it may deceive hasty naval critics. But we come to a question of much greater importance when we deal with the general amount of the Estimates for this year, taken in relation to the general liabilities of the country in naval matters, not only in this year but in the years to come. Broadly speaking, what are our naval liabilities, what is the magnitude of our naval responsibilities? They fall into two classes broadly—the construction of new works and the construction of new ships. These are the two items upon which I am going to touch. The construction of new works, in the main, is the construction of docks for new vessels of the "Dreadnought" type at Portsmouth, and still more, and of incomparably greater importance in my opinion, the construction at Rosyth of a naval base for the North Sea. The Government have done very little since they came into office in dealing with Rosyth. I think the right hon. Gentleman thought it worth while to criticise the late Government in regard to this before they went out of office. The right hon. Gentleman did not treat these matters controversially, and I do not wish to treat them controversially. But let me observe that the necessity for Rosyth increases year by year. The mere fact that the magnitude and strategical importance of floating mines has been recognised lately, and that foreign governments have refused to forbid them, are naval circumstances which add immensely to the importance of ports like Rosyth, which cannot be blockaded with the same facility as the Channel or Spithead. The immense naval construction which has gone on in other parts of the North Sea, and places adjacent to the North Sea, is also a new and pressing reason why we should not hesitate to spend large sums in hurrying on Rosyth, so as to make it adequate for the naval necessities of the country. And, therefore, not only do I regret that the Government have lost time in dealing with this great problem, but it seems to me that the importance of the problem itself, its imminence, and its insistence have greatly increased during the years in which the present Government have held office. That would have been a reason, as I think, why the First Lord of the Admiralty and his colleagues should have asked the Government whether they could not in this present year's Estimates put down a large sum for dealing with Rosyth. To which the reply might have been: "Fresh naval construction is so great and so pressing at the present moment that you do better to put off Rosyth for a year and press on with your naval programme." But that is not what the Government have done. They find themselves, rightly or wrongly, in this year 1908–1909, relieved from the obligation of indulging in any very ambitious programme for the construction of new ships. They think, rightly or wrongly, that the possible peril from foreign nations does not require expenditure upon the new construction of ships this year, whatever may be required next year or the year after. If that is the case, and for the moment I do not dispute it, I ask was it not the part of wise and prudent men to take the opportunity this year, in which you have a slackness in new construction which will not be repeated—which nobody thinks can ever be repeated in the official lifetime of this Chancellor of the Exchequer, or of his immediate successors—to take this opportunity of getting on with those permanent works for which it will be very difficult to get the House to vote the necessary money if they are met with a gigantic shipbuilding programme in 1909–10, 1910–11, and succeeding years? The Government have refused to follow this plainly prudent course, and they have done so, I cannot doubt, for political reasons. That is not, I think, an unkind suggestion to make after the debate we had this day week. They find themselves face to face with a very formidable body of their own friends who are apparently content with the statement of the Government that we were safe for the present as far as shipbuilding is concerned, and they have reduced the Naval Estimates this year by £1,250,000, I think it was, compared with two years ago; although the Chancellor of the Exchequer forgot to say what I think he must have known, that the £1,250,000 was going to be swallowed up by automatic increases next year, and that, in addition to the automatic increases, it will be absolutely necessary for this Government—I do not care what their financial position will be—to lay down new ships and new construction on the largest scale if foreign nations carry out the programmes which they have announced. That is my first complaint, that the Government, having the prospect both of naval construction and of works construction to deal with in this and immediately succeeding years, in spite of the fact that they think themselves justified in being slack about construction in 1908–9, have refused to take that fortunate opportunity for meeting some of their obligations in permanent works. I pass to the other branch of the programme—namely, the necessities for new construction with which the taxpayers of this country are most unhappily faced in future. That new construction is required, and has partly been recognised in the present building programme of the Admiralty to be required, in order to meet what I cannot help regarding as our present deficiencies in the matter of fast vessels, fast cruisers and torpedo-boat destroyers. I need not dwell on this branch of the subject, which is very complicated, but I will ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he was not using an argument very perilous in its general character when he contented himself with a mere enumeration of the torpedo-boat destroyers of which we are possessed which are less than eleven years old. It is quite true that the Admiralty have laid down the life of a torpedo-boat destroyer as eleven years or thereabouts, and it is quite legitimate, therefore, for them to take credit for the possession of torpedo boat destroyers which are less than that critical age. But when you compare the number of torpedo-boat destroyers which we possess with those possessed by other Powers, you must not simply content yourselt with enumerating the destroyers which are less than eleven years old; you must ask how the age of our destroyers compares with the age of the destroyers of those countries with whom there might be some possibility, we hope infinitely remote, of conflict. The torpedo-boat destroyer resembles a living organism in this, that while its life may be only eleven years, its efficiency does not go on unimpaired until the clock strikes at the eleventh year; it is a rapidly diminishing quantity, and every year which brings it nearer to the fatal term, makes it more necessary to send it for longer periods into dock for repair, makes it more costly to repair it, and gives the country a fewer number of months out of the twelve in which to count on its efficient use. I believe the Admiralty are perfectly aware that no mere enumeration of the number of torpedo-boat destroyers under eleven years which we have, as compared with that of other Powers, gives us any sense of the relative strength of the parties. If we with old destroyers have got to contend against a Power with new destroyers, you cannot count them as being equal one to one; and you must get a great margin of superiority over the bare numerical enumeration of that Power which has been fortunate enough to begin its construction late and has, therefore, the largest number of the most recent and powerful types, and the types least needing repair, at its hand for any naval purpose. I will not go into the question, dealt with with conspicuous ability by the hon. and gallant Member for King's Lynn, of whether we who have got to operate at a great distance from our base ought to content ourselves with anything comparable with mere numerical equality in dealing with a Power which would not have to make any counter efforts, and would not be required to use its torpedo craft at any very great distance from its base. I am not sure that the Committee of this House is a very good arena in which to discuss these delicate tactical problems; but the point is one which I am sure the Admiralty must have considered, but on which they have not so far given us any information. I come to the more anxious question, or at all events that on which the majority of this Committee are likely to be more anxious—namely, the balance of battleships of the newest, most powerful, and effective types. The hon. and gallant Member for King's Lynn quoted some statement which he thinks I made, or which I did make, in 1906, regarding the construction of the "Dreadnought. I do not remember the statement. I fully accept the responsibility of having been a member of the Government which was responsible for the "Dreadnought" type, and from that responsibility I in no way shrink or recede. But the naval Lords, when they devised this type, told us, and I am sure they told our successors, that the "Dreadnought" type was one which made it very difficult to compare the strength of two fleets, one of which possessed "Dreadnoughts" and the other did not. We were told, in fact, that the country which possessed "Dreadnoughts" and the allied type of armoured cruisers might almost ignore the country which did not. Well, let us eliminate from our calculations for the future all battleships which are not of the "Dreadnought" and the allied armoured cruiser type, and consider how we are going to stand in regard to these, the most powerful, but unfortunately, the most costly instruments of war ever devised by man. The Government seems to be quite serene as to the number of ships which will be available when the programme of the coming year is completed, both in this country and in Germany. But have they reason for that content? I entirely agree with them when they say that at the present moment our strength in battleships is amply adequate to any conceivable strain that may be put upon it. But let us cast our eyes forward from the year 1908–9, when new ships are due to be laid down, to the year 1911, when those ships will be completed. As I understand the matter, we shall have, when the present programme of the Admiralty is completed, twelve ships of this superior type in existence in January, 1911.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the right hon. Gentleman was not including the "Lord Nelson" and "Agamemnon" types.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not include them. On what principle am I to include them? I am surely justified by everything we said on the advice of our naval experts when we were in office, and by everything the right hon. Gentleman has said up to this year on the same advice, in considering the "Dreadnought" and the "Invincible" type as on one side of a dividing line, and even the best of every previous type of battleship as on the other side. I take that classification, and I am justified in taking it.

Mr. BELLAIRS said the right hon. Gentleman was including two for this year, but they were not certain of that. As far as they knew it was only one.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the hon. and gallant Gentleman on that point did less than justice to the Admiralty. It is quite true that the right hon. Gentleman did not say what the type of vessel was to be. I certainly have understood from rumour, and, I think, from some previous utterances of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, that these two ships are to be of this new and finest type. At all events, I will assume that we are to have two of this type laid down this year, or, as I think more probable, one "Dreadnought," and one "Invincible." We shall have in January, 1911, twelve ships altogether of this new type—eight "Dreadnoughts" and four "Invincibles." The Germans, on the same date, January, 1911, at the same rate of construction, will have nine. But now carry your thoughts a few months later, and you will find that by the autumn of the same year, 1911, the Germans will have four additional ships of the new type; in other words, they will have thirteen, while we shall only have twelve. That difference arises from the fact that we begin our construction in December of each year, and the Germans begin their construction in June. Therefore, if the Germans build at the same rate as we do, there is evidently a dangerous margin in the last six months of each year which you will have very carefully to weigh to compare the results of the building programmes of the two nations. It may be said that the Germans do not build as fast; and I earnestly hope it is true, for a reason which will meet with the sympathy of the hon. Gentleman who spoke last, and of everybody who desires to see, as we all must, the Navy Estimates kept as low as is consistent with the national safety. If we find that we can build as fast as our neighbours, of course, we can wait until we see the sort of ships our neighbours start before we start any of our own. But if by organisation and industrial improvement—in which some foreign nations are showing as great an aptitude as ourselves—they begin to have a power of turning out ships as fast as we can turn them out, then the immense advantage we have had—an advantage which has made for economy and peace—vanishes; and we have to face the fact that other great Naval Powers build ships as fast as we do, and build apparently with the consistent determination rapidly to augment the number of first-class ships which they have at their command. The Germans have announced that they mean to build four big ships—three "Dreadnoughts" and one "Invincible"—every year. We propose only to lay down two such ships. Manifestly, unless this programme of ours is rapidly augmented, is changed immensely and immediately, the Germans would be building twice as many ships of this capital type as we are; and consequently the time is not only not far distant, but imminent, when in regard to that particular type of vessel they will be, not our equal, but our superior. I should like to put this plain question to the right hon. Gentleman; and it is a question easy to answer. If the Germans can build as fast as we can, will they not have, in the autumn of 1911, thirteen ships of the "Dreadnought" and "Invincible" type; and can the right hon. Gentleman show us any possible means by which we, in the autumn of 1911, should also have thirteen "Dreadnoughts" and "Invincibles." I understand that we cannot have more than twelve in January, 1911, and that we cannot have another—unless we alter the date at which we begin our shipbuilding programme—until the January of the following year. I can assure the right hon. Gentleman—and I think he will admit it—that the last thing I want to do is to embarrass him or the Board of Admiralty. I have no wish to treat either of the great Departments of the Army or the Navy in a party spirit; and I do not think I have ever said a word in this House which would lead any one to hold a contrary view. But I think the right hon. Gentleman will see from the statement I have made that I feel the Government are open to criticism upon one point, and that there is real ground for anxiety upon another. The point upon which they are open to criticism is that in this year, when they have elected not to construct on a large scale, they are not spending money on necessary works; and my ground for alarm, which I honestly say has not been removed by anything I have heard in this debate, is that if German shipbuilding is now, or is going to be in the immediate future, as fast as our shipbuilding, whatever we may do next year, Germany will be superior to us during the later months of 1911 in ships of capital importance. I may say that if the Government can reasure us on this plain issue of policy they will not only have few difficulties in Committee on the Navy Estimates, but they will have set the mind of the country at rest in regard to the most vital interest of national security.

*MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton) said he thought that the debate the other night would have been sufficient to reassure the right hon. Gentleman to some degree that at any rate with regard to ships of the "Dreadnought" type we were at the present moment, with ships actually launched in the water and ships on the stocks, in a position of unquestionable superiority.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I admit that.

*MR. LAMBERT asked whether it did not follow that if this country was in a position of unquestionable superiority now, it could not, with its unequalled capacity for shipbuilding, build at any rate, as fast as any foreign Power. The Admiralty could not consent to rule out the "Lord Nelson" and the "Agamemnon." These ships would not be commissioned until April.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Are they as good as the "Dreadnought"?

*MR. LAMBERT said he was not a naval expert, but, in the opinion of the Admiralty, these ships had good fighting qualities.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Can they fight a "Dreadnought"?

*MR. LAMBERT thought they would be able to give a good account of themselves. He might point out to the Leader of the Opposition that the hon. Member for King's Lynn had spoken very highly of these ships. The right hon. Gentleman was quite ready to quote the hon. Member for King's Lynn when it suited his purpose, but he did not quote the same hon. Member's opinion in regard to ships of the "Lord Nelson" and "Agamemnon" type as compared with "Dreadnought." It was said the other day that Germany had six of these big ships on the stocks. This country had seven in the water and three on the stocks. Surely that showed that at the present moment we were in a position of unquestionable superiority; and, being in that position, did it not follow that if it were required we could at least compete in building with any of our foreign neighbours? The right hon. Gentleman calculated that Germany, with only six ships now on the stocks, would have thirteen ships fully commissioned by the end of 1911, if certain contingencies happened. He could not give the opinion of the Admiralty on such a point. It could only be a hypothetical opinion. But even supposing the right hon. Gentleman's estimate of the strength of the German Navy at the end of 1911 were accepted, it would mean that Germany would complete thirteen armoured ships within three years and four months. He thought that was a complete reply to the alarm of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. BELLAIRS: Is the hon. Gentleman aware that the figures of the Leader of the Opposition are really the figures of the Secretary to the Admiralty?

*MR. LAMBERT said he would deal with his hon. friend later. The right hon. Gentleman had also attacked the Admiralty on the question of destroyers. He could only repeat what had already been said, that, in the opinion of their expert advisers at the Admiralty, the number of destroyers to be laid down this year was ample for the country's needs. The right hon. Gentleman had said that they ought to have foreseen the slackness in construction. But he was not sure there had been any slackness this year. The Secretary to the Admiralty had shown they were spending this year a very large sum, greater in proportion to other years, on new construction.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.) said that the Secretary to the Admiralty drew a distinction between the new construction and the new programme. On new construction less was being spent this year than in any past year. It was in regard to the new programme that the Secretary to the Admiralty gave figures to show that a little more was being spent.

*MR. LAMBERT said he had the figures showing the amount we were spending on the new programme, but surely if he said that we were spending as much as the advisers of the Admiralty considered it advisable to spend that ought to be enough. There were really so many naval experts in the House, there were so many ways of manipulating figures, that he regarded it as very difficult indeed to reply to the different calculations and combinations of calculations that were made from the benches opposite. The right hon. Gentleman opposite had said that the Government ought to go on faster with Rosyth, but he must know that a great engineering work involving an expenditure of £3,000,000 must take a certain amount of time in connection with the placing of contracts, getting the particulars of the borings and the information which was necessarily incidental before the work could be economically and profitably started. He wished to say a word about the right hon. Gentleman's criticism of the Home Fleet. The right hon. Gentleman had said that of the battleships at Portsmouth two out of three were not fit to be instantly sent to sea. That was a mistake. The "Canopus" would be completed at the end of April, the "Jupiter" and the "Prince George" were completed. The hon. Member for the Fareham Division had attacked the Admiralty rather severely on the question of repairs of the Home Fleet. If hon. Members wanted accurate information he would ask them to give notice of the exact points they wished to know about in regard to the disposition of the ships. There was hardly a man he believed in the Admiralty who could tell off-hand where the ships were and what they were doing.

MR. ARTHUR LEE: I made a statement as to the position of certain ships, and the hon. Gentleman went out of his way to deny the truth of my statement. I pointed out that the figures he gave were not accurate.

*MR. LAMBERT said he had to get the information on the spur of the moment from the advisers of the Admiralty as to the battleships instantly ready at the Nore, and he gave the hon. Gentleman the information given to him by those officials. He left the House to judge whether these officials would be right or the hon. Gentleman. He thought the officials were right.

MR. ARTHUR LEE: The hon. Gentleman questions my veracity in the matter. I took steps personally to verify the position of the ships the day after the hon. Gentleman made the statement, and I found that my statement was correct and his was wrong.

*MR. LAMBERT said he made the statement on the authority of the Admiralty officials, and he could not do better than that. The extraordinary fact which seemed to come out of these debates was that British ships required repairs. Did not the ships of foreign navies require repairs? It was the case because our ships were often in the dock that they were in such a state of good repair. As naval efficiency was a relative matter, surely if we kept our ships in repair foreign ships to be equal to ours must be kept in repair and therefore must be docked also. The criticism of the hon. Member for King's Lynn was that a large spasmodic programme deranged industry and upset finance. What about the building of ships which were not wanted? That would derange industry and upset finance more. The hon. Member said that we were getting a "Dreadnought" cheap this year. But supposing we put out five more, would we get them cheap?

MR. BELLAIRS: Supposing you put out two?

*MR. LAMBERT said that surely after all the "Dreadnought" was not the last word to be said in shipbuilding? There were improvements going on, and when the hon. Gentleman pressed for details in regard to the new cruiser to be laid down under this year's programme he would say that after all the Admiralty might be allowed to get all the possible experience they could from the Admiralty experts, so that when the ship was laid down it would be the very best that could be laid down.

MR. BELLAIRS: I did not ask details. I asked whether the ship would be of the large armoured type or not.

*MR. LAMBERT said that of course the ship would be of the large armoured type. The Germans launched the first of the "Dreadnought" series on Saturday last. That ship was in the German naval programme of 1906. What was the position of the ships in our 1906 programme? The "Bellerophon" was launched in July, 1907, the "Temeraire" in August, 1907, and the "Superb" in September, 1907. The Admiralty was attacked by the hon. Member for King's Lynn on the subject of repairs. He quoted the figures relating to 1903–4, and that was most misleading. In that year the repairs were put out to contract and that proved expensive. Then it was before the policy came in of scrapping ships. If they had not so many ships to maintain, there were not so many repairs. Of course, the policy of scrapping ships led to an enormous diminution in repairs, and it was absolutely unfair to compare the present year with 1903–4. The hon. Gentleman had said that there was a large amount in the Estimates for repairs. His right hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty was insistent in putting in a large sum for repairs. Last year he put in more than his official adviser asked him to put in, and at the end of last session the Government were bitterly attacked for allowing the Home Fleet to get out of repair. He himself had to come down to the House, with a list of ships which were alleged in the Press to be unfit for fighting purposes, in order to show that they were absolutely ready. The hon. Member for the Fareham Division had criticised them for spending £60,000 for the repair of the "Terrible." Last year the charge was brought against them that the "Terrible" was in dock at Portsmouth, and that she was not being repaired. It was suggested in the Press which supported the hon. Gentleman that we must not have so much advertisement of the gunnery of the fleet. He could assure the hon. Gentleman that that suggestion would be borne in mind, but after all was said and done, the policy pursued by the Board of Admiralty had improved the gunnery of the

Fleet enormously. The hon. Gentleman had asked about oil fuel, and the getting of stores as much as possible within British territory. He could not divulge all the negotiations that were going on in these matters. It was only ten days ago that they were engaged in consulting the India Office on that very subject. He hoped that he would not be pressed further on that point. He had been asked whether the "Lusitania" and the "Mauretania" had completed their tests. The contract conditions had been fulfilled in long trials round our own coasts, and whilst awaiting confirmation of these results in actual ocean passages, the Admiralty had felt fully justified in making the necessary provision in the Estimates. The hon. Member for North-West Lancashire had asked questions in regard to the coastguard and the Navy Medical Service. He understood that an hon. Gentleman would raise the question of the coastguard later on, and he would, therefore, postpone his reply on that subject. As to the Navy Medical Service he assured the hon. Gentleman that the Admiralty were always ready to receive criticisms with the view to the improvement of the Navy.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I rise particularly in order to call the attention of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty to the fact that we have had no answer whatever to the very grave point which was raised by my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition. The Civil Lord said he deprecated these references to foreign Powers, but after all, it is by reference to the strength of the navies of foreign Powers, as the Secretary to the Admiralty informed us the other day, that this House and the Government must judge of the efforts which are required on our own behalf. We cannot avoid these references, but we hope we make them in a tone which will cause no legitimate offence in other nations. What is the answer which the hon. Gentleman attempted to make to my right hon. friend who asked the very simple question: If the Germans build as quickly as we do, will they not have by the period of 1911 thirteen of the "Invincible" and "Dreadnought" class of ships to our twelve? What is the answer which the hon. Gentleman attempted to make to that question? He said that our present position in regard to this class of ships is perfectly satisfactory. No one has ever challenged that. He seems to think that at some stage or another we had challenged our present security. We have never done anything of the kind. But we must look forward as wise and prudent men would look forward. You cannot build a battleship in a day; you cannot improvise a battleship; and, therefore, what should be considered now is our position, not at this moment, but two or three years hence; that is, at the time when the ships we are laying down and other Powers are laying down will be ready for effective use. Let the Government, therefore, disabuse their minds of the idea that it is part of our contention that at the present moment we are deficient in ships of the "Dreadnought" and "Invincible" class. But, the hon. Gentleman said, "Let the right hon. Gentleman remember that we have a superiority now, and as we can build as fast as any other Power, shall we not always be able to maintain our superiority?" Yes, but that has to be demonstrated. The question, however, is whether you are taking the steps to do so now? If we lay down as many ships as other nations do, we shall have at the end of any period you like to name as great a margin of security over them as at the present time. But are you laying down as many ships as this foreign Power? Of course we are not. The German Government, not by annual Vote, but under legislation, are contemplating a programme to extend over a period of years, of laying down four ships a year, and you are only laying down two this year and you are not going to lay down four next year.

*MR. LAMBERT: The reason is that our Naval programme is larger than the German Naval programme of 1906.

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Gentleman's answer is quite irrelevant. We are not concerned with the German 1906 programme. I am concerned with what will be the position of affairs at the beginning of 1910 and the beginning of 1911, and particularly the middle of 1911. What will be the German position in the middle of 1911? The hon. Gentleman says that that is a hypothetical question, and that he is quite certain the Committee will not expect him to answer it. But the figures given by my right hon. friend as to the position at that time, as was pointed out by the hon. Member for King's Lynn, were practically the figures given by the Secretary to the Admiralty. The Secretary to the Admiralty admits that if the Germans accelerate their programme, as they can, there will be twelve German ships of this capital type against twelve of ours, at the beginning of 1911. Now, we want to know, and this is a simple question which the hon. Gentleman or his colleague can easily answer: "Will there not be on 1st August in the same year another of those ships launched, on the same hypothesis, without a counterbalancing ship having been launched on our side?" Will there not be, therefore, if the Admiralty pursues the normal course of their programme, a period in 1911 when Germany will be superior to this country in capital ships? That is a fair question, germane to the questions already dealt with. We are only asking the hon. Gentleman to cast his eye six months further forward than he has done; and we are entitled to know from the Admiralty if that is a correct anticipation; and if so, what steps they are going to take to meet it. The hon. Gentleman attempted to prove that we need have no fear of German acceleration. I do not think that is the view taken by his right hon. colleague. But at any rate, the case which the right hon. Gentleman adduced is wholly illusory. It is that a ship, contemplated in the 1906 programme, had only been launched the other day. The real question is, how fast the German Government can build? When was that ship laid down? It was laid down eight months ago and it was brought to that condition without any resort to overtime whatever. [An Hon. Member: What about the preparation beforehand?] We do just the same thing. The Committee is familiar with the fact that when our Government talk of launching a ship so many months after it has been laid down, they have been collecting materials for it beforehand. It is certain that the Germans have been accelerating the building of ships very much. It is certain that they will pay more and more attention to this matter. It is not likely that a nation so effective in organisation, industrial and military alike, is going to be content to lag far behind this country in that respect. I have seen somewhere that the Germans have, as a matter of fact, caught us up in the rate of battleship construction. If our superiority in construction has given out, as is to be feared, we cannot afford to wait until they have laid down ships before we lay down our ships. This is a question of national safety; it is one of such gravity that I hope before this discussion closes we shall have some definite answer from the Admiralty representative, and not merely a rather shuffling evasion like that given by the hon. Gentleman. [Ministerial cries of "Oh."] Well, I will not use so strong an expression; but I maintain that the answer of the hon. Gentleman is wholly illusory. There was no answer in the statement which the hon. Gentleman made. As I have intervened at this stage of the debate I want to say a word in regard to the finance of the Government programme. I am much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for correcting the figure which I gave a week ago on my own authority, but I ask, What is the position from a financial point of view? The right hon. Gentleman has told us that there will be automatic increases in the Navy Vote of £750,000; that an additional sum of £500,000 will be transferred from Loan to Vote, that we shall have to provide on the Annual Estimates for the works at Rosyth and the great new lock at Portsmouth. Whatever may be the excuse for not making greater progress with them this year they must be proceeded with as rapidly as possible the moment they are begun. And next year £500,000 will be required in addition to the small sum on this year's Estimates. We have there an addition of £1,250,000 to the amount mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman. You are entitled to subtract from that amount £700,000 for refrigerating apparatus which will not be needed to be repeated next year. If not a single new ship were laid down next year, you will have also £360,000 to provide for new construction. But we all know you have got to lay down a very serious naval programme next year. I do not think it will be disputed in any quarter that the new programme of new construction will be much heavier than in the Estimates we are now considering. But supposing you proceed next year on exactly the same lines as you proceed this year in the Estimates, you will have in addition £1,750,000 as a minimum which must fall on the Estimates next year—that is using the figures supplied to me by the right hon. Gentleman, except the £500,000 for Rosyth and Portsmouth. You have to face that increase instead of that stated by the Chancellor of the Exchequer the other day in order to meet the requests of his friends below the gangway and in order to present a favourable Budget and bring forward social reforms. With these enormous liabilities in front of you, with these great additional burdens next year and the succeeding year, you must provide new ships and new construction. Therefore, I say that apart from the question of naval safety and the sufficiency of this year's programme, there is here a financial position which is unsound, unthrifty, and is overburdening succeeding years for the purpose of getting a temporary advantage this year.

*Mr. J. M. MACDONALD (Falkirk Burghs) in moving to reduce the Vote by 8,000 men, said that he hoped to carry the discussion into narrower lines than those on which it had so far been conducted. Last year in the discussion of these Estimates, much had been said in favour of the view that the governing factor in determining the amount of naval expenditure was the Shipbuilding Vote. He took leave to question the view. He would take the Vote for new construction eleven years ago, and this year. Eleven years ago the amount was £7,166,000, and this year it was £7,545,000, an increase of nearly £400,000; but against this increase there was in the same period, in the Votes 1, 2, and 3, an increase of no less than £3,500,000, or considerably more than one half of the three Votes taken together in 1897–8. These figures seemed to him to justify the contention of the editor of the *Naval Annual*, when he said that "the steady and continuous increase for many years in the permanent forces of the navy, had been largely responsible for the increase in Naval Votes." The total number of men which the Committee was asked to sanction this year under Vote A. was 128,000, the same number as that asked for last year. The number voted for the German Navy last year was 46,936, and for the French Navy 56,800. Thus our numbers exceeded the numbers of the German Navy by 81,000, of the French Navy by 71,000, and of the two navies combined by 24,000. He asked his right hon. friend how it was that he justified the maintenance of a force so enormously above the two-Power standard which, they had been told, the Government accepted as the measure of its requirements. He thought they had a right to some explanation upon this point from his right hon. friend. Then, again, Vote I., which was the Vote for wages, showed an increase this year of £260,000. But the number of men was exactly the same as last year. The increase of the money Vote was, therefore, automatic in character and was due to the fact that there were more men and officers in the more highly paid classes of the service than there were last year. But last year they also had an increase in this Vote of £138,700 due to the same cause. He made no complaint with the form of this increase, but he should like to know when these automatic increases would cease and the new scale of expenditure would come into full operation He asked this question in connection with two items in Vote 1, of which he should like to have some explanation. They were asked this year to vote fifteen more naval cadets than last year, and 144 more than they were asked to vote in 1905–06. They were also asked to vote 430 more boys under training of the seaman class. Now these additions to the strength of the Navy, small though they were, meant inevitable increases in Vote 1 and the cognate Votes in future years. Why were they made? He wished to put another question resting upon Lord Brassey's statement in a letter to

The Times of 10th February, that we had more men than we required to man our up-to-date ships. Was it, or was it not, true that we could man all our combatant vessels with the same number of men that we had in 1898–9? He had made out a calculation based upon the Dilke Return. He took every vessel in that Return credited to our fleet except the torpedo boats and the submarines. He had given to each vessel a crew, he believed, considerably above the real average. He had credited all the first class battleships with average crews of 800, the armed cruisers with crews of 700, the first-class protected cruisers with crews of 500, the second-class protected cruisers with crews of 200, the third-class protected cruisers with crews of 150, the scouts with 150, the torpedo vessels with sixty, and the torpedo destroyers with sixty. He had on that basis come to the conclusion that we could man everyone of the ships included in the Dilke Return, with 101,880 men, and that bore out Lord Brassey's contention that we could man our combatant vessels with the same number of men that we had in 1898–9, or ten years ago. If that calculation was even approximately accurate, what became of the 26,000 not afloat? There was only one argument which could be advanced as far as he knew, for keeping our Fleet on full war footing, as undoubtedly it had been kept during recent years, and that was that our crews must be more perfectly trained than they formerly were. That was a quite unanswerable argument so far as certain classes of men employed in our ships were concerned. It was a good argument for example in the case of the gunners, but 20 to 25 per cent. of the total of our crews were employed for the purpose of conveying ammunition to the guns. The long training of this class of men could not be really essential to the welfare of the Fleet. They could in time of peace be reduced enormously and passed more rapidly into the reserve than they were at the present moment, very much to the economy of our finances, and he believed with no detriment at all to the fighting character of our Fleet. He summed up by stating that he wanted to know (1) Why we maintained a permanent force of men which exceeded the German Navy by 81,000, and the French Navy by 71,000, and both those navies combined by 24,000; (2) When the new scale of expenditure under Vote 1 would come into full operation; (3) Why they were asking for 144 naval cadets more this year than was asked for three years ago, and why they wanted 430 more boys under training of the seaman class than were asked for last year; and lastly, whether it was or was not true that the whole fleet could be well manned with the numbers voted in 1898–9? He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That 120,000 officers, seamen, and boys be employed for the said Services."—(*Mr. J. M. Macdonald.*)

*MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire) said he was surprised that his hon. friend had raised this discussion again in Parliament after the very remarkable vote that was given a week ago. As a Scottish Member of the same political faith as the hon. Gentleman, he rose to oppose the Motion. The reduction of the vote by 8,000 men might be taken roughly to mean, judging by the standard number for each battleship estimated by his hon. friend a reduction of ten battleships. The hon. Member asked why keep up this mighty fleet? He could give him one momentous fact—one vital reason not only why the two-Power standard should be maintained, but why we should have the substantial margin to which his hon. friend took exception. Apart from the defence of our shores and our Colonies, and the protection of our vast over-sea trade, there was one momentous fact which had not been mentioned in these debates — he referred to our Conventions and agreements with foreign States. He had listened to all the speeches in this debate, but they were concerned solely with the contrast between our naval strength and that of a rival Power, the defence of this country and the Colonies, and the protection of our commerce. The point of view in all those speeches was the insurance given by the Navy against aggression; they never touched upon our agreements with foreign countries. Perhaps the most important of these was the Anglo-Japanese Alliance. The obligations under that alliance were practically world-wide, and these obligations were, under the alliance, to remain in force for the next eight, or nine and possibly ten or eleven years, during which we, in co-operation with Japan, would be responsible for the defence of the integrity of China by armed force, naval and military, and also for the defence in every part of the globe of the interests and rights of our ally Japan. Article I. of the instrument provided that if in the opinion of either our own country or in the opinion—right or wrong—of Japan any of those rights or interests were threatened, we should use our naval and military force to defend those interests of Japan which were menaced. That was perhaps the most important and vital Article of the whole Convention. This was to run until 1915, or, under certain conditions, until 1916; but there was this startling proviso — that if Japan was at war when the period of the alliance expired —the obligations which we had undertaken were to continue until peace was concluded. The terms of that instrument were extremely onerous; and when it was remembered that certain Powers were only awaiting the disruption of the loose, ill-assorted units of the Chinese Empire in order to appropriate a part of the wreckage, it could be conjectured what was the responsibility lying upon this country in view of the fact that in addition to the defence of Japanese rights and interests—which might not always be consistent with the independence of China—it had contracted for the next eleven, twelve, or thirteen years to defend the integrity of the Chinese Empire. That was surely a reason, if there was none other, why we should maintain a sufficient reserve over the strength necessary for our own insurance. It was unfortunate, perhaps, that this necessity had been forced upon us. But there it was—there was no use blinking the fact. He did not wish to question the wisdom of that alliance. It was very easy to be wise after the event. He admitted freely that at the time it was made in August, 1905, the Liberal Party to which he belonged gave at least a conditional consent to its terms; but in any case the Government and the nation were bound by it. It was a great contract, and they were bound to abide by it. Some hon. Members said it was all nonsense—Japan would never need aid, that she was too exhausted by the tremendous waste and loss of the great war through which she had passed to be likely to again try the arbitrament of war; that was all very well, but as the hon. Member for Fareham had observed the other day, our relations with foreign Powers were for ever shifting —nothing was truer than that—and the hon. Gentleman added that our friends of to-day might become our enemies to-morrow. What was truer than that? Surely, that helped to demonstrate the need of strengthening and maintaining the Reserve to which his hon. friend took exception. In surveying the possibilities for us under this Treaty with Japan, it was incumbent upon them to consider her present condision and aspirations. Japan had fought and won a great fight. She became a first class Power at the end of the war. The treaties which she made with us in 1902 and 1905 had enormously increased her prestige, and she was now capable of borrowing money on the security of those alliances. And what was she doing with it? They knew that she was preparing large naval and military armaments, while she was becoming a very powerful figure in the commercial and industrial world. Her military history was, they might say, the contemporary history of the world. She had a redundant population of thrifty and industrious people, but they found themselves cribbed cabined, and confined within their island domain, and the inevitable result was an intense longing for territorial expansion. They were left in the front rank by the war, and they considered themselves entitled to the international rights and privileges of a first rate Power. And here was the crux of the situation. Japan found her aspirations thwarted and barred by the invincible prejudice against the colour of her people. There lay the crux of the situation, and that would be the crux until some very remarkable event took place which would place Japan in a position where she could assume the rights and authority to which she now aspired. She was sensitive; her political temper was rising; she believed herself to be ungenerously treated, and she thought her only hope now lay in having sufficient force to compel acquiescence in her demands when the occasion arose to make them. They knew that America had not been altogether on the most friendly terms with Japan. There had been considerable friction. The reason of the recent growth and formidable programme of the American Navy and of the demonstration of naval force which she was making in the Pacific was no secret; they all knew it. The fact of that demonstration and the growth of the American Navy were due to the impression produced on the American people by the ambitions and advance of Japan, intensified by the British alliance. What was the obvious course? We must prepare for eventualities which might possibly arise. It would be simple madness to proceed in the way his hon. friend suggested, and reduce that margin by which alone we could hope to meet, in addition to protecting our shores and commerce, any contingency which might arise with regard to the Japanese and the United States. The truth was that the political atmosphere in which Japan was moving was very highly charged with the elements of danger, and at any moment trouble might arise. For these reasons he opposed the Motion. Some of his hon. friends on that side of the House grudgingly accepted the two-Power standard if it were to be the absolute maximum for all time—irrespective of sudden needs which might arise; they would not hear of any margin or reserve. But surely in business a very different rule was followed. A prudent banker maintained a margin of reserve for possible bad debts. We were the political bankers of Japan and had constituted ourselves so by the alliance, and Japan was our political client, and a margin of naval strength was a necessity of our condition, and therefore, as a Liberal and on Liberal principles, believing that having made a solemn promise we were bound to carry it out, and to show that we were able to carry it out, he opposed the Motion for the reduction.

*Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the hon. Member for Falkirk had broached perhaps the most difficult of all the technical difficulties connected with the Navy, the problem of manning. There was nothing he recoiled from with more horror than the prospect of having to explain the system of manning which now obtained. If he had given him notice of his questions he should possibly have been able to give him a more adequate answer than he could now, but he would do his best to get him the information. His first question was when these automatic increases in the pay of the Navy might be expected to come to an end. He had resorted to the only means of information open to him at that time, and he was told that no estimate could at this moment be made. If he could he would make a better answer on further inquiry. The second question was how he could justify or explain the increase asked for in the number of boys and cadets. That was a matter of mechanical measurement. Increases of that sort were based upon technical calculations of wastage made by officials of the Admiralty.

*Mr. J. M. MACDONALD: May I ask if the technical calculation alters from year to year, and, if so, on what principle it alters?

*Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he could not at that moment explain. He believed it was calculated on averages. These, however, were quite subsidiary questions. The important question was as to how he justified asking for 128,000 men for the Navy, and the suggestion was based on some writings of Lord Brassey's which he had not seen, but which appeared to be to this effect, that fewer men might do provided they fell back on the Reserves.

*Mr. J. M. MACDONALD: No, that is not his point. He contends that the whole of the combatant vessels of the Fleet could be manned for the purpose of war by the number of men that were voted in 1898–1899, and that for the wastage of war you ought to fall back on your Reserves.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he did not know what the number was in 1898–1899, but the numbers voted in any one year were determined by what were considered to be the war requirements of the British Navy. The first of these was that all the more modern warships, the initial war fleet, should be ready. The initial war fleet consisted of all ships except special service ships, which were a kind of reserve, and auxiliary ships. The second requirement was that the initial war fleet must be manned by active service men, who alone could be ready at once. He had never heard of any alternative scheme which did not involve or imply the use of reserves and that involved the following disadvantages. It would take time to call them out—days must elapse before they could get to their rendezvous, and, the Reserves not being equal to active service men it took time even for the best of them to rise to active service efficiency. In the third place it would require some time for them to settle down into their places.

*MR. J. M. MACDONALD: Is our policy with reference to the Naval Reserves like the policy of Germany and France or different ?

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he could not answer for the policy of France and Germany. He had enough to do to answer for his own policy. Any alternative to the system he had described would be to cut down the initial war fleet and to rely upon the Reserves, which would impair our readiness for war. He believed our system was a good one. At all events it was one on which the Admiralty had organised the Navy for some years past. He hoped the Committee would pardon him if he did not go into the figures which he had in his hand, but he would hand them over to any Member who would like to see them. First of all, he struck out the ineffectives, 4,500 cadets and boys. The next was that a certain number would be required to provide nucleus crews for special service vessels, which would be filled with Reserves after mobilisation, and to supply wastage. The balance of the active service list, after these two elements had been deducted, was just sufficient and no more than sufficient to man the initial war fleet. The distribution in peace was, of course, a very different thing, and might be taken to be something like the following. He would enumerate the elements in the items and ask the House not to press him for the figures. There would first be a number required for ships in commission, including the war fleet. Then there would be those required for the keeping up of the special service vessels. The third item was surveying ships, which would absorb a considerable number. The fourth item was the number required to provide complements for harbour establishments and tenders connected with harbour establishments. Then there were the men on leave and those employed in home ports. The item which would interest his hon. friend more than any other was that of the men waiting draft, on leave and employed in home ports—those, in other words, who were borne on barracks. The number borne on barracks, to use the technical term, was 11,607, as compared with 20,647 three years ago. He considered that a great reduction. Of the number borne on barracks there were only about half actually in barracks. He would be glad if he could give the hon. Member any further satisfaction as to the validity of the system.

*MR. J. M. MACDONALD said that although he was grateful for the statement which had been made on behalf of the Government he could not say that he was altogether satisfied. There were points upon which he thought the Committee was entitled to further information, and which would have to be pressed upon some other occasion. But for the moment he accepted his right hon. friend's statement and asked leave to withdraw his Motion. [Cries of "No."]

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London) said he did not think the hon. Member should be allowed to go away from his position in that way. He thought they ought to take the judgment of the House in order to see which hon. Members on both sides of the House were desirous of having a good and an efficient Navy. He congratulated the hon. Member for Stirlingshire upon having made one of the most statesmanlike and well-reasoned speeches which it had been his privilege to listen to in the House of Commons for some years. He was sorry the House was so empty when the hon. Member delivered his speech, more especially on the Ministerial Benches. [An Hon. Member: What about the Opposition Benches ?] It was a lesson which hon. Gentlemen opposite might well have learned had they been present, but which the Members on the Opposition were well up in, and upon which they did not require any teaching. Something had been said about the sanctity of contract, and that the contract with Japan was a sacred one and must be enforced. He would like to say a few words upon the alliance with Japan, but before doing so he would deal with the reasons which had been brought forward by the hon. Member for Falkirk. He had intended to move an Amendment, because he thought the number of men was too small, but the hon. Member had moved in the opposite sense, and if he pressed his Motion to a division he should vote with the Government. The hon. Member for Stretford had argued that it was not necessary to have such a large number of men in the Fleet, because of the Anglo-Russian Convention and because we were at peace with the world, and he urged that the working classes would benefit if they were not taken into the Fleet. He thought that the working classes were benefited by being found employment in the Navy. The argument had been advanced that in 1899 the number of men was quite sufficient to man the Navy, he presumed he meant of that day. That was a very extraordinary argument, because the Fleet was larger to-day than in 1899 and the Fleets of other nations also were much larger. The hon. Member opposite had quoted the figures for France and Germany, but he had forgotten to mention that in those countries they had conscription. If the hon. Member for Falkirk was prepared to vote for conscription in this country, then he might reasonably argue that our Naval policy should be put on the same footing as other countries, but so long as we had not conscription in this country it was idle to draw such a parallel. The hon. Member had said it was a very bad thing that they should have to maintain ships to give training to sailors and that a large number of men were kept in barracks, which also was a bad policy. They could not, in his opinion, train seamen in barracks. The Secretary to the Admiralty had said there were fewer men in barracks now than there had been for a long time, whilst the hon. Member for Falkirk had argued that all these men were not required and that it was a bad thing to train them on vessels at sea. His opinion was that was the best thing they could possibly do. He had always understood that one of the reasons for our success at Trafalgar was that the French and the Spanish sailors who manned the warships had not had sufficient training at sea, because they had been kept in harbours and barracks and many of them were sick when they went into action. [Laughter]. Hon. Members laughed, but if they would read history they would find that his statement was quite correct. It had been overlooked altogether that it was necessary to have a trained Reserve. In the old days of sea fights the captain and officers knew their men, and the men knew their officers. In these circumstances they would be more likely to make a good fight than if they did not know each other, and if the officers were pitchforked on board ship at short notice. He would be curious to hear what the hon. Member for Bradford had to say on this subject. The proposition to reduce the number of men in the Navy would not be popular. The hon. Member opposite had pointed out that while the 128,000 men asked for this year was the same number as last year, there was an increase in the cost of £260,000. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Local Government Board stated the other day in the country that his Party had put the different public offices on a business footing. Was it putting the Admiralty on a business footing to pay more for the same number of men ? It was absolutely the reverse. His own idea would be to get more efficiency with less cost. Earlier in the evening they had been told that Germany was building four vessels of the "Dreadnought" or "Invincible" type, as against two which we were building. He asked the hon. Member for the Falkirk Burghs what he would do in the event of the Admiralty coming down next year and proposing to build four vessels of this type? The men must be got to man them. Did the hon. Member think that he could train seamen in the short space of a year or two years? Seamen must be brought up to the work, and the best were those who from boyhood had imbibed a liking for the great service in which they acquitted themselves so well. He did not know the cost of a "Dreadnought." Was it £1,000,000?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Nearer £2,000,000.

SIR F. BANBURY said it would be sheer waste of money to spend £8,000,000 on the building of four "Dreadnoughts" if we had not men to man them. The possession of an adequate Fleet put us in the position of being able to maintain the agreements and treaties we entered into with foreign nations, and also of maintaining the great Empire of which we were so justly proud, except perhaps the hon. Member for Bradford. He hoped the hon. Member for the Falkirk Burghs would have the courage of his convictions, and that he would go to a division on the Amendment. He himself had often been in small minorities in the division Lobby, and he generally found in the long run that the cause for which he voted was right. He did not say that that would be so in this case, but he mentioned his own experience as an encouragement to the hon. Gentleman not to be afraid of his own opinions. The Civil Lord said the other day: "Sufficient for the day is the programme thereof." His idea was to have enough vessels and men to sooth hon. Members for the moment, and that next year might take care of itself. Most Members of the House were, he thought, desirous of maintaining an efficient Navy, and, of course, that could not be done unless they had a proper number of men. The hon. Member for Stirlingshire had alluded to the treaty with Japan as one of the most valuable ever made, and he quite agreed with him. But it was useless to expect foreign nations to make treaties with us unless we observed them in a just spirit and maintained them, if necessary, by power, and in order to do that, we must have a sufficient number of ships and men. It was a great mistake to suppose that anything would be saved by reducing the number of men in the Navy. We were more likely to save money by having an efficient Fleet kept up to the two-Power standard. He was not sure he would not rather have it at a three-Power standard. The Fleet was the very best protection against war we could have and he did not think the country would grudge the cost of a powerful and efficient Fleet. He would, therefore, vote against the Amendment.

MR. BELLAIRS said that the two-Power standard had never applied to anything but battleships, and had nothing to do with the manning of the Fleet. One reason for the increase of the vote was that the seamen were being increased while the Marines were being reduced, though the Marines were more efficient and cheaper. No one understood why this policy of hostility to the Marines was being pursued. The increase in the number of cadets was due to the new system of training. It was unnecessary to take engineers for the Navy at thirteen years of age. Then there had been a great increase in the boy artificers, who were trained at great expense to the country. We had formerly a system by which we got first rate artificers into the service, and their training cost the country nothing. The men were doing a great deal of dockyard work, and the moment the *personnel* of the Navy was cut down the number of men employed in the dockyards would have to be increased. That ought to be brought into account. It was also to be remembered that we had a number of ships doing merely police work, which was not the case with the French and German Navies. For the suppression of piracy and the slave trade, and gun-running in the Persian Gulf, China, and elsewhere, the world Powers practically relied on the police efforts of the British Navy. That, too, ought to be brought into account. He thought that the system of entering men as boys in the

Royal Navy should be altered. He confessed that he had changed his mind in regard to the question of the Reserve. A certain number of short-service men was desirable undoubtedly, but the number should not exceed 5,000. It was quite true that 20 per cent. of work done on board ship was performed by unskilled men, but it had been found from experience that when these short-service men were discharged to the shore, they did not pick up civil employment again with the same facility as the ten years' service men. Another point was that the American Navy had great difficulty in getting men, while, after our being at the expense of training up men who passed into the Reserve, these men went abroad and joined the American Navy. In his opinion the American Navy would never expand as some people imagined so long as they had this manning difficulty. If we were to go on in a wholesale scale for short service in the Navy, the result would be that large numbers of these men would be attracted to the United States by the superior pay and comforts which they had on board American warships.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) said he considered the arguments of the hon. Member for Falkirk Burghs almost a fallacy. The hon. Member complained of the excess of men we had engaged in the naval services, chiefly because a large percentage of them were during the greater part of the year to be found ashore and not afloat. No doubt the Admiralty would keep a very large number of the 128,000 men in the Navy on shore if they could afford to do so. But they had to make up their minds year by year what was the minimum number of ships required for the proper defence of the country, and having done that to determine upon an adequate number of men to man them. It was then the duty of the Admiralty to see how they could keep these ships in an efficient and seaworthy condition and ready at a moment's notice for war in the cheapest possible way. If ships did not cost more in commission than in reserve everyone would say that every ship should be in commission and ready for war, but owing to the extreme expense the Admiralty adopted a variety of expedients by which they could keep the ships efficient and ready at a reasonable time to meet the enemy. It was clear that those ships which were occasionally taken for tactical exercises did not cost as much as those in full commission. The hon. Member seemed to assume that because these men were kept ashore they were unnecessary. The proper way to look at the matter was to recognise that our Navy required a certain number of men, and until such time as they were required for warlike purposes it was our duty to keep them on duty that would reduce the cost of maintenance as much as possible. The object of the hon. Member was to reduce not only the number of men but the number of ships, and he understood he would be willing to reduce the power of the Navy below the two-Power standard. If that were so they were in this position. They must either admit the desirability of keeping the Navy up to the two-Power standard, which carried with it a little over that standard or rely upon diplomacy and treaties with Japan and the *entente cordiale* with France.

MR. MADDISON (Burnley) on a point of order asked whether the hon. Member was in order in discussing the general policy on the Vote for men.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG said that the question of reduction of men was intimately bound up with that of the number of ships.

*THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN said that he had suggested that the reduction moved should be withdrawn and the main Question put up again if hon. Members wished to resume the discussion on the general policy; but the hon. Member for South Antrim objected to this course, and had insisted on speaking on this question of the reduction of men. His remarks must be confined to the Vote under discussion.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG said that accepting the Deputy-Chairman's ruling, he would reserve his remarks to another occasion.

MR. JOHN WARD (Stoke-on-Trent) said he wished to refer to a very interesting point which had not yet been sufficiently dealt with. The hon. Member for Falkirk Burghs had made a suggestion that it might be possible to dispense with a great number of what might be called the standing Army of the Navy, and that that might be done by the introduction of a short-service system in the Navy on the same principle as that in the Army. That was, he thought, a very dangerous suggestion for a man who was opposed to militarism to make. He maintained that the short-service system in the Army was not a benefit in any way from the labour point of view. The tendency of all those in favour of conscription for the Army and Navy was that there should be a great reserve of men produced by short service. He disagreed with that principle altogether, because in his opinion the short service system destroyed civil habits and at the same time gave no very definite substitute for them. When a man had served three or four years in the Army and was then thrown back again into civil life, he was almost entirely divorced from ordinary occupations, and the most disastrous thing at the present moment, in connection with unemployment, was the inability of soldiers who had been engaged on the short-service system to get ordinary work again. In addition to that the two services were entirely different. He did not suppose that even the most extreme militarist would require the soldier to be trained for more than a year, but it could not be argued that because it was satisfactory in the Army it would necessarily be satisfactory in regard to the men of the Navy. He had heard it suggested that it took at least twelve years to make a good sailor, and if they were going to man the Navy voluntarily and with no conscription it was necessary that they should retain in it men who required so much training. In the Navy, moreover, the way of doing the work was constantly changing, and a sailor of five or six years ago would have to go through a fresh training of from six to eight months to do his work to-day. He thought the Admiralty would be very ill-advised in present conditions if they were to reduce the period of service in the Navy, and rely upon the conditions which applied in the Army. They must admit that the great difficulty in getting men for the Army to-day was the fact that the man only came for a very short time, and he knew that he would have to go back again into civil life with all its difficulties. They did not get such good men as they would if a man knew that he had a career before him which would give him something to do for the best part of his life, with a prospect of a pension or superannuation or some kind of employment at the end of his period of service. He did not think that one could divorce a professional Army or a professional Navy from the long-service principle. He did not think, however, they could rely upon manning the Navy by a Reserve which had been trained six or seven years ago, and then been scattered all over the population and had reintroduced itself into civil life and civil habits. Under those circumstances he hoped that not the slightest attention would be paid to the suggestion to reduce the period of service so far as the Navy was concerned. They could easily teach a man the goose step, and a few trots up and down the parade ground that he never used when he went to battle. He supposed it was done in the Army for the purpose of maintaining discipline or for the purposes of show on a regal occasion, as it enabled them to make a very smart appearance, but as a battle arrangement or for purposes of moving under fire no officer would tell his men to form up as they did on occasions of that description. One would think that it would be quite easy to take the ordinary civil population if they had the slightest elementary knowledge of fire-arms and make an army of them in a short period, but it was not possible in case of an emergency to do that with regard to seamen, and if the Navy was to be kept in a position of preparedness, ready for any emergency, they must have a long-service system maintained, and have the men always ready. He did not think any other system would be satisfactory in any degree. The ships and the Navy cost quite as much money as was desirable as it was, but they ought to be ready for any emergency, and he hoped they should not introduce that wretched short-service system which had turned adrift so many thousands of men who had lost the ordinary inclinations of civilian life. As they saw it to-day in the Army under the short-service system, after men had been used they were got rid of. After they had been trained and used as so many tools and nothing else, they were discharged without any consideration as to their position in the future or as to any consequences whatever. He thought it would be a great mistake, having a professional Navy and a volunteer Navy, if they did not offer the boys a career where they could keep themselves for the best part of their lives and have some security, provided they performed their duties and maintained a good standard of conduct, of being provided for. That seemed to be the best system and there was no reason why they should alter it.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said he was unwilling to allow the hon. Member for Falkirk to run away from his Motion to-day, after taking up the position which he had done, and he wished to add his voice to the protest made by his hon. friend the Member for Stirlingshire. The hon. Member for Falkirk Burghs came up smiling after his defeat the other day, and tried to make out that he was voicing the opinion of the Liberal Party. He protested against that. The duty of the Liberal Party were to follow the Government into the division Lobby and not to try to urge them to take steps which were dangerous to the safety of the country and disastrous to the Navy. On last Monday there were some eighty odd Members of the House who were unwilling to wait to vote, and they signed a document denouncing the action of the hon. Member for Falkirk, root and branch, and it seemed to him that expression should be given to the views, not of a small party or a miserable minority, but to the views of the Government as to the maintenance of the two-Power standard in the Navy. He objected to these haphazard suggestions of reductions of 8,000 or 18,000 men or any other number at the instance of private Members, and he entered as strongly as possible his protest against the hon. Member and his friends being described as the party of economy. He appealed to hon. Members to say whether there was anything so wasteful or so expensive as haphazard reductions, to be followed, as they must be wherever there was a continuous policy, by hasty increases in a subsequent year. The only way to deal with this great problem with any regard to elementary economy was to keep every year the construction programme and the men up to the standard which the Government had laid down, which the Liberal Party had laid down, and which differed altogether from the ideals of the hon. Member for Falkirk, who had again tried to force his views on the Liberal Party, and put them forward as if those who held them were the Liberal Party, and those who opposed them were not the Liberal Party. He protested against the whole assumption of the hon. Gentleman and his friends, and joined with his hon. friend the Member for Stirlingshire in condemning it. Such views as those of the hon. Member for Falkirk were not economy, and embodied, in fact, the falsest economy. It might or might not be good electioneering. That remained to be seen, but that it was good economy he most emphatically denied. The hon. Member for Falkirk seemed greatly distressed because our Navy had 80,000 men more than the German Navy; he did not suppose it had ever entered the hon. Member's head that the German Army was to ours 4,000,000 to something less than a tenth of that figure, and that our Navy was to us what her Army was to Germany. To descend to such trivialities on such a question as this, on which depended the very existence of this country, with all its trade and prosperity, was certainly not to express the views which animated the great Liberal Party. The hon. Member for Falkirk was by no means justified in claiming the authority of Lord Brassey for his views, as any one would see who read the whole of Lord Brassey's letter. It was easy enough to wrest a particular phrase from its context, but if Lord Brassey was an adherent of the party of the hon. Member, all he could say was that he did not understand what Lord Brassey wrote. He would ask hon. Members to read

Lord Brassey's letter through. His hon. friend the Member for Stirlingshire had dealt with a great many questions in regard to the Navy, to which he would not refer, but there was one he left out and that was the necessity of keeping open communications with India and maintaining the safety of the Empire there and of our fellow-countrymen and of British capital, and he thought that when the people of that country read of a proposal for an off-hand reduction of 8,000 men in the Navy, they would be inclined to say that they would regret the disappearance of the blue-jackets, more than that of all the Members of Parliament. It was true that we were put to great expense at present to maintain the Fleet at a two-Power standard, but if we gave in the whole object of those who were pushing us to that expenditure would be achieved. He would give an illustration from the realm of industry which he thought applied particularly well. They had seen how Germany had pushed forward her aniline dyes until they had crushed out of competition the natural indigo. Nobody knew what it had cost them to do it, but they had done it until indigo had been almost beaten out of the market, no one knew at what cost, or at what loss. The same thing might happen in regard to ships, and when they had beaten us the balance of power would be permanently disturbed, and it was not for us who were not the poorest Power in the world to give way in the game of beggar my neighbour, which was being played. The hon. Member on Monday said that what he desired to see was a diminution in the effective fighting strength of the Fleet. How could anybody actually desire that in the interests of the British nation? Our actual existence depended upon the effective fighting power of our Fleet. The hon. Member for Tyneside had urged that it was not necessary in any case that the Fleet should be maintained at such strength as to be able to act on the offensive. He said that the sole requirement of the Navy was that it should be able to act on the defensive. If it had not been for the erudition and eloquence of the hon. Member, he would have been inclined to ask if he had ever been at school, because, even in one's school-days, it was clear enough that anyone who acted on the defensive, without being able to act on the offensive, was soon knocked down. Another hon. Member had said that the cost of the Navy was so great that it must be reduced, but the expenditure on the Army and Navy had not increased in anything like the same proportion as population, wealth, trade and area of the Empire. It was absolutely impossible to keep our insurance at the original figure when the value of the property insured had multiplied exceedingly. Ten years ago the cost of our insurance was 5·45 per cent. of our trade; to-day it was 5·08. The insurance of the Empire as a whole cost 3 per cent. of the annual income and 4 per cent. of the capital. The hon. Member for Stoke, who was so sound upon the Navy, had made an admirable speech, and he was sure he would realise that the matter must be looked at in a comparative spirit. It was trifling to say we could cut down our Navy by so many ships and men. We had to consider our treaty and diplomatic obligations and the volume of our trade and our responsibilities all over the world. The hon. Member was, however, one of those who held that all expenditure on the Navy was unproductive. He did not know whether the hon. Members for Chatham and Woolwich and Plymouth would agree with that. He did not think the hon. Member for Stoke would in fact agree with it. He had a Question on the Paper for to-morrow which seemed to show that the expenditure was productive and that he was anxious that it should continue to go into the pockets into which it had gone before. It had to be borne in mind that the whole of the period in which there had been an increase in the cost of the Navy had not been a period in which this country had been driven to the verge of ruin, but had been one in which wages had doubled, and in which the prosperity of the country had increased by leaps and bounds. He could not understand how it was that hon. Members who on Friday were prepared to coerce every country which did not adopt our habits and customs, to treat Macedonia as if it was as much ours as Monmouthshire, and to put the whole world right, could not realise that they would not be able even to make such speeches unless we had a strong Navy.

MR. MADDISON asked whether the hon. Member was in order in discussing the whole question of naval policy on a specific Vote for men.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must not go into the general question. The reduction, as I have pointed out, is for a reduction of 8,000 men.

*MR. REES said he was coming back to that. If there had not been a great many men and ships there would not have been much talk about Macedonia or the Congo. He apologised for having digressed, but he particularly protested against the manner in which the hon. Member and his friends came forward as the chosen friends of economy. There was no economy in haphazard reductions. They must lead to spasmodic and increased expenditure. When hon. Members got up and said that the true Liberal principles were those they professed, he asked what was the test of being a true Liberal? Was it supporting a Liberal Government or supporting a minority which opposed the Liberal Government in the Division Lobby?

*MR. BARNES (Glasgow, Blackfriars) said he rose to join in the appeal of the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London to the hon. Member for Falkirk to go to a division, but, if a division took place, he would, he thought, be found, in one lobby and the hon. Baronet in another. As one returned to Parliament two years ago pledged to a policy of retrenchment in order to get reform, he was going to vote for the Amendment as he had hitherto voted for every Amendment of a like character. The hon. Baronet had said that the Vote for the money would be a good thing for the working classes because they would be employed. He was, therefore, in favour of 8,000 men wasting their lives in simply manning ships apart altogether from the question whether they were necessary. That argument, if argument it could be called, was based upon an economic fallacy. There could be no increase of employment or of prosperity by simply increasing naval or public expenditure, which impoverished the taxpayers. He agreed that the Navy should be maintained up to its proper requirements, but he denied that employment in the Navy necessarily increased the sum total of employment in the country. If the taxpayers were called upon to pay the wages of these 8,000 men, they would have less to spend otherwise. Their effective purchasing power in the way of providing boots, shoes, clothing, etc., for their wives and families would be diminished, and therefore, so far from these 8,000 men in the Navy increasing the number of men employed on the whole, it simply meant that 8,000 were employed in that way who might be employed in another, and he ventured to say a far better way in developing our home resources. They might be found wages in productive employment instead of in the unproductive manner suggested by the hon. Member for the City of London.

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY: I would like to ask the hon. Member whether they would not join the ranks of the unemployed.

*MR. BARNES said he contended they would not. He assumed, of course, that the money was to be saved and not wasted in another manner. The taxpayers would be relieved and would have the money to spend in more productive forms of employment. The second argument of the hon. Gentleman was even weaker than his first. He told them that they must maintain this number of men and go on maintaining the Navy at least at its present strength, because the Germans were adding to their Navy. He did not profess to be an expert; but he did not think it was a matter for experts. The House was the custodian of the purse of the country, and he hoped it would continue to discharge its duty without reference to experts. He had gone into the matter so far as he could in the light of common sense, and he had come to the lamentable conclusion that the statesmen of this country were very largely responsible for increasing these grievous burdens upon the backs of the peoples of the world. He thought he could show, even from the point of view of tonnage of ships launched, that during the twelve years prior to the advent of the Liberal Government, this country was responsible for a great deal more than was necessary to maintain the two-Power standard. The Secretary of the Admiralty was quite within the mark when he told them that the present condition of the Navy was at all events ample to maintain the two-Power standard. He believed there was a considerable margin. He would just give a figure or two in regard to the men. Going back to 1889 he found there were in the Navy 65,400 men, and in seventeen years the number had grown to 128,000. That seemed to be a matter for congratulation and satisfaction to hon. Members. He hoped they would be able to satisfy their constituents. He thought it was a needless and wicked waste of men's activities and he was going to vote for every single Amendment having for its object a diminution of the number. He believed the programme of Germany which had been mentioned so much in the last few days was a very natural answer to this increased expenditure of our own during the last twelve or fourteen years, and he hoped the House would be brave enough and sympathetic enough, having regard to the conditions of our own people and to the need there was for lifting them out of the sordid condition in which they were, to give the German nation a lead in the other direction, which all the indications went to prove they would be glad to have. Now he came to the extraordinarily jingoistic speech of the hon. Member who had preceded him, and who claimed to speak for the Liberal Party. He could not congratulate the Liberal Party upon its spokesman. It seemed to him that the Liberal Party was at the parting of the ways. It would have to do one of two things, either to use the resources of the nation in a policy of social reform or to adopt the policy of wasting them in chasing the myths of the naval and military experts. He hoped it would do the first, but if it did not, it appeared clear that it was a long farewell for Liberalism in the government of this country. A great deal had been said in the last few days about our Empire. What he was concerned about more than Empire in the sense in which it was meant was the protection of the homes of the people of this country from the devastating effects of poverty. He was concerned about seeing that the children were fed and were likely to be brought up as proper trustees to carry on the burden of Empire, which could not be done as long as we spent the money in the way that had been indicated in that debate. The Member for Stoke spoke the other day in a despairing sort of note on the two-Power standard, and seemed to have swallowed the experts holus bolus and opened his mouth and shut his eyes to see what they were going to send him. Reforms had never been won in that sort of spirit, and although he was going to give all the consideration due to experts when talking on matters that came within their province, he would not accept their advice as to how much was to be spent on ships and how many men they were to have. This country, with possibly France thrown in, was more responsible than any other country for the great burden that they were bearing in Navy expenditure, and for the prevention of the carrying out of that principle of the immunity of merchant ships which would do a great deal not only to limit our expenditure, but to limit that of other countries. The arguments for maintaining the *status quo* seemed to him very weak. They were told the war might go on for an indefinite period if merchant ships were immune from seizure. If it went on for some time with the loss of seizure, at all events people would have a little time to think and the war might be brought to a conclusion. Then they were told that the mercantile marines of other countries were expanding, that they were getting more vulnerable, and therefore it was necessary that we should maintain this principle of the destruction of ships at sea, because, if we did, other countries would be less liable to go to war with us. But that might be carried a bit further. If the two-Power standard was to be applied all round, Germany and France had as much right as we had to maintain as many men as they liked and must protect their commerce. What was that going to take us to? Other countries were increasing their mercantile marines, therefore Germany and France must increase their navies in order to protect them, and if we were going to follow up our traditional policy of the two-Power standard with a large margin, the prospect was really a frightful one. He hoped the House would look upon the matter in a much more serious light than had been exhibited by the Member for the City of London and others, and would welcome anything that might come from the German Emperor or anybody else with a view to lessening the men who were wasting their lives in this way and the expenditure which pressed so hardly on the people and especially the class for whom he spoke.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.) thought the Committee would be disposed to congratulate the Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow, on the courage with which he was prepared to face a division. There was a disposition on the other side to run away from a division, but hon. Members opposite would now be compelled in consequence of his brave words to go to a division. The speech of the hon. Member for Montgomery had been met by a great deal of interruption on the part of hon. Members below the gangway, because that speech was animated throughout by a patriotic spirit. Unionists had no desire for a monopoly of patriotism. The patriotic spirit of the hon. Member's speech did not commend itself to hon. Members opposite, whose one desire apparently was to do everything they possibly could against their own country. The hon. Member for the Blackfriars Division had expressed the opinion that the 8,000 men whom he wanted to displace from the Navy would find remunerative employment elsewhere if they were discharged to-morrow from the Navy.

*Mr. BARNES: I am sorry to interrupt, but I said nothing of the kind.

Mr. T. L. CORBETT: I quite understood the hon. Member to say he believed these men would find more remunerative employment if they left the Navy to-morrow, and that the taxpayers would not suffer by this reduction.

*Mr. BARNES: What I said was that employment as a whole is not increased by the employment of these 8,000 men in the Navy, and if the taxpayers were relieved of the cost of their maintenance other men, not these necessarily, might be employed in a productive way

Mr. T. L. CORBETT said he could not profess to follow these subtleties. The hon. Member now reasserted that there would not be fewer men employed if these 8,000 men were discharged. He would like very much to know where these 8,000 men were going to find employment if they were driven out of the Navy to-morrow and how they could possibly add to the employment of the great mass of the unemployed which was constantly being most pathetically put to the House by the hon. Member and his colleagues, who condemned the President of the Local Government Board for his want of sympathy in dealing with the unemployed question. But he was glad the hon. Member was going to show the courage of his convictions and take a division which the mover of the Amendment was afraid to take.

Mr. HUNT (Shropshire, Ludlow) said the Government claimed that they were maintaining the two-Power standard. The Civil Lord did not deny that we had far less second-class cruisers than Germany and far less torpedo boats.

*The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: Order, order! We are only dealing now with the Vote for the men.

Mr. HUNT said he wished to call the attention of the Committee to the insufficient pay of the ordinary seamen in the Navy.

*The DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: That question does not arise on this Vote.

Sir F. BANBURY said the hon. Member for Glasgow had accused him of not approaching this subject in a serious vein. He denied that, for there was no question more serious or deserving greater consideration at the hands of the Committee. The dismissal of those 8,000 men from the Navy would not only add to the general lack of employment throughout the country, but it would add to the number of men who would be thrown out of employment in the dockyards. Did the hon. Member know the effect of the dismissal of the men from the Woolwich Dockyard?

*MR. BARNES said he happened to know that during the very time those men were being discharged from Woolwich, employment in that particular trade was more full and complete than it had ever been before in his time.

SIR F. BANBURY: But did those dismissals increase employment?

*MR. BARNES said he did not know, and it would be impossible for anyone to answer that question in a simple and short way. The reply would involve a great many considerations which could not be dealt with properly in a simple answer to a question. It was, however, an economical fallacy to say that the employment of men irrespective of the character of their employment was going to add to the benefits of employment as a whole, and to that statement he adhered. It ought to be obvious to the hon. Baronet that that was a sound argument.

MR. HUNT asked if it was not a fact that the men who were turned out at Woolwich went over to work in Germany and Canada?

MR. BARNES said it was true that a few went to Germany and Canada, and if they bettered their position good luck to them. That had been going on for years, and the number of men who went to Germany and Canada was not any greater during the dismissals from the Woolwich Arsenal than in any previous time.

MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing) said it had been stated publicly that the skilled artisans of Woolwich had been sought after to work in the German arsenals.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I understand that the mover of this Amendment has asked leave to withdraw, but that leave was refused. I would suggest that it would be for the general convenience to come to a decision on the Amendment.

CAPTAIN J. CRAIG (Down, E.) said that so far in the debate nothing had been said on behalf of that valuable branch of the Army service, the Royal Marines. He asked the Committee to consider seriously whether it was advisable to make any further reductions in this force. This question appeared to have been altogether overlooked in the debate. According to an answer given by the Secretary to the Admiralty, the number of officers in the Royal Marines had been reduced since 1905 from 3,331 to 3,228. The number of men in the same force on the 1st of October, 1905 was 18,640, but on the 1st of February, 1908 the number had been reduced to 17,403. In view of that drastic reduction in this valuable arm of the service he asked hon. Members seriously to consider this question. The Royal Marines promoted a spirit of friendly rivalry in the Navy on board ship and they were very popular amongst all classes in the Fleet. The cost of training a recruit for this particular branch of the service was less than that of an ordinary seaman. The presence of Royal Marine officers on board ship enabled the Naval officers to take a wider view of the many problems which constantly arise in connection with Naval affairs, because those who were navigating and managing the engineering department and looking after the gunnery were apt to take a more or less narrow view owing to the concentration of their minds upon their immediate duty, and that to a certain extent was obviated by having with them on board those who had been trained from an Army point of view. That was an effective check to any narrow-mindedness in that portion of His Majesty's service. Influence was brought to bear by officers in the Royal Marines who possessed a certain amount of barrack knowledge, and that was of considerable assistance to the officers on board ship. The Marines were very valuable men when it came to landing parties on active service, and in all ceremonial matters abroad they were very serviceable in the direction of impressing foreign countries with the character of the men of the British Navy. History showed that on many occasions the Royal Marines had proved to be extremely useful in quelling unfortunate disturbances when they occurred on board ship. He did not think hon. Members opposite knew what they were doing when they went into the lobby to vote for a reduction of the number of men in the Navy. He knew that the country prized the Royal Marines very dearly. He asked the right hon. Gentleman whether it was not a fact that along with the serious reduction of the Royal Marines there had also been an indirect reduction of the Force. Was it not a fact that there had been a transfer of a number of bandsmen and band boys, and that consequently even the figure given by the right hon. Gentleman at Question time was incorrect? He considered that this was a very serious matter. There had been rumours in the country that it was the intention of the Government to do away with the Royal Marines altogether. Was there any truth in these rumours? If the right hon. Gentleman would deny that there was any intention on the part of the Government to interfere further with the Royal Marines, he would allay serious apprehension in the country. At the same time he might tell the Committee whether the 17,403 who were on the strength on 1st February this year represented Royal Marines and not boys and bandsmen who had been transferred in order to make up that number. A service for which the Royal Marines had always been particularly suitable was that of guarding consulates and other British representative places abroad where it might not be convenient to get any branch of the Army speedily on the spot. If the number of men in the Navy was to be reduced in the way proposed by the mover of the Amendment, he would like to ask the hon. Member and his supporters if they had considered what was to become of the men discharged. It was all very well for hon. Gentlemen below the gangway to talk in the way they were doing, but if their demand for a reduction in the number of men in the Navy were granted, they would before many days be crying out about the unemployed. If 1,000 men were suddenly told that they must be discharged next week or next month, it would be a crying shame, for the men would not only be thrown out of employment, but they would be prevented from pursuing a calling which they had followed for years with credit both to themselves and to the country.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) said that this discussion appeared to him to be absolutely illogical. Surely the first question which ought to be settled was whether a two-Power standard was necessary. If that was necessary, a certain number of ships were necessary. The House had decided to support the Government concerning the preservation of the Navy in a high state of efficiency. The Government had decided on a certain shipbuilding scheme as necessary to keep our Navy in a position of predominance. If that were so, it must be illogical to attempt to reduce the number of men. If a certain number of ships were built, there must be men to man them. The centre of the whole thing was that the number of men demanded by the Admiralty was a number absolutely necessary to man the ships of the British Navy when these were ready. Last year when, on the initiative of the hon. Member for Liverpool, they had a long discussion on the Home Fleet, it was pointed out that that Fleet was insufficiently manned, and that nucleus crews did not represent the highest form of efficiency which those responsible for the Navy would like to see. But as finance governed, after all, the number of ships built and the number of men employed, the Government had decided to run the risk of having the Home Fleet not ready to proceed to sea on the immediate outbreak of war. To that extent therefore, they were deficient in the number of men required. He was within the bounds of reason and logic in saying that not one single man ought to be reduced from the Navy if they kept the shipbuilding programme of the Government as it stood. They might reduce the number of ships and cut down the naval programme, but they ought not to cut down the number of men. They had been told that the Japanese had made a soldier in six months, and the Secretary for War thought that he could make a Briton a soldier in six months, but anyone who knew anything about the Navy must be aware that an able-bodied seaman could not be made on board a man-of-war in anything like six months, or even a year. For anyone who accepted the policy of the Government, or believed in the efficiency of the Navy, to propose to reduce the number of men in the Navy was absolutely illogical. An hon. Member below the gangway had talked of unproductive employment, but on that basis if employment in the Navy was unproductive, then the whole carrying trade and mercantile marine of this country was unproductive, because, if our Navy was needed at all it was needed as an insurance and to protect our mercantile ships, and those industries in which so many Members of the House were interested, and upon which they depended on their success in life. The hon. Member for the Blackfriars Division of Glasgow had said that if the men were discharged from the Navy, they would find employment elsewhere, and he wondered why it was that the Secretary for War had advised men discharged from Woolwich to go to Canada. He had stated in January, 1907, that the conditions of unemployment were worse during 1906 than in the whole ten years previous to that date; yet the hon. Gentleman opposite had the courage to say to the Committee that the 8,000 men reduced from the Navy and sent out to an over-stocked market would be no injury to those men now employed and those men unemployed! Hon. Gentlemen below the gangway who represented Labour ought to realise that all that stood between the working men and conscription was the 128,000 men in the Navy. If they moved those 128,000 men they would naturally destroy the Navy, and every working man in the country would be obliged to shoulder his rifle, go into barracks, and lose his position in the scheme of national life. If the Committee had any pretence to reason and logic, as he believed it had every claim to both, the hon. Member who moved the Amendment would find when he went into the lobby that he and those who agreed with him would receive little support from the Jingoes on their own side of the House. It would surprise him if there were not Jingoes on that side of the House, although it was generally imagined that that title applied only to the Opposition side.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that the hon. Member meant the Jingoes this side of the Channel.

SIR GILBERT PARKER asked if the hon. Member meant the channel between one side of the House and the other? When the Civil Lord of the Admiralty waved his hand to those behind him, he supposed that the right hon. Gentleman meant that his strong Navy would be supported by Liberal Imperialists, as represented by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. He had made his point that the Amendment was absurd and illogical, and he had every faith that the House as it had done in the past would once more proclaim its devotion to a strong naval policy and the preservation of 128,000 men, which was the absolute minimum necessary for the manning of our Navy at its present standard of efficiency.

MR. JENKINS (Chatham) said he had sat for three days in the House listening to the discussion between the two front benches. He had been greatly interested in the speeches which had been delivered, but he trusted by this time that the Opposition were agreed with the Government as to the number of ships, as to how they should be built, as to the style of ships, and also as to the policy on which they were to be built and other matters connected with the building programme. He could not entirely associate himself with his hon. friends who sat near him, and he would not care to give a silent vote in this matter, not because like some of his hon. friends opposite he represented a naval constituency, but because he had made up his mind that he would never vote for a reduction of men and displace labour until this Government had seen its way to cater for the unemployed. He would like to draw the attention of the House to a most important question raised by the statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty in his Memorandum. He ventured to say that his action last year in dividing upon the question that there should be at every naval base a dry dock sufficiently large to dock the "Dreadnought" had been justified. For what did they find in the statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty when he spoke of the work connected with Rosyth? The noble Lord said that the necessity of this work was apparent when it was remembered that there was no naval dockyard capable of docking ships of the "Dreadnought" class along the whole of the east coast of Great Britain. That he repeated, and he was sure the country would agree, was a very serious statement. When the present Government came into office the Secretary to the Admiralty made a statement to the effect that they were going to observe continuity of policy, and that they had practically taken up the whole of the programme of their predecessors. He thought that that programme was carried out in 1906–7. He had there a Blue-book which gave an account of the Government's predecessors in office. In 1900 a Committee was appointed called the Naval Accommodation Committee, and on that Committee he noticed that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Worcestershire, together with four experts, were appointed to inquire into the naval bases of this country. They reported very fully, and in 1902 their report was signed and submitted to the Admiralty. They found in 1905 the hon. Member for Fareham, when the Naval Works Bill was before the House, dealing with the question of Rosyth and Chatham, which the Committee had recommended to be taken up.

Mr. VIVIAN (Birkenhead) rose to a point of order. He wished to know whether a Motion for reduction having been moved on a particular point this question could be referred to.

*The CHAIRMAN said that he did not think that the question of reduction being moved, really affected the questions that could be discussed. He did not consider that the question of reduction having been moved affected the questions of general policy which could be discussed upon this Vote.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG reminded the Chairman that he was called to order, and made to resume his seat for straying away from the question.

Mr. NIELD said that owing to the interposition of the hon. Member for Plymouth he did not proceed with his remarks and had not since been called on.

*The CHAIRMAN said he assented previously to the suggestion that they had better get rid of this Motion for reduction, but now he was appealed to on a point of order and he was bound to say that this reduction on the whole Vote did not restrict the general consideration of the subject of the Vote.

Mr. JENKINS, continuing his speech, read an extract from a speech made by the hon. Member for Fareham in July 1905, in which he said that the two most interesting items were the Chatham Dockyard extension and the Rosyth item. The broad result, he said, of the Admiralty deliberations in connection with these two services had been to push on the large expenditure foreshadowed at Rosyth and not to proceed with the Chatham Dockyard extension. This, he said, would perhaps be a surprise to some hon. Gentlemen in the House. Further, he said, that in view of the scheme outlined in 1903 for the expenditure of £4,500,000 in addition to the large expenditure foreshadowed for Rosyth, the Admiralty did consider that the expenditure for Chatham should be dispensed with at any rate for the present. In the latter part of his speech the hon. Gentleman said that there was a want of such accommodation on the East coast which it was necessary to provide at Rosyth or Chatham, but not at both. At that time the then Government knew perfectly well that there was no provision for ships of the larger type, and during their term of office the "Dreadnought" was designed, yet while this Committee was appointed in 1900 and the late Government went out of office in 1906, it being now 1908, nothing was done, and, therefore, the late Government must take a great share of the responsibility for this provision not being made for the larger vessels. He urged the House and the Secretary to the Admiralty to consider this important question. They had these vessels which cost the country £2,000,000. They might have vessels operating at the Nore, a vessel might be rammed, and where were they to take that ship? The nearest dock was 250 miles distant, and before the vessel could be got round there she would have foundered. For the sake of efficiency and economy it was absolutely necessary that these docks should be built. In the tea room hon. Members would find a skeleton model of the great Rosyth, which was going to cost this country at least £7,000,000. There was no foreman in any private yard in this country who would submit to his manager a model of such description as the one in the Tea Room. He desired to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty to allow the matter to stand over. It was a serious item. They were voting £5,000,000 for a new base which might cost £10,000,000 in the long run. The hon. Member for Stoke told them last week that they had gone 120 feet in the clay without coming to the rock bed. That was a very serious item. There was a great basin of 52½ acres with a depth of water of 38 feet 8 inches. The channel leading to it was to be dredged to a depth of 36 feet below high water mark. What was the depth at low water mark there already, and how far had they to dredge to get to the bed? The channel of the basin for submarines was to be dredged to 15 feet below low water. What was the depth of low water at Rosyth? These were pertinent questions which ought to be answered before the Admiralty laid out any more money. The outer channel was to be dredged to a depth of 36 feet below low water mark. He asked for some explanation from the Secretary to the Admiralty as to the position at Rosyth before the country was pledged to a scheme which might involve an outlay exceeding £10,000,000. He hoped the House, in considering reductions of armaments and how it could economise, would remember that we had existing naval bases which, at least, in his opinion, were equal to the proposed Rosyth base, according to the reports. If those reports were of no value, then the sooner the House appointed a Committee of laymen with the experts to see whether some definite conclusions could not be come to which would be thoroughly consistent the better.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): May I appeal to the House to come to a decision now and to bring to a close the general discussion on Vote A?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: Is that all that is to be taken to-night? We are discussing an Amendment moved from that side of the House. It has occupied some three hours of our time, and it has confined us within particular limits, no doubt wide enough for the hon. Member who moved the Amendment, but too narrow to permit of the discussion of some of the questions in which we are more interested. As between the hon. Member for Falkirk and the Government, we are on the side of the Government, and, if he goes to a division, I shall vote with the Government against the reduction. But before we got on to this Amendment we were discussing wider questions, questions of grave national and naval importance, and my right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition had in particular put a specific question to the representatives of the Admiralty, to which the Civil Lord's speech was no reply whatever. We are anxious on our side of the House to have an opportunity of resuming that discussion, and we cannot consent to leave Vote A. without having discussed it, unless we have a clear understanding with the Government, sanctioned by you, Sir, that we shall have an opportunity on Vote 1 to resume the general discussion which we were conducting before this Amendment was moved. If that is what is in the mind of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, then I think that makes the basis of an agreement between this bench and him; but if the idea is that we are to part with all opportunity of general discussion on the constructive policy or on the policy of the Admiralty generally, then certainly we could not consent to that at all. May I say one word more which is of importance? When we are discussing these matters of arrangement, it is essential that there should be no ground for possible misunderstanding. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Committee will look at the notices upon the Paper, they will see there are eight notices of reduction of Vote 1, and of those eight, seven are from the Government side of the House. I think it is essential, if we are to have any effective continuation of the general discussion, that it should take place before those Amendments are called upon. If it is postponed till after those Amendments are called upon, the accidents of debate may prevent it ever taking place at all. Therefore, before we assent in any way to abandoning our remaining opportunities on Vote A., we should like to know that the Government is willing that our discussion to-morrow should begin by a general discussion on naval policy on Vote 1, and, if I may ask you, Sir, for an expression of your opinion, that, under such circumstances, you would be prepared to sanction that course being taken.

*MR. BRAMSDON (Portsmouth) said he had an Amendment down to Vote A., and he had been patiently waiting to move it. He wanted to move it before Mr. Speaker left the Chair, but in deference to the general desire he refrained on its being represented that he could move it on Vote A. He had serious doubts now whether he would be able to move it at all, because the general discussion between the two Front Benches monopolised nearly the whole time, and minor men could not get a chance. He did not often trouble the House, but he had looked forward to addressing the House on naval matters, being the senior Member for the senior naval port.

MR. ASQUITH: As regards what the right hon. Gentleman says, if Vote A is taken now, we quite agree that the general discussion should proceed on Vote 1 before the Amendments are put, subject to the assent of the Chair. As regards my hon. friend's point, I think he can raise it quite as well on Vote 1 as on Vote A.

MAJOR SEELY referred to a Motion to reduce the Vote by £50 in order to discuss the question of the coastguards, which had been left in a position which they did not quite understand and as to which all parts of the House wished to have a more definite statement. He asked that it should be borne in mind in any arrangement that might be made that there were Members he believed on both sides who wished to have a brief discussion on the subject.

*MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said the hon. Member for Gravesend had accused the hon. Member for Falkirk of having moved a Resolution which was not quite logical, because if we had so many ships we must have so many men. The hon. Member for Falkirk, however, took his stand on the two-nation standard, but when it came to the number of men his opponents said that the two-nation standard was not to be adopted. He assured them that the number of men in the Navy was much more than the two-nation standard, and hon. Members opposite said the two-nation standard was not to guide them with reference to the number of men. It was said that we must have men enough in time of peace to man all our ships, but he did not think that followed. What was the reason for starting now to build great vessels which would only be used in four or five years time? The reason, he took it, was that they could not build and arm a huge ship of 18,000 or 20,000 tons in a year, and therefore they must begin a long time beforehand to build. But it was not necessary to have a large force of men in each one of these vessels always. He fancied that men could be got much more quickly than big ships and guns. There were trained men in the mercantile navy who could be easily got. They had been got in former wars. We had laid a great many countries in former wars under requisition for sailors to fight our battles, and we should be able to do so in the future, if we offered high wages. Another great advantage of not commissioning these ships would be that they would not become damaged. If the ships were put in commission and taken out to sea, the boilers and engines were soon worn out, and if the great guns were fired they were soon seriously injured. We had so many ships in commission that they were frequently in collision or run upon rocks. Therefore it would be wise to keep some of these ships carefully so that they would be as good as new, and it was by no means illogical to say they should reduce the number of men even though the number of ships was not reduced. Moreover, he could see no reason in building a great number of ships before we had docks to put them in. It was quite possible to effect great economies in the Navy without making great reductions in the number of men or ships. The wages and pensions for officers in the Navy amounted to £2,400,000 a year. Who could say it was necessary to have 175 admirals? A million was paid annually to officers on half or retired pay. What advantage was got from them? There were three commanders-in-chief, each getting £3,967 a year. What was the use of spending £3,967 on any officer? We did not advertise for officers. They had grown up in the Navy and gradually risen, stage by stage, and they would rise just the same, and be quite as efficient if the maximum salary was £1,000. His experience was that if a man was paid too much money he took a lot of time to spend it, while a man who had just enough to enable him to live devoted the whole of his time to his work. Then there were three commanders at £3,467, three more at £3,102, and two at £2,000 a year. That was a survival of the old-fashioned time when the Navy was looked upon to find a comfortable living for younger sons and relatives of the aristocracy. That day had gone by, but the salaries had not. He hoped the Chancellor of the Exchequer would use his influence with his colleagues to put an end to the existence of these exorbitant salaries. The amount of money we spent on the officers came to £515 a year each for pay and pension the whole time they were in the Navy. He wanted to be ready against attack. He had pointed out last year that every night when our fleet was at anchor no means were taken to prevent its destruction by an enemy. They took no precautions whatever to protect the Fleet in time of peace. No foreign foe would ever dream of attacking our Fleet unless it was done unawares. A part of the Russian Fleet was destroyed before the Russian admiral thought there was any danger. If they had to have a great Navy, then let them protect it and not wait until there was a prospect of war. No general in charge of a fort would leave it to be rushed by the enemy. The great art of military and naval tactics was to deceive the enemy and lead him into a false sense of security; if anyone ever dared to attack our Fleet it would be unexpectedly in a time of peace. No precautions were taken to protect the Fleet from attack at night, and if they did not think any foe was likely to attack them, why should they spend all this money? The fact that the Admiralty took no precautions proved that they did not believe that anyone ever would attack us; they felt no anxiety; all they wanted was the nation's money. They were elected on the cry of economy and they were pledged to put down extravagant expenditure, but immediately the Liberal leaders became Ministers they got into the hands of permanent officials and one after another succumbed to those officials. The country was now being governed by a lot of permanent clerks who were past masters at their work of managing the Ministers, and until that state of things was altered they would not be able to check this extravagant expenditure upon armaments. He considered that it was his duty to vote for a reduction of Naval armaments upon every occasion, and he hoped his hon. friends would support him.

MR. BRAMSDON moved the adjournment of the debate. He did so because there were still a number of questions which had not been discussed. He had been trying to introduce an important subject but he had not been successful. There were other Members interested in other questions which they wished to raise, and he did not think it was fair that they should be deprived of an opportunity for further discussion.

MR. ASQUITH rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 189; Noes, 43. (Division List No. 33.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood,Rt.Hn Sir Alex.F
Allen, A.Acland (Christchurch)
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Asquith,Rt.Hn.Herbert Henry
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Baker, Joseph A.(Finsbury,E.)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, Redmond J.(Tyrone,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell,Sir J.H(Essex,Romf'rd
Black, Arthur W.
Boulton, A. C. F.
Bowerman, C. W.
Branch, James
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brodie, H. C.
Brunner, J.F.L. (Lancs.,Leigh)
Bryce, J. Annan
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Byles, William Pollard
Carlile, E. Hildred
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton,Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cavendish,Rt. Hn.Victor C. W.
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chamberlain,Rt Hn J.A (Worc.
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins,SirWm.J.(S.Pancras,W
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett,C H(Sussex,E.Grinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cox, Harold
Crossley, William J.
Dalmeny, Lord
Davies,David(Montgomery Co.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dobson, Thomas W.
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunne,Major E.Martin(Walsall
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, John Michael F.
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone,Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glen-Coats, Sir T.(Renfrew, W.
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Hemmerde, Edward George
Henderson, J.M.(Aberdeen,W.)
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon.,S.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Horniman, Emslie John
Hudson, Walter

Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Lough, Thomas
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
Maddison, Frederick
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry.)
Menzies, Walter
Mond, A.
Money, L. G. Chiozza
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Myer, Horatio
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N (Doncast'r
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, W.H.M. (Suffolk, Eye
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Rees, J. D.
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seely, Colonel
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs, N.W.)
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Valentia, Viscount
Verney, F. W.
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Ward, John (Stoke-upon-Trent)
Watt, Henry A.
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Banner, John S. Harmood-
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Clark, George Smith (Belfast, N
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Lloyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.)
Craig, Captain James (Down, E
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fell, Arthur
Gordon, J.
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Helmsley, Viscount
Hill, Sir Clement
Hills, J. W.
Holt, Richard Durning
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hunt, Rowland
Jenkins, J.
Jowett, F. W.
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir John H.
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Moore, William
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Seddon, J.
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark
Thornton, Percy M.
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Winterton, Earl
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Claude Hay and Mr. Bramsdon.

Original Question put accordingly, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

MR. WHITELEY gave notice that the suspension of the Eleven o'clock rule would be moved for to-morrow.

Adjourned at fourteen minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 10th March, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Pontypridd Water Bill [H.L.].—A witness ordered to attend the Select Committee; Skegness Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: The Orders made on the 19th of February and the 2nd of March last discharged, and Bill committed; Bristol Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order), and committed: The Committee to be proposed by the Committee of Selection; Upton Town Hall Bill [H.L.]. Read 2ª (according to order), and committed; Herne Bay Pier Bill [H.L.]. Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to Commons.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

POSTAL AGREEMENT (SURINAM).

Additional Articles to the agreement of 29th April—7th November 1906 for the exchange of money orders between the Post Office of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of the Dutch Colony of Surinam, dated 13th February 1908—11th December 1907.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Report for the year 1906 on the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Royal Colleges of Science and of Art, the Geological Survey and Museum, and on the work of the Solar Physics Committee.

MINES AND QUARRIES (SHAFT ACCIDENTS AT CERTAIN COLLIERIES).

Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Professor R. A. S. Redmayne, M.Sc., M.I.M.E., F.G.S., on the causes of and circumstances attending the shaft accidents which occurred at the Foggs, Barrow, and Rawdon Collieries, on the 4th October and 15th and 18th November 1907 respectively.

EXPLOSION AT LORD ASHTOWN'S LODGE, GLENAHIERY, COUNTY WATERFORD.

Report of District Inspector Preston, Royal Irish Constabulary, to the police authorities, dated 7th September, 1907; Statement of District Inspector Preston, dated 11th September 1907, furnished to Lord Ashtown, to the county council of Waterford, and to the rural district council of Clonmel, No 2; Statement of Sergeant Rielly, dated 22nd August 1907, furnished to the same parties, and referred to in the statement of District Inspector Preston, dated 11th September 1907.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

DISEASES OF ANIMALS ACTS, 1894 TO 1903.

Order, dated the 27th February 1908, revoking Order No. 5179 of the 19th May 1894, defining a foreign animals wharf at the port of Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

LIGHTHOUSES, &c. (LOCAL INSPECTIONS).

Reports to the Board of Trade by the Trinity House of Deptford Strond, the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses, and the Commissioners of Irish Lights, of their inspection of local lighthouses, buoys, and beacons (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 95, of Session 1907).

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SMALL LANDHOLDERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

The LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord Loreburn): My Lords, the Bill to which I am about to ask your Lordships to accord a Second Reading is substantially the same as that which I introduced in the month of August last. That Bill did not pass, and the course which this House took with regard to it is one which I regretted at the time. Since it was rather late in the session the Government withdrew the Bill for the purpose of reintroducing it again this year. It has now been again read a second time in the House of Commons by a majority of three or four to one. Another event has happened. Two Bills corresponding to the double purpose of this Bill have been introduced into this House by members of the Opposition. That certainly to some extent simplifies the task which I have to discharge, and I for one have never regretted that these Bills should be introduced, because they show what is in the minds of the majority of this House.

The Bill introduced by the noble Lord, Lord Lovat, attaches that part of the Government Bill which relates to the crofters and crofter tenures strictly so-called. The Bill pays us the compliment of being very largely taken from our own measure. There are, however, grave differences, and there are also, I think, grave defects in the Bill of the noble Lord. It is so restricted by various conditions that very few will be able to come in under it. It imposes rates upon crofters in respect of improvements other than those which are agricultural, on which in theory a good deal may be said, but which would raise a storm in practice. The powers for the enlargement of holdings created by this Bill are very insufficient, the transfer of powers of the Congested Districts Board to the Crofters Commission as proposed by the noble Lord, is, I think, a mistake, for it is transferring administrative functions to a judicial body, and, lastly, no provision is made to enable the Commission to create new holdings. I say those are grave differences, and some of them are grave defects, but I do not propose to dwell upon that subject this evening, having indeed an abundance of other matter, and because I think, if nothing was before the House except the strictly crofting proposals contained in the Government Bill, there would be no difficulty about the Second Reading after the support which was given to the Bill introduced by Lord Lovat. The main lines are the same, and I shall therefore part from that Bill at once.

I come to the real subject of controversy —namely, the proposals of the Government in regard to the Lowlands and non-crofting districts. Upon the subject of the need for a Small Holdings Bill I need not say much, because the need is admitted, but I must say a few words in view of the criticism made last year that no such explanation was offered. My Lords, I desire to place this Bill upon its true foundation without exaggerating it. There is great rural depopulation going on in the country districts of Scotland, which is a source of sorrow and danger. The population in the rural districts, in the Census of 1891, was 23·06 of the whole population; in 1901 it had sunk to 19·81. The emigration has been increasing, and the migration into the towns has been increasing also. Last year I mentioned it, but the reference was treated, not indeed, with derision, because I think no Member of the House questioned the extraordinary significance and importance of that fact, but it was regarded as an irrelevant fact. I will not repeat the figures I then gave, but I will say this, that great and distressing as is the overcrowding in London and in the great cities of England, which themselves transcend the worst features of Continental countries, it is small in comparison with the overcrowding in some of the great cities of Scotland, and I say again it is a serious danger to the community at large.

I am perfectly aware that other measures will be required before that overcrowding in the centres can be effectively dealt with, but I say that this Bill will, in the belief of the Government, tend to relieve and to check the rural depopulation which is one of the main causes of the increase in the overcrowding in the central parts. This is only one of the different methods by which we are seeking to approach, with difficulty I grant, what is called the problem of social reform, the most difficult, the most appalling problem of modern times, affecting this country in such a way that unless we can solve it the most serious and fatal consequences must arise. The Government and the majority of the House of Commons by three or four to one present this Bill to your Lordships as a bit of concrete social reform, in regard to which we desire to make it just and also efficient, and to welcome assistance from any quarter which will have both the one effect and the other.

It is now admitted that small holdings ought to be increased by Government assistance, and we have the two Bills of Lord Lovat and Lord Camperdown brought in as witnesses to that necessity. The only point, therefore, is how is this purpose to be effected? We have been told that purchase is the only honest method. Now this subject has a history. In 1892 an Act was passed, applicable alike to England and Scotland, which empowered the county councils to acquire by agreement land for the purpose of small holdings. In England that Act has had some measure of success, but it has been local and very partial, so much so that it was thought necessary to pass an amending Act. In Scotland the Act of 1892 has been an unredeemed failure from beginning to end. I believe in the whole sixteen years of its existence there has only been one instance of its application—in the County of Ross, I think, and in peculiar circumstances.

In point of fact there has been, at all events in Scotland, two causes which operated fatally against the success of that measure. The first was that the county councils were naturally reluctant to risk the rates upon enterprises of a somewhat unknown character in advance. That was in itself enough to check the success of the measure, notwithstanding which Lord Camperdown told us that some counties, including his own, Forfarshire, did make an effort, but found the tenants were not willing to take the land. Why? Because they are not men of great capital. They look after their own interests naturally and legitimately, and they were not prepared to lock up such capital as they possessed in the purchase of land, but thought that if they could hire it at a fair rent they would be able to do better. I believe these two reasons for the failure of the purchase system established under the Act of 1892, will be acknowledged by all who are conversant with this subject.

Why have the Government not proceeded by way of the purchase system? To begin with, it would be a great financial operation. The present is not a propitious time for embarking on a considerable sum or adding to the liabilities of the country in respect of land purchase. I believe that, anxious as all parties were to promote the scheme of land purchase in Ireland, and although the Act of 1903 had produced beneficent results, and will, I believe, produce more beneficent results, yet in the present circumstances no Government would have had the courage to come forward and propose that Act for Ireland, because of the condition of the money market and the notorious difficulties which it has produced in the administration of that Act. We do not propose to proceed by purchase, because it is utterly impracticable from a business point of view. The second reason is that the experience of the Act of 1892 has shown us that even if the Government were prepared to come down with a lavish hand for the purpose of promoting land purchase in Scotland it would not be operative. The third reason is that as a solution it was rejected by this House and by the other House last year in the case of England.

We are accustomed to hear the English Act of last year spoken of as if it were a purchase Act. It was nothing of the kind. It was a compulsory hiring Act, though a small part of it did deal with purchase. The preceding Act of 1892 had bestowed upon the county councils in the United Kingdom the power of the voluntary purchase of land for this purpose. The Act of last year gave to the English county councils the power of the compulsory acquisition of land. If adopted in Scotland such a proposal would be inoperative. I am not aware that anyone proposed to convert the voluntary powers of the Act of 1892 into compulsory powers for Scotland. If any such Amendment were brought forward the Government would, of course, be perfectly prepared to consider it, but that merely touches the fringe of this question, and is in no sense a solution either for England or for Scotland. Purchase having failed, something else must be found. Here again I am glad to think there is agreement between both sides of the House.

The Government propose compulsory hiring. Lord Camperdown also proposes compulsory hiring, as in the English Act of last year. But I am not sure that everyone quite realises what necessarily follows from the adoption of the compulsory hiring system. You must have some third person to choose the land which is to be the subject of the hiring, to fix the rent, to fix the other conditions of the tenancy, and to lay down the period of years for which the tenancy is to subsist. Emphasis has to be laid upon the article of compulsion when one is speaking of compulsory hiring, because it means that the landlord, for reasons no doubt satisfactory to himself, is not prepared to make an agreement, and every clause and condition, therefore, must be made the subject of decision by some outside authority. That is all involved in the principle of compulsory hiring which has been accepted by both sides of the House.

Let me use the English Act of last year as an illustration. That Act was accepted by this House—I do not say it was in all respects heartily accepted—but it was accepted from public reasons, and I think, if I may be permitted to say so, reasons which were wise and sufficient. Under the English Act, which Lord Camperdown proposes to apply to Scotland, the landlord may be compelled to let his land to the county council for from fourteen to thirty-five years at the option of the county council, and the tenancy is renewable in perpetuity, if the county council thinks fit, on conditions fixed by the Board of Agriculture, against the will it may be of the landlord, but necessarily containing provisions for good farming. There is to be no renewal after the first term if the amenity or convenience of the landlord's property requires that this should be so. The landlord may resume for mining, industrial, or kindred purposes. The county council, being the tenant, is to re-let to whom it pleases, and the occupant may, under the English Act, resign his tenancy with the permission of the county council. Those are the familiar provisions of the Act of last year applied to England.

I have heard denunciations of dual ownership. What is dual ownership? Some people may say that nothing except the three F's in their perfection constitute dual ownership; others may say there is dual ownership whenever there is a long lease. But I put it to your Lordships that, judged by the ordinary common sense of mankind, the tenure under the English Act complies with every reasonable description of dual ownership. You take a man's land against his will, you fix a fair rent against his will, you give to the county council exclusive occupation in perpetuity, subject to their own right, if they think fit, to throw up the lease at intervals of fourteen or thirty-five years against his will. I put it to every candid controversialist that that is dual ownership in every real sense of the word. The noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition last year said—

> "What gives reality to ownership, what makes it a valuable and precious thing to many people is that we have hitherto associated with it the power of guiding the destinies of the estate, of superintending its development and improvement, and, above all things, the right to select the person to be associated with the proprietor in the cultivation of the soil."

I believe that is a fair description of the line which is drawn between dual ownership and onwership which is not dual. Under the English Act does the landlord retain the power of guiding the destinies of the estate? Can it be said that he has the right to select the person to be associated with him in the cultivation of the soil? That person is chosen by the county council and placed upon the land, and the landlord never may know him.

I now turn to the Scottish Bill of the Government, and I will endeavour to confine myself to what I may call Second Reading points. The landlord may be compelled to let the land for small holdings to persons selected by the Agricultural Commission at a rent fixed, if disputed, by the Land Court. The conditions of tenure are very similar to those in the English Act, but of the two the Scottish conditions are more favourable to the landlord. The land is to be permanently small holdings, except that the leave of the Land Court is required in the last resort. The landlord has power to evict for breach of conditions, and he can resume possession for purposes substantially the same as those specified in the English Act. The tenant can renounce his holding, not as in England, at intervals of from fourteen to thirty-five years, but at any time after twelve months' notice. The clauses as to the compensation of the landlord and the farmer are substantially the same as in England. The power of assignment, however, is denied to the tenant in Scotland; he has only this power to bequeath his holding to members of his own family. The State give a guarantee under Section 16 of the Bill as to the rent and conditions being paid and fulfilled by the existing small holders who come into the Act; but they do not get the benefit of Section 16.

This, my Lords, is our model for Scotland. The other was our scheme for England, which is the model for Scotland of the noble Earl, Lord Camperdown. Of course the Scottish Bill, in my opinion, unquestionably comes within the description of dual ownership as the English Act does. Let me examine the differences between the two Bills from the point of view of the Scottish landlord who approves of the English Act but does not approve of the Scottish Bill. What are the crucial points of difference between the suggestions of the noble Earl and those of the Government? The first great difference is that under the English Act the county council is the tenant. Under the Scottish Bill the county council is not introduced into the scheme, and I have been sorry to hear on more than one occasion that omission treated as an affront, or outrage, or indignity to the Scottish county councils.

Scottish county councils have, I suppose, a full share of pride not generally inferior to the pride of other people; but not a solitary county council in Scotland has made any complaint to the Government of having been omitted, and when this Bill was first brought in in 1906 no complaint was made in the House of Commons about the omission of the county councils. When the Bill came on in 1907 for Second Reading no objection was made in the House of Commons on the ground that the county councils were omitted. It was only after the English Bill was brought in, which introduced the county councils, that complaints were for the first time heard. I do not know whether this objection is largely shared or not. Last year, when Lord Balfour of Burleigh, who has himself been Secretary for Scotland, made his speech in this House, if my memory does not deceive me, he never made any complaint that the county councils were not included; and subsequently, I observe, he wrote an interesting letter to the *Scotsman* making a powerful indictment against this Bill, but I do not think he said a word in it in regard to the county councils being omitted from the scheme. I am sure Lord Camperdown, when he introduced his Bill the other evening, laid no particular emphasis on this feature; and I have read the Amendment of the noble Duke and find nothing in it about the county councils. In these circumstances I think it is very curious, if the feeling is that the county councils should be brought in and that they are entitled to regard their omission as something in the nature of an affront, they should not have been more vocal on the subject.

The reason for their omission lies, I think, on the surface, or, at all events, one sufficient reason. This Bill does not propose to throw any charge or any liability at all upon the rates. The English Bill did, and when you charge the rates you must bring in the county councils. The county councils in Scotland would not have been at all prepared, as they were not prepared under the Act of 1892, to risk rates in this enterprise. In Scotland the county councils are very particular to avoid everything which may increase rates, and very properly, for Scotland contains about one-seventh of the population of England and the area is about one-half of the area of England. The consequence is that over the same area a penny rate, apart from the lesser wealth of the country as a whole, produces less than it does in England. I really think that opinion in Scotland, when it appreciates it, will at least be indulgent to the view I put. This Bill does not propose to bring the rates in at all, but wholly to rest on the taxes if money is required; and let me explain that there is no subtle design to benefit Scotland at the expense of the rest of the United Kingdom. We all know that a rough and ready account is kept of the sums of money which each part of the kingdom derives from the public purse and a fair equality is observed between the different parts of the kingdom, and whatever amount is spent from the taxes for this Bill will of course be debited to Scotland. I think I have given a real reason for not introducing the county councils into the Bill, and it is not necessary to have recourse to a strain of the imagination that we have any desire to affront the county councils.

Still, it may be the landlord will say, "Where is the security for my rent? My

English neighbour has the county councils. I have not the county councils. I have a person I have not chosen and he is placed in possession of my land without my will, and you do not give me a solvent and thoroughly trustworthy tenant like the county council." I think that is a fair representation of his point of view, and it is perfectly true. What is the answer to it? With regard to new holdings that are compulsorily created, if the tenant fails to pay the rent or perform the conditions, the landlord may turn him out, and on doing so is to be compensated under Section 16 for all the failures of tenants except those he has brought on himself by allowing the tenant to remain in unduly long. That is, I believe, the true construction of Section 16, and if it ever comes to discussing the subject in Committee I shall be able to make good that statement. That, at all events, is what the intention of the Government is.

But, still, the landlord may say, "Section 16 gives me compensation, gives me security for rent, and also for anything causing depreciation of the land or for any damage that arises from its being used for small holdings, but that is not the case with regard to existing tenants." He may say, "My English neighbour has small holdings upon his estate. You do not interfere with them. You only create new holdings. The Scottish Bill proposes that all small holdings under £50 a year shall come under the operation of the Bill." That is perfectly true. The Government are very anxious to create security in the case of these existing tenants, not in the smallest degree from a desire to do what is unjust; but the mischief in the present condition is this. The present condition of small holdings tends to squeeze them out. The equipment of small holdings is more expensive relatively to their size. The landlord often cannot afford to pay for adequate improvements, and the tenant has not the security which would induce him to do so; and, therefore, the tendency is that small holdings are apt to be swallowed up in larger farms by the working of economic causes. We believe that if you can, without injustice, create the necessary security, the tenant will find the means for effecting improvements himself, and will do them better and more economically, the rent will be more safe, and the conditions better for all. In this respect we do not in the least desire to impose unfair terms on the landlord or to treat him unfairly. I have not heard in this House any proposals made either to limit the class of existing tenants to be brought within the Bill, or to safeguard the legitimate interests of the landlord; and if Amendments are proposed—again on the supposition that the Bill will arrive at a stage when such Amendments will be appropriate—the Government will be ready to consider them and, as far as they fairly can, meet reasonable suggestions.

There is one more capital difference, or a difference which has been treated as capital, between the two Bills. In Scotland a tribunal is established, a permanent tribunal, with salaries upon the Consolidated Fund with the usual irremovability attaching to judicial office, to be called a Land Court, and I believe that grave apprehensions have been excited as to the operations of this Land Court, and the dangers supposed to lurk within the proposal, apprehensions that it will follow the Irish model, and other similar alarms. I propose to say a few words on this subject. In the first place, let me consider the functions of this Land Court, and again, I say I hope I shall be excused if I only deal with salient points. I think I shall state all the functions, but if I omit minor points I am sure your Lordships will allow me to do so with a desire not to obscure the subject with excessive detail. A function of the Land Court is to decide, if it is disputed, whether certain land is to be taken or not to be taken. In England, under the English Act of last year, the Board of Agriculture decides that. The next function is to determine compensation on all points, valuation, and rent. In England these functions in the main—again I speak generally—in the main these functions devolve on one valuer, and upon this I will say a word in a moment. The next function is to decide whether a landlord is entitled to resume possession for industrial, mining, or analogous purposes specified in the Act, a judicial function to determine whether the case put by the landlord comes within the provisions of the Act. In England this duty is discharged by the Board of Agriculture. These are the main duties of the Land Court—I think I may say, in substance, the only duties of the Land Court—and they are all judicial in their character.

It is the intention of the Government, the wish of the Government, that the Land Court shall be a judicial, not an administrative, body, that it should not have the initiative, but shall discharge judicial functions in a judicial manner. I am aware that it is regarded with apprehension and even terror in quarters where I do not think it is really quite understood. The functions are in substance judicial, and they are necessary functions, and in England, under the English Act, they are shared between the Board of Agriculture, a valuer, and in one or two instances by an arbitrator appointed in each case by the Board of Agriculture. Now, these functions, if you are going to have compulsory hiring at all—and this is why I dwell upon the subject of compulsory hiring—these functions must be discharged, these points must be determined. I do not know whether it is really the view of many that a valuer, as in the English Act, is preferable to a Land Court. The valuer under the English Act is appointed by the Board of Agriculture for each particular case, who is not obliged to hear the parties or witnesses; he may go and judge for himself. I think that is perfectly defensible as applied in the English Act. I am quite prepared to defend it, and did so last year when it was suggested from the other side that there ought to be someone bound to hear witnesses and parties. The Land Court in Scotland is bound to hear witnesses and parties, and so far as attainment of a conclusion by judicial process is concerned, the interests of landlords—and others also, for we have not to consider the landlord's interests exclusively—are safeguarded more carefully by a Land Court than they can be by a valuer, always supposing that the Land Court is fairly appointed and consists of impartial men.

But it is said the Land Court is not, like the Department of Agriculture, responsible to Parliament. No, it is not, because its duties are judicial, not administrative. We have stripped the Land Court so far as we know of administrative functions it originally possessed, and if there is any remnant of administrative functions remaining, it is our wish that these functions shall be discharged by persons responsible to Parliament in the usual way. Commissioners are responsible to their Parliamentary chiefs, but our object is to isolate those duties which are judicial and put them into the hands of an independent body composed of men who will command popular confidence. It is at least worthy of recollection that Scottish people are accustomed to the idea of a Land Court by the Crofters Acts. These have been in operation for 20 years, and there has been no accusation of partiality.

There is only one other point I will advert to, and that is the objection made that the money paid is insufficient. We propose to add £65,000 to the £35,000 supplied to the Congested Districts Board, making £100,000 in all. In the first place I desire to say it is the belief of the Scottish Office, a belief in which, so far as I am capable of forming an opinion—and I admit I am not so capable as some of your Lordships—I concur, that this Bill will not require much money; that it will call up the energy, the enterprise, the resources of the country, and help in many ways. But putting aside that as a matter of anticipation, let me say this is not a money Bill, and if more money is required it will have to be provided by Parliament. The English Act of last year prepared a great scheme of compulsory hiring without reserve of liability in certain matters. I am not sure that any money was appropriated last year, but I believe there is now appropriated £100,000 for working the English Act of last year. Well, it seems to me, if your Lordships were willing last year to pass an English Act for compulsory hiring without any greater assurance than that £100,000 would be forthcoming for the purpose, surely £65,000 for Scotland is in proportion a larger sum.

This is not a money Bill, nor was the English Act. It proposes a scheme, and if to carry it out more money is required, Parliament must provide the necessary amount, or restrict the operation of the Act so that no more money may be required. What was no objection to the English Act should not be an objection to this Bill. I have no desire to say anything further beyond this. I do not, of course, know what course the House may take. The Government have stated their policy, and of course we cannot be a party to the substitution for our measure of a different scheme, but, subject to that, we are ready and even anxious to meet in a reasonable conciliatory spirit any reasonable and fair amendment that may be proposed.

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—*(The Lord Chancellor.)*

THE DUKE OF MONTROSE, who had given notice, on the Motion for the Second Reading, to move to resolve—

"That this House, while desirous of facilitating on sound economic principles the extension of small agricultural holdings in Scotland, and of considering such amendments of the Crofters Acts as are shown to be required, declines to pass a measure—

1. Which unnecessarily extends the provisions of the Crofters Acts throughout Scotland;
2. Which establishes a Land Court for the whole of Scotland; and
3. Which does not enjoy the general approval of the agricultural interests proposed to be affected."—

said: My Lords, I desire at once to acknowledge the conciliatory spirit in which the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has introduced this measure, but I have not observed in his speech any material concessions which would induce me to withdraw the Amendment standing in my name. I feel bound, my Lords, to deal with this Bill as it has come to us from the other House of Parliament. If, as the noble and learned Lord infers, there are any suggestions of a compromise, then we must have an assurance from noble Lords on the other side of the House that they will accept Amendments on the lines of the Bills introduced by my noble friends Lord Camperdown and Lord Lovat. I must apologise to your Lordships for addressing you for the second time upon this Bill, when, in my view, the situation is so very similar to what it was last autumn. But there is this difference, that we have been able in the meanwhile to ascertain more fully the opinions of those who are interested in agricultural matters in the Lowlands of Scotland, with the result that your Lordships' judgment of last August has been most triumphantly vindicated.

Some wise man has said that there are three classes of individuals—those who think, those who think as others think, and those who do not think at all. When I observed that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for Scotland had introduced his measure into the House of Commons for a second time without any Amendments, I felt almost inclined to include him in the third category. The result of the autumn campaign in Scotland must have given him serious cause for consideration. This campaign was waged with unusual vigour. Not a day passed but the Secretary for Scotland, the Solicitor-General for Scotland, or some other hon. Member did not address meetings, as far as I could see, for the purpose of trying to assimilate their divergent views regarding what would be the probable effect of the provisions of this Bill. But they were tolerably unanimous upon one point, which was that Scotland is inhabited solely by a race of landlords and factors. I hope that the Secretary for Scotland has by now realised, and I rather think, from what fell from the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, that he probably has realised, that there are other sensible people in Scotland besides landlords and factors.

I will not detain your Lordships by recapitulating the many objections to this Bill. They have been stated both inside and outside this House. For the sake of brevity I have, therefore, divided my Amendment into three heads, upon each of which I propose, with your Lordships' sanction, to say a few words; and in doing so I hope I shall deal in some measure with the arguments of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack. Those who think with me are desirous of facilitating the extension of small holdings and of considering such amendments to the Crofters Act as may be required; but we decline to pass a measure which unnecessarily extends the provisions of that Act throughout Scotland. The Crofters Act of 1886 was passed with the object of dealing with a specific system of land tenure within a specific area. The root of that tenure was that the buildings and equipments of crofts were the result of the labour and expenditure of the crofters themselves. Thus the crofter was in a wholly different position from that of the ordinary agricultural tenant. He had no lease and he had the chance of losing, not only his holding, but the improvements which he had created. It was to deal with this state of affairs that the Crofters Act of 1886 was brought in.

If experience has proved that any amendments are necessary to that Act, we, on this side of the House, are perfectly willing to deal with them. That was stated to your Lordships last August by the noble Marquess who leads us on this side, and it has been exemplified by the Bill brought in by my noble friend Lord Lovat. Sir George Trevelyan, when he asked leave to introduce the Crofters Act of 1886, stated that—

> "The proposal of the Commissioners is based on, and limited to, the special and local circumstances of the district to which this Bill is intended to apply."

And he went on to say—

> "If the Commission had proposed such a measure as this with regard to the common grazing ground of the Lothians or for the eastern counties of England, it would have been in no sense a restitution; it would have been an expropriation pure and simple."

Now, it is the provisions of this Act that it is proposed to extend to the southern counties of Scotland, where the system of land tenure is practically the same as it is in England, where the improvements are done by the landlord, and where the tenant is safeguarded by the Agricultural Holdings Act of 1906.

The Solicitor-General for Scotland, who has not been always quite happy in the accuracy of his statements during this controversy, has gone up and down the country stating that there is not a vestige of dual ownership in this Bill. It will be in the recollection of your Lordships that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, when he introduced this measure last August, stated that the success of the Crofters Act rested on divided ownership, and that this was a dual ownership Bill—a proposition not to be disputed. My Lords, it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to introduce into the Lowlands of Scotland the very worse provisions of the Irish land system—provisions which we are paying at the present moment upwards of £120,000,000 to get rid of. Then there are the present small holders in the Lowlands, men who are sitting now under the rents that were paid by their forefathers, where improvements have been made for them, and whose houses have been built for them by the landlord, who are, as I have said, protected in respect of any improvements they may have made under the Agricultural Holdings Act of 1906, and who are perfectly contented with the position they occupy. Why in the world are you to force these men to become crofters under the compulsory clauses of the Crofters Act? Why in the world are you to upset the whole economic conditions between landlord and tenant in the Lowlands of Scotland by this drastic measure? I venture to say that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has shown us no good reason, because there is none. We object to the introduction of a Land Court throughout Scotland. It is an insult to the intelligence of my countrymen to force upon them a highly paid body of officials to make bargains which they have always been perfectly willing and able to make for themselves. In reference to this subject, I must refer to statements made by the Secretary for Scotland, which, I think, have done more to damp the ardour even of the supporters of this Bill than any argument I could possibly use. With your Lordships' permission I will quote from the "heckling" that took place at Carmyllie on 9th or 10th December last year. I will read the questions put to Captain Sinclair and the answers he gave—

> Q. I understand the State is prepared to advance money. What rate of interest would they take?
>
> A. The very lowest rate of interest.
>
> Q. Are there any arrangements for redeeming the capital expended?
>
> A. Oh, yes; they will have to pay it off.
>
> Q. Have you fixed any number of years for that?
>
> A. That will be a matter of arrangement.
>
> Q. If ten or twelve people took over some land, is the State to advance the capital and put down dwellings and steadings for all the twelve?
>
> A. Yes.
>
> Q. Supposing these individuals failed to pay their rent, what position would the landlord be in?
>
> A. The landlord is protected under the Bill for the creation of new holdings by compensation for all such losses.

Q. Then who compensates the State?

A. Nobody compensates the State.

Q. If the State put out so much capital, how are they to get it back?

A. They cannot get it back. It is money gone.

Yes, my Lords, it is money gone. Scotsmen are very shrewd people, and they are quite prepared to take anything they can get, provided they have not got to pay for it. I know that a great number of people supposed that under this confiscatory Government the landlords would in some way or another have to make good the money losses that must inevitably take place under this Bill, but here, for the first time, we are authoritatively informed by the Secretary for Scotland that Peter, in the shape of the taxpayer, is to be robbed to pay Paul, for the purpose of creating experimental small landholders. No wonder the advent of highly paid peripatetic officials is not looked forward to in the Lothians with much favour.

And now, my Lords, I come to the third heading of my Amendment. Disguise it as you will, you cannot hide from the "man in the street" that this measure has not the general support of His Majesty's Ministers, of the Liberal Party, or of the people whom it is intended to benefit. We have not as yet heard the views of the noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Rightly or wrongly, he is supposed not to favour this measure. We have heard the views at Perth of the noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty. Perhaps he will drive another nail into the coffin of this Bill from his place in your Lordships' House. We have not as yet heard the opinion—I am sorry I do not see him in his place—of the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for War; but he should be an authority on the cultivation of deer forests. Where is my noble relative who owns half Perthshire and half Argyleshire, the kindest and most generous landlord in Scotland, and one of the best authorities on small holdings? I do not see him in his place to support this measure. You have the opinion pretty freely expressed of the hon. Member for the Leith Burghs, a strong supporter of His Majesty's Government, and an expert in agriculture; you have the opinion of the hon. Member for Berwickshire, a representative Member of a typical county. I have here the opinion of the East Lothian Farmers' Club, composed, I am told, of gentlemen of all shades of political opinion, who at their annual meeting supported the promotion of small holdings with the general proviso that the good points of the present system of land tenure in the Lowlands should not be interfered with.

Then you have the opinion of the Scottish Chamber of Agriculture, which is strongly opposed to the provisions of Mr. Sinclair's Bill. You have also the report of an independent Committee composed of five members appointed by the Secretary for Scotland himself to report on the agricultural conditions of Denmark. This independent Committee reported as follows—

> "If the rents of small holdings were fixed by valuation, and if the landlords were denied all freedom in the choice of tenants and in the selection of improvements to be made, we think it unlikely that landlords in the Lowland districts would be willing to invest capital in the equipment and maintenance of such farms, since they would have no sure ground for expecting an adequate return on their outlay. The application of the Crofters Act to small holdings generally would thus be apt to result in the withdrawal of landlords' capital from the equipment of small holdings. This would undoubtedly have an adverse influence upon the position of the farmers of small holdings. But there are certain districts in which a system prevails closely connected to that which the Crofters Act originally dealt with. In those districts the provision and maintenance of permanent equipment is wholly or largely left to the tenant. To all such cases we believe the Crofters Act might be extended, but the extension of the Crofters Act to other districts in which the opposite practice prevails, and the equipment is provided by the landlord, would, in our judgment, be attended by very serious disadvantages."

That is the opinion of an independent Committee, and it is supported, amongst others, by Sir T. Gibson-Carmichael and Mr. C. M. Douglas, the late Liberal Member for the North-Western division of Lanark, both strong supporters of His Majesty's Government on every question except the one at issue.

If His Majesty's Government can give us on this side any assurance that they will accept Amendments on the lines of the measures introduced by my noble friends Lord Camperdown and Lord Lovat, they will receive the cordial support of all on this side. If, on the contrary, His Majesty's Government desire to press forward this Bill in its present shape, I shall be forced to press my Amendment to a division, because I know that I do not speak for myself alone when I say that we object to the Lowlands of Scotland being made a Tom Tiddler's ground for the experimental legislation of the Secretary for Scotland.

Amendment moved—

"To leave out all the words after the word 'that' in order to insert the following Resolution:—'This House, while desirous of facilitating on sound economic principles the extension of Small Agricultural Holdings in Scotland, and of considering such Amendments of the Crofters Acts as are shown to be required, declines to pass a measure—(1) Which unnecessarily extends the provisions of the Crofters Acts throughout Scotland; (2) Which establishes a Land Court for the whole of Scotland; and (3) Which does not enjoy the general approval of the agricultural interests proposed to be affected.'"—(*The Duke of Montrose.*)

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: My Lords, the noble Duke who has just sat down has dealt so exhaustively with the Bill from the point of view of noble Lords who are interested in Scotland, that I feel I need not trouble your Lordships with many remarks upon the Bill from that aspect. I rise to-night, as a mere Englishman, for the purpose of pointing out to your Lordships that there is an English aspect of this question as well as a Scottish aspect, and the remarks which I am about to address to the House are prompted by a petition which I presented to your Lordships from the Central Chamber of Agriculture in England. That petition stated that it is essential, for the safety of the flocks and herds of Great Britain, that the administrative responsibility under the Diseases of Animals Acts should remain in the hands of a single Department. The Central Chamber of Agriculture view with grave alarm the proposal contained in this Bill to establish an independent Board of Agriculture in Scotland.

The people of Scotland have always shown a very great desire to administer their own affairs, and you have, in connection with Scottish Private Bill business, a procedure by which Scottish private Bills are dealt with in Scotland instead of in London. But, in this particular instance, we find the agriculturists of Scotland at one with the agriculturists of England in their desire to see one Department, and one Department only, responsible for the administration of agricultural affairs. There is on the part of the agriculturists of England also no disposition that the rule of my noble friend Lord Carrington should be exchanged for that of the Secretary for Scotland. I say, without the slightest hesitation, that the people both of England and of Scotland would infinitely prefer to see my noble friend's Department administering the Diseases of Animals Acts throughout the kingdom rather than that a new Department should be set up in Scotland for the purpose.

Those Acts are of the most vital importance to the farmers of this country, and I do not think any time could have been more opportune for demonstrating that than the present. The recent outbreak of foot-and-mouth disease in Scotland was dealt with by the noble Earl with promptitude and severity. But suppose there had been two Departments, and my noble friend had had to consult his colleague the Secretary for Scotland. We know that there is always a certain amount of red tape methods with Government Departments, and such a consultation would have led to needless delay. When your Lordships consider that the markets for many animals, especially sheep, raised in Scotland, are in the northern towns of England, I think you will see that it is essential that all regulations with regard to their movement should be under one authority and one authority alone. For this reason I deprecate most strongly the handing over to the Agricultural Commissioners suggested by the Bill the duties which are now discharged by my noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture.

Turning for a moment to the Bill itself, I have not yet heard from the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, or from any noble Lord opposite, the reason why the county councils in Scotland are supposed to be incapable of administering the Act which English county councils are capable of putting into operation. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack said there had been no petitions from county councils in Scotland in favour of this Bill. Why? Because, in the graphic language of the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Act which now applies to England was specially designed to "ginger" the county councils; and I have yet to hear of anybody petitioning Parliament that "ginger" might be applied to them to carry out their duties. But I differ from the noble and learned Lord when he said that the Act of 1892 had not been carried out in Scotland. There was a very conspicuous example in the county of Ross-shire. That county did put the Act into operation, and allotted a large number of small holdings, some of which, it is true, were only partially successful; but I understand these all have now been transferred to other holders, and that at the present moment the cultivation of those holdings is perfectly satisfactory. I do not see why what has been done in Ross-shire should be impossible in other counties in Scotland.

I had the honour of presiding over a Departmental Committee before whom a good deal of evidence was given on this subject. We sent some of the members of that Committee to Scotland, and we gave public notice that we should be willing to receive evidence upon the whole question of the provision of small holdings. We took evidence, and I ask you to look at that evidence and see whether any one of the witnesses proposed anything approaching the Bill which His Majesty's Government have laid on the Table of your Lordships' House. We had the leader of the crofter movement in Caithness, the secretary of the Congested Districts Board, and the secretary of the Crofters Commission, but none of them proposed this extension of the Crofters Act to the whole of Scotland. We had one gentleman of very great experience in these matters—a Mr. Hodge—who told us that the last thing he desired was to see the whole farming system of Scotland changed; all that he wanted was an exhaustive experiment, in all suitable counties, with small tenancies, and a similar experiment with small occupying ownerships in suitable counties. That is what is aimed at by the Bills of my noble friends Lord Camperdown and Lord Lovat.

The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack did not shrink from the proposition of my noble friend behind me that this Bill creates dual ownership. He admitted quite frankly that it did, but he added, "You have already dual ownership under the English Act." I should like to follow that proposition a little way The noble and learned Lord said that he believed no very large sum of money would be required to be provided for the purpose of creating these small holdings, and that he looked to the small holders to help themselves. The only interpretation I can put upon that is that the noble and learned Lord expects that the occupiers of these small holdings will put up their own buildings. Do you for a moment suppose that, if these smallholders put up the buildings at their own expense, you can in the long run prevent them having the right to sell the buildings, and to sell the right to occupy the farms on which the buildings stand? But that is dual ownership in its purest and crudest form. In the English Act you have the county council as tenant, a perfectly solvent body to whom to look to carry out all the covenants of the lease, and the county councils are not in the least likely to ask to be put into a position to sell the right to occupy the small holdings or the buildings which stand upon them. There is, I venture to submit, nothing in the English Act which establishes the dual ownership which the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack says is identical with the dual ownership set up by this Bill.

Then there is another very important difference. Whereas in this Bill it is proposed to establish a Land Court which, I frankly admit, will be a judicial body—the salaries of the Members being on the Consolidated Fund, and the Members being irremovable except under those very peculiar circumstances which, as we know, rarely, if ever, occur—we infinitely prefer to have responsible for the administration of the English Act my noble friend opposite and his representative in the House of Commons, whom we can call upon for an account of their stewardship. The Board of Agriculture is responsible to Parliament; the Land Court, which it is proposed to set up under this Bill, will not be responsible to Parliament, and that is the great difference between this Bill and the Act which applies to England. I understood that there was some hope that His Majesty's Government might be prepared to offer some suggestion by which the Bill might be brought more into harmony with the proposals in the Bills of Lord Camperdown and Lord Lovat, but that hope has been rather dashed to the ground by the concluding words of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack. The noble and learned Lord said the Government would give full and fair consideration to any Amendments that were put down. It would be rather an insult to your Lordships' House if the Government proposed to do anything else; but what we wanted to know was, would they be prepared in any way to meet the views of my noble friends behind me? I gather that they are not.

Now, my Lords, really will they seriously think this matter over? My noble friend behind me pointed out that noble Lords on the Front Bench opposite have as yet, at any rate, not been very enthusiastic in the encomiums they have poured on this measure. It is perfectly well known that a large number of their supporters in another place look with grave distrust on the provisions of this Bill, and I believe that, if the division could have been taken under the secrecy of the ballot, and without the fear of the crack of the Government Whip, the result would have been very different from the four to one majority of which the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack seems so proud. It is evident that there is a disposition on this side of the House to extend very materially the provisions of the Crofters Act where they may be properly applied. Looking back the other day I came across a statement made by the Chancellor of the Exchequer before he assumed office. He then said he was authorised to speak for the leaders of the Liberal Party Well, he is now authorised to speak for His Majesty's Government, for, in the regrettable absence, owing to ill-health, of the Prime Minister, he is discharging the duties of Leader of the Government in another place. Speaking in Scotland, Mr. Asquith said—

> "The Liberal Party propose to extend the Crofters Act to districts where similar conditions exist, to amend the Act as regards leaseholders and limit of size, to set up a central authority that would be able to supply that demand for small holdings which we believe to exist."

If that were the policy, and the only policy of His Majesty's Government, I venture to think it would be received with much greater favour by your Lordships' House than will be the Bill which does those three things which the noble Duke behind me has pointed out, and, in addition, exposes the flocks and herds of the agriculturists of this country to a grave danger from which they would fain that your Lordships would protect them.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES (Earl CARRINGTON): My Lords, I ask the indulgence of your Lordships while I make a few remarks in the capacity, to quote my noble Friend who has just sat down, of a mere Englishman who happens to be Minister for Agriculture for Scotland as well as for England. I am bound to say that during the recess I do not think we had much reason to anticipate any very great difficulty about this Bill. Conservative Members of Parliament were very reticent on the subject, and although Lord Cawdor made a speech in Dundee and the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition spoke on several occasions in Scotland on the subject, yet there was not that active public hostility shown to the Bill which we had reason to expect. We rather hoped, therefore, that the Bill would be reintroduced into this House, that there would be an important Second Reading debate, that some excellent speeches would be made, and then that the Bill would be read a second time, it being perfectly understood that those opposed to the Bill did not in any way pledge themselves to the whole of its provisions on account of having acquiesced in its Second Reading. Then we thought some arrangement might have been made in Committee and that finally the Bill would become law, and that, as happens in connection with most Liberal legislation, in ten years everybody would say that it was the proper thing and wonder why there was any objection to it at the time.

But about three weeks ago there was a change in what I believe is called the "atmosphere," and we were told that the Government were in a very tight place. The unexpected happened. My noble friend, Lord Camperdown, fell desperately in love with my poor little English Small Holdings Bill. He eloped with the Bill across the border, and, with his customary sagacity, secured the invaluable services of my noble friend on the Cross Benches (Lord Rosebery) to act in the well-known character of the blacksmith of Gretna Green. I see that the noble Earl has resumed his usual seat, but I hope that on this occasion he will abstain from the performance of once more sticking the poor attenuated butterflies on the Front Bench with a pin. The Bill has been very lucidly explained by my noble and learned friend on the Woolsack, and, in my humble opinion, he entirely demolished the arguments of the opponents of the Bill. I will, however, with your Lordships' permission, briefly recapitulate the Second Reading objections to the Bill.

The first objection, I believe, is to the extension of the Crofters Act to the whole of Scotland. I believe that has been very greatly deprecated, and, as a mere Englishman, I will leave that point to my Caledonian colleague who at the moment is leading your Lordships' House. Then a great many persons seem to be extremely anxious to retain me as Minister for Agriculture in Scotland. That, I am bound to say, fills me with astonishment, and somewhat with sorrow. As a Home Ruler, I regret to see the representatives of a great Kingdom tacitly acknowledging that they are not able to govern themselves. But as that is entirely a personal matter, I hope I may be excused from going into it.

The next objection is what Lord Rosebery called the affront and disparagement implied in ignoring the county councils of Scotland. Honestly speaking, I fail to see that there has been much ignoring of the county councils. So far as we are able to judge on this side of the Tweed, the Scottish county councils are not very anxious to act, as was clearly put before the House by noble and learned friend on the Woolsack. They are not anxious, for the reason that the guarantees under the Bill are placed upon the taxes instead of the cost falling on the rates, as in England. If I had been able to have obtained that in my Act of last year I am perfectly certain it would have cleared the ground very much, because the great objection to the Act of last year—and naturally—was that it imposed such a tremendous charge on the rates. The farmers of England, if they have a glandered horse, a scabby sheep, a rotten cow, or a dirty pig, invariably come to me and say, "We must kill these loathsome animals at once, and the State must pay for them." That is what all the farmers of England are clamouring for. Whether they will get it or not is another matter. They want the money to come from the taxes and not out of the rates. As the expense under this Bill falls on the taxes instead of on the rates, I do not think it is to be wondered at that the county councils have no desire to work the Act and prepare the arrangement contained in the Bill which we have the honour to submit to your Lordships.

Another objection is that the tenants are obliged to hire land instead of purchasing it. Some people seem to have fallen under the spell of my old friend Mr. Jesse Collings, who is always preaching about the magic of property. In fact my noble friend Lord Rosebery last year went so far as to express his firm belief that deep-rooted in the Scottish character is the desire for freeholds. But is it? An Act was passed in 1892, just before the Conservative Government went to the country, for the purpose of enabling a man to buy a small piece of land and settle on it, but somehow or other that Act missed fire altogether. As your Lordships were told by my noble and learned friend the Lord Chancellor, it has only been applied in one county—Ross-shire—throughout the whole of Scotland. Well, the Act was not very much more successful in England, because only 800 acres or a little more than one square mile, was purchased in sixteen years. I do not think my old friend Mr. Jesse Collings can be very proud of an Act which has had this deplorable result.

Let us look at the Act in which hiring is the rule. Under the Act of 1907, which came into operation on 1st January this year, 8,474 applications have been made up to this morning for 135,000 acres of land, or 226 square miles. And here I hope I may be permitted to express my grateful thanks to the county councils of England, and not only to them but to the landlords of England, for the businesslike way in which they are, with one or two small exceptions, applying the Act. I believe that in not one in 100 of these applications is any request made for permission to buy a holding. Therefore, when I see my old friend Mr. Jesse Collings waving his magic wand, with all his admirers round him, and trying to conjure up phantom freeholders, I am reminded of another magician, who said, "I can call spirits from the vasty deep," and of the rejoinder, "So can I or any other man, but will they come when thou dost call for them?" As to the objection to dual ownership, no two persons seem to agree on what dual ownership or dual control means.

Then objection is taken to the so-called application of Irish legislation to Scotland. Last year, as we all remember, my noble friend on the Cross Benches, Lord Rosebery, caused a sensation by his wonderful allegory of the maleficent angel who came sweeping down and injected the poison of Irish legislation into my right hon. and unfortunate friend Mr. Sinclair. I do not know where angels go, but they disappear. That seems to have had a great effect on the minds of other people, and the Duke of Montrose, in his admirable speech, if I may be permitted to say so, though I do not agree with it, said the Bill introduced the worst provisions of the Irish Land Acts and that the Land Court was an insult to the commonsense of his fellow countrymen. I should like, in passing, to say that I believe a Land Court has been adopted in Scotland before, and with very good results. My noble friend Lord Kintore, in his agreements, has an arrangement by which if there is any disagreement between himself and his tenants as regards the rent during the lease or the tenancy, it is referred to an independent arbiter who fixes the rent. I believe that is done in other cases, though the provision is not in the agreements.

Mr. Walter Long, who is not only the leader of the agricultural party in the Commons House of Parliament but was for a certain time Secretary for Ireland, stated in his place in Parliament—and if it had not been for the very strong rail in front of the Peers' Gallery in the House of Commons I should fallen straight on the floor through astonishment—that the Bill contains none of the virtues of the Irish system, but all its vices. I hear that statement cheered. I would ask the House to consider for a moment what are the conditions of land tenure in Ireland. There are three F's—fixity of tenure, fair rents, and free sale. There is no such thing as free sale in the Bill which we have laid on the Table of your Lordships' House. That, I suppose I shall be told, is one of the virtues of the Irish land system. What are the vicious principles that are left? Fair rents and fixity of tenure—no, not fixity of tenure, but security of tenure dependent on the fulfilment of certain obligations. Therefore what we have left is one F and one S—fair rents and security of tenure; and I ask, how in the name of common sense are you to get these two most necessary things without some independent authority?

Then we come to the question of the Land Court? I was told last Sunday, at Brooks's, by a Scottish landowner that it was monstrous to apply to Scotland legislation which we have not the courage to apply to England. I would ask, Is that so? Clause 7, Sub-section 10, Paragraph 6 of this Bill declares that the Land Court shall determine what is a fair rent for each new holding. The English Act which your Lordships were good enough to pass last year provides that the amount of rent to be paid by the county council for land compulsorily hired shall, in default of agreement, be settled by a single valuer appointed by the Board—that is myself. Can you imagine anything more drastic than that it should be settled by a single valuer from whose decision there is no appeal? Really the truth is that my noble friend Lord Camperdown has been taken in by his inamorata.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: I have been taken in by your Bill.

EARL CARRINGTON: My noble friend has been taken in by his inamorata, who brought him a bombshell in her trousseau in the shape of the Land Court. What is the result? My noble friend Young Lochinvar has been the whole of the winter straining and gasping and choking over the Scottish gnat, when this year, with his eyes wide open, he swallowed in this House the English camel, head, teeth, hoofs, hump, and tail.

It is said that Scotland does not want the Bill. The Duke of Montrose was kind enough to inform us that the Bill had not the support of His Majesty's

Ministers. Now I wonder how he knew that. Then it was stated that if the division in the House of Commons had been taken by ballot the numbers would have been quite different. Now, how on earth did the noble Lord know that? These are the statements that are recklessly made in this House, and then they are accepted by the Unionist Press tomorrow and taken as gospel. I respectfully submit that fifty-seven Scottish Members are in favour of the Bill and only five against it. We have been told that these Members do not represent their constituents. If Members of Parliament do not represent their constituents, in the name of fortune whom do they represent? As regards Scotland, who represents that country? Would it be contended that the Scottish Archers represent Scotland? Some people might go so far as to say that the *Scotsman* newspaper represented Scotland, but that would be so far-fetched that I need not dwell upon it. Other people might say that the members of your Lordship's House elected by the Scottish Peers were the representatives of Scotland. I yield to no man in my respect and veneration for this great and hereditary House, to which for forty years I have had the pride and privilege to belong, and no person either in public or in private shall, if I can help it, ever say one word derogatory of the honour and credit of your Lordships' House. But I do say that it is going a little too far to say that the Scottish Peers represent Scotland, or that the House of Lords as it is at present constituted—I do not know what its constitution may be after the Committee which has been sitting has reported—represents the people of this country.

I do not think that the man in the street, who is supposed to make and unmake Ministries and to hold elections in the hollow of his hand, will be satisfied by the arguments of noble Lords opposite or convinced by their logic. I think the man in the street will instinctively feel that the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack put the matter plain and straight, and that Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman stated the case in a nutshell when he said that the main reason for this Bill is that it represents what the Scottish people are desirous of having. While the Bill may be improved, and while—to quote the words of my noble and learned friend the Lord Chancellor—Amendments will be heartily welcomed, would it not be unwise for the predominant partner to interfere with what I honestly believe to be the decision of Scotland, and to mutilate and destroy a great measure of land reform on which the people of that country have set their hearts, and which we are determined to do our utmost to pass into law during the present session?

*LORD ROBERTSON: My Lords, I am quite sure the whole House is under a debt of obligation to the noble Earl who has just sat down. He has amused us, consciously and unconsciously, and has indulged in a wealth of illustration which has delighted us. But my purpose in rising is rather to thank him for more solid contributions to this discussion. One of the main questions is as to the merits of the English Act, and the noble Earl, who is the highest authority on the subject, has given the most abundant and conclusive testimony to the success of that measure. He has assured us that applications crowd in and has described the progress of that Act as a triumph, and it occurred to some of us sitting here whether, following the example of the Secretary of State for War, the noble Earl might not suggest that already there was proper occasion for a national thanksgiving.

The noble Earl carefully removed one by one some of the props upon which the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack based his speech. On one point, at any rate, the noble Earl has strayed from historical fact, and I wish for a moment to put that right. He suggested, but perhaps it was merely in order that he might start his story against Lord Camperdown, that until a few weeks ago there was no rumour of opposition to the Bill on the grounds now taken. I spent some portion of last Sunday reading the debate on the Second Reading of the Bill last year. I did not take part in that debate, and, therefore, I am the more free to say that a more admirable exposition of the arguments which we are now advancing I have never heard. Everything which I could aspire to suggest to the House to-night was represented by the speakers on that occasion, and therefore it is a great mistake in fact to suppose that the Opposition are taking up any new position in this debate.

One observation of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack was, I thought, not merely wise, but opportune, when he pointed out that the controversy in this House had been greatly narrowed by the fact of Lord Camperdown's and Lord Lovat's Bills being on the Table. The expediency of extending small holdings is not merely admitted but asserted by those who sit on this side of the House; the expediency of modifying the Crofters Act, again, is not merely admitted but is asserted by this side.

Therefore the controversy is narrowed to this question—Is the House in favour of or against the crofterisation of the Lowlands? That is the whole question which is in dispute between the two sides of the House. I may, perhaps, go too far in the direction of generosity when I say there is common ground, because the provisions of this Bill shatter at a blow all the visions of what Lord Carrington called the magic of property. That is a topic which was dwelt upon with great unction in the House of Commons, not merely by Mr. Jesse Collings, but by numerous hon. Gentlemen, supporters of the present Government, and it is to be observed, as suggesting caution, that one at all events of the objects that have greatly advanced the popularity of small holdings has thus disappeared. I mention that merely for this practical reason. The whole subject of small holdings is more or less conjectural, provisional, tentative. I wish it well, but it is idle to speak as if it were certain that there would be, under the auspices of any Bills of this kind, that return to the land which so many desire. These proposals are, to a certain extent, untried, and of doubtful result. Is it wise, is it not madness to shatter an existing prosperous industry in the interests of a perverse addition to these schemes?

The crofterisation of the Lowlands is the sole issue in dispute. I hope the House will remember that the Crofters Act was careful not to distinguish between Highlands and Lowlands, but to distinguish districts within the Highland counties which had crofting parishes; and accordingly, what the Commissioners were bade to seek for were parishes where a state of society existed which, in the language of Sir George Trevelyan, which has been quoted to-night, was utterly alien to the general system of Scottish society. The position of matters in those crofting districts was this. They were by history and tradition inhabited by people who had never moved from their places for centuries They had, moreover—and this is of the gist and essence of the matter—put up their own houses and all the buildings on their crofts, and accordingly Parliament could not go far wrong when they accepted traditionary tenure.

I cannot help thinking that the authors of the Crofters Act, some of whom unfortunately are gone, could they be brought together, would view the present movement with the greatest surprise. It has never been suggested, until this Bill was produced, that the crofting system was appropriate to a progressive and enterprising community. The crofters had many high virtues, personal and political, but they had not the gift of enterprise and energy. Let us speak the truth about these things; and this goes deep into the present question. In those days the theory was accepted of traditionary tenure, and, as proof thereof, the fact that they had put up their buildings. The Crofters Act accepted that; it was not an idea constructed by the Commissioners or by Parliament; it was, on the contrary, a recognition, and, as we know, a reluctant recognition, of the existence of a somewhat backward state of society in those districts, and the measures proposed were intended to palliate the incident evils of that system. That has been, we are triumphantly told, a success. I believe the condition of the crofting people has improved, but it would not be accurate to leave out of account the fact that Government after Government have poured money into the crofting districts and have opened up the country by railways, by steamers, by improved fishing—indeed, have done all the things which tend to open up the country to modern civilisation; and my noble friend Lord Balfour of Burleigh was most active and diligent in following out that beneficent policy. So do not let us suppose that, when the system has succeeded under those conditions, you are an inch nearer applying it to a progressive and enterprising community.

I turn to the application of this measure to the Lowlands. I take, for honour, the

Lothians as the scene of the experiment. You go there and you find somebody who falls under this Bill—an existing tenant, a tenant at will, that is to say, from year to year. He is asked by one of the Commissioners, either in Gaelic or in English I do not know, "Have you traditionary tenure? Have your forefathers been here for generations?" Fortunately in some cases they have, but not by traditionary tenure. He would ask "Have you put up the house?" The man would laugh in his face. In the case of many of these people they came there the day before yesterday. And what do you do with them? You confer upon these men fixity of tenure, and they are to stay for all time. You confer fixity of tenure upon them, but you tell them at the same time they can go any day they like, on a year's notice. You tell them, also, that from this time onwards the landlord shall have no say as to what is done by way of buildings or repairs on the farm, and that that is to be at the discretion of the existing holder.

If I had to focus my opposition to the Bill it would be on the setting up of crofterdom for existing tenants in the Lowlands. I say it is a preposterous and monstrous proposal, and I cannot help thinking that the draftsman of this Bill, at all events has shared my apprehension, because you will find that this momentous change is introduced entirely by way of reference. By a stroke of the pen the Crofters Act is applied to the Lowlands. The root of the Crofters Act was that the tenure was perpetual; in this case each of these men comes there upon a contract; and I ask in all seriousness what is the reason that the privilege is confined to tenants at will, and not given to leaseholders? Why is it to be given to holders of £50 and not to the man paying £51, or, for the matter of that, why is it not to be given to the man paying £500? Each of these various classes, the one as much as the other, is there under contract. A part of his contract is that he shall go at the end of his tenure—there is not a vestige of traditional tenure about it; but the landlord is to be deprived of his proprietory right to resume his farm, and with no compensation.

Just let us look at the effect of this. The effect will be to isolate landlords from all power of improving their land; they can do nothing whatever in that direction. It has been said over and over again—I am not a landlord myself, and therefore I speak the more freely—that the landlords of Scotland have taken a pride and interest in the management of their landed estates, as no doubt have English landlords, and if you take from landlords the right to control the development of their land you strike off a very large part of its value. One curious part of this measure is this, and it seems to have wholly escaped His Majesty's Government. I accuse them of filching part of the value from one person and giving it to another, but they do not give to the other the whole of what they filch. It is lost, and one of my great complaints against this Bill is that it diminishes the aggregate value of land. It is not merely the case of taking from one and giving to another, but it shuts out the access of capital to the improvement of the land. I am perfectly certain of this, that if the Bill passes, the value of land will be such that any man thinking of putting his money into it would refuse to do so, so long as there were brewery shares in the market.

Then, my Lords, I should like to know who are the people to whom will be entrusted the destiny of this part of the agricultural world? The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack was rather surprised at this being regarded as an attack on the county councils. He seemed to think that it would be natural for the county councils to come and beg for these powers, and to deprecate their not being given to them. I daresay there are many county councillors present in your Lordships' House this evening, and they will agree with me that anything of that kind is the last thing that would occur to county councils. My attack with regard to the ignoring of the county councils is partly due to this, that I object entirely to the bureaucracy which is set up in another place. Who are these men? We are assured by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack that the Land Court will be composed of certain highly respectable persons. I am willing to take that for granted. But coming to closer quarters, what do we know about them? One of them is to be our old friend "the barrister of ten years' standing," who, according to Sydney Smith, may be taken as the *primum* *mobile* of human existence. We have him to begin with. There is nothing said of the others—except two things—first, that one of them must speak Gaelic; and, secondly, that their decision is to be final. They would deal with weighty matters. Every few years they would have the right to revise the rents, not of new people only, but of old existing tenants; and no matter by what process of reasoning they arrived at their decision there would be no appeal. Therefore the whole direct management of the agriculture of Scotland is to be put into the final hands of this nondescript body.

My Lords, do not let it be forgotten, in considering this question, that this refers to a large portion of the land of Scotland. I was surprised to see from a recent return the extent to which the land in Scotland is in the hands of small holders who would be brought under the land Court by this Bill. I listened with close attention to what was said by the Lord Chancellor and by Lord Carrington on the point, but I heard no valid argument in favour of the exclusion of the county council. But we who know Scotland cannot forget that there are arguments which are not advanced in this House but which perhaps operate out of it. Look at your Press. What do the newspapers say about the Scottish county councils? They say that they are landlord preserves—Tory preserves. I should like to know what these people would be after. These county councils are elected by the widest possible household suffrage, with all the latest novelties, including woman suffrage. Accordingly I am afraid that, unless you are going positively to proscribe the landlord, and declare him ineligible, it will be impossible to get any constituency to do different from its predecessors. It is the case here, to quote a phrase of Mr. John Morley's, that there is no new formula of exorcism nor any untried enchantment. The reason these men are elected is that their neighbours know them and trust them, and send them to do the county business. One of the losses of this Bill will be that, instead of having local opinion and local sentiment represented on the delicate subject of the assignment of small holdings, you will have a bureaucracy which, starting from a Gaelic-speaking country as its basis, has, by tradition and reputation in Scotland, methods and proceedings which are entirely alien to the active modern stirring world which exists in agriculture in the Lowlands.

I have detained your Lordships perhaps too long, but I should like to say a word in conclusion upon the general merits of this scheme. The Lord Chancellor has indicated that he who would judge of the magnitude and beneficence of this scheme by the figure of £65,000 takes a very contracted view. I hope his colleague the Chancellor of the Exchequer has authorised that statement, and I hope that if the worst comes to the worst there will be a fulfilment of that faint and vague promise. But £65,000 and the best intentions of the Lord Chancellor will not sound in value very big if you put against it the driving of capital out of the country and the destroying of the credit of land. That is really the alternative which this House has before it. There is no room for creating prejudice by representing this as a landlords' question. It is a question affecting the whole of the agricultural community, and, through it, the whole of the people of Scotland. You will by this Bill, should it ever pass, strike wantonly and unnecessarily a fatal blow at this interest. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has admitted that there are other ways of dealing with the holdings question. The subject to which I have mainly addressed myself is the interference with the existing tenants in the Lowlands. That was very lightly touched by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, but there is the kernel of the matter, and I would entreat this House to act firmly on that subject, feeling sure that justice will be done by the wide honest public which sees through the veils of party, and will pronounce the opinion that, if we were to sanction this, there is no folly that we would challenge.

LORD CLINTON: There is no question but that every noble Lord on this side of the House is keenly anxious to provide a system of small holdings for Scotland on terms at least as favourable as have been granted to England. That has been shown by the Amendments moved last year and this year, and also by the Bill introduced by my noble friend Lord Camperdown. We are keenly desirous that a good and proper scheme of small holdings should be brought in for Scotland, and I say it is not this House which stands in the way of a scheme being adopted. It is His Majesty's Government themselves. They have tied themselves up in a scheme which has not the support of the people of Scotland, which has been condemned by agriculturists both individually and collectively, and which has been severely criticised by their own supporters. I say that the Government's blind adherence to that particular scheme forms at the present moment the only bar to the extension of small holdings in Scotland.

We have been told that the Government scheme is the only possible one, and the only one which suits the situation. We have been asked to believe that, in order to extend a system of small holdings, it is essential to introduce all those items included in the term "crofterisation," every one of which has been condemned by noble Lords in this House. The institution of dual ownership, the setting up of an autocratic body or a new Board of Agriculture, are not of the slightest importance in regard to a small holding scheme. They are absolutely excrescences. They do not touch the principle, and they amount to so much deadweight of controversial matter which of themselves will, I am afraid, make it absolutely impossible for a scheme of small holdings to be passed for Scotland this session.

It has been shown that the method proposed by the Government is not the only way in which small holdings can be provided for Scotland. There is an alternative in the Bill introduced in your Lordships' House this session by my noble friend Lord Camperdown; it is on the lines of the measure adopted last year for England, and which the President of the Board of Agriculture speaks of as having been a very great success. It was frequently said during the autumn campaign that it was impossible to adapt that scheme to Scotland. Those of your Lordships who are acquainted with agriculture in both countries know perfectly well that not only could that scheme be adapted, but that the conditions are so similar that very few alterations would be necessary to make the Act of last year apply. It is no new principle to legislate for Scotland and England agriculturally on the same lines. I would cite, as precedents the Act of 1892 and the Acts of 1900 and 1906. Moreover, the Agricultural Holdings Act of 1883 forms an exact precedent for the course your Lordships are now asked to adopt by noble Lords on this side of the House.

The problem with which we have to deal is the same in Scotland as in England. I am quite certain that the words used by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack with regard to the congestion in our cities were in no sense too highly coloured. Side by side with that congestion, and, in some degree, the cause of it, is the depopulation of our rural districts—a matter which must cause, and does cause, the greatest concern. Whether it is possible to deal successfully with this problem remains in doubt; but, although we hope and believe that a scheme for increasing small holdings may have some effects in ameliorating the congestion and in stemming depopulation, we have no reason to think that an extension of the Crofters Act would have any effect upon either question. It has been shown by the evidence given before the Crofters Commission that the Crofters Act has not had any effect upon the depopulation of the crofting area, and I do not think we have any reason to suppose that an extension of that system would have other than prejudicial results. I hope, as I say, that the extension of small holdings may prevent depopulation; but whether it is possible to create small holdings on a sufficiently large scale to touch the congestion in our large cities is a matter that remains to be proved. I say that the problem we have to deal with is the same in Scotland as in England; and, if that is so, and if the conditions are alike and the agricultural system practically identical, it seems to me perfectly obvious that the solution might be the same in both instances.

In discussing this measure last year we called attention to the serious hardship which would be entailed upon many tenant farmers by the vesting of compulsory powers in a central autocratic body for taking land during the progress of a tenancy. The short experience of the English Act has shown us that this is a real objection. You cannot go about among the farmers in England at the present moment without seeing that every man is nervous about it. They do not know when their turn is to come, but they do know that, if the compulsory powers of the Act are exercised to the degree of interfering to any large extent with the size of their holdings, it may mean to them the actual difference between a profit and a loss; and this is particularly the case when you consider the nature of the land which will always be taken. It must be good land, because no one would condemn the small holder to eke out a miserable and precarious existence on a poor few acres of land. Speaking during the Second Reading discussion a few nights ago the Lord Advocate pointed to the fact that there were 3,000,000 acres of land in Scotland devoted to purposes of sport, sufficient, he said, to apply four and a half acres to every man, woman, and child in Scotland. I do not think it is necessary for me to waste one moment in dealing with the almost absurd fallacies and the great practical impossibilities which underlie that; but I think it shows up this Bill in rather a remarkable way when it becomes necessary to use such a feeble argument as that in its support.

By this Bill farms under 150 acres in extent are to be exempt from interference. It seems to me that that average, as stated, has really very little meaning. One hundred and fifty acres of hill land at 1*s.* an acre and 150 acres of good arable land are placed in the same category, and both owners are liable to interference. I submit that it is a real hardship to deprive any man, by legislation, of the possibility of making a profit out of his holding, and to interfere with the size of a holding no matter how well it may at the moment be cultivated, and also during the currency of the lease. It was stated the other night that no interference could take place during the currency of the lease, but only leases in force in the year 1906 are exempt. All those entered into last year, this year, and in the future will be liable to exactly the same interference. It is of enormous advantage to agriculturists generally that there should be, as far as possible, absolute security in regard to holdings. We have enjoyed this security to a great extent in Scotland under our nineteen-year leases, and under the custom of the country which has prevented landlords turning out the tenants as long as they behaved fairly under their leases. That custom has been translated into legal terms by the Act of 1906, but every one of the securities are to be swept away by this Bill. A sense of insecurity will, therefore, spread over the country, for no individual farming more than 150 acres will know when he may be turned out, and he may be turned out at the bidding of any one man, probably not one whit more deserving than himself.

The Secretary for Scotland, in explaining his reasons for ignoring the county councils, said that these bodies were not so thoroughly representative as those in England. He said that every county contained remote and inaccessible districts without rapid means of communication, and that members of the county councils found it difficult to attend the meetings I think that is a most undeserved slur upon our county councils in Scotland. I hold that they have done their duty admirably, and that they are as fully representative of their constituencies as any bodies of the kind. The argument is that the members do not attend because they live in remote and inaccessible parts of the country. I hardly think those words can be applied to the great bulk of the county councillors in Scotland. I have been myself a member of a Scottish county council for many years, and I have also had a seat upon an English county council, and I think I may say, without drawing an unfair comparison, that the members of the county councils in Scotland attend, and that the business is carried on, equally as well as is the case in England.

*LORD SALTOUN: My Lords, I do not propose to detain your Lordships for more than a few moments, but as the noble Earl the Minister for Agriculture quarrelled with a statement that was made that His Majesty's Ministers were not on one accord in regard to this Bill, I should like to draw attention to the controversy that raged round the Bill during the Parliamentary recess. We remember the protest which the First Lord of the Admiralty made against what was done in your Lordships' House on the Second Reading of the Bill. We know also that he went down to Perth, and there made a statement which was practically the very opposite of what he stated in this House. The noble Lord shakes his head, but he most certainly said he preferred the English Bill to the Scottish Bill.

THE FIRST LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (LORD TWEEDMOUTH): I beg the noble Lord's pardon. What I said was that I liked the idea of the county councils being brought into the Bill. Otherwise I was perfectly contented with the Bill as it was drafted.

LORD SALTOUN: Of course, I accept the noble Lord's explanation, but on that point, at all events, he admits that he would prefer the county councils brought in. During the recess I think nearly every Minister spoke in Scotland, and I confess I do not think that they advanced one good argument for the Bill. The Secretary for Scotland claims that this Bill is based upon the excellent work of the Crofters Act. But the Commission sent out by various followers of the Government to inquire into the working of the Act condemned it in every way. That Commission was composed of gentlemen who were also members of the Commission which the Secretary for Scotland sent to Denmark. Not only was their Report a tremendous condemnation of the whole of the Crofters Acts, but they stated that these Acts had in no way arrested the migration from the rural districts into the towns. The Prime Minister at Edinburgh, in the early days of October, referred to the success of small holdings in Wales, and added that he saw no reason why they should not be equally successful in Scotland. That statement was followed by a letter in *The Times*, of 10th October, from Mr. D. A. Thomas, M.P., an ardent admirer and faithful follower of the Prime Minister. Mr. Thomas pointed out that the statement of the Prime Minister was not in accordance with the facts. Indeed, it was only an example of the inaccuracies which have been uttered by Ministers all over the country. Mr. Thomas also wrote to *The Times* stating that he did not share the faith of those who believed in the power of Parliament to counteract or control the economic forces which had drawn the population from the country to the towns. He added—

> "Any such error as 100 per cent. made in calculating the strength of the foundation on which the argument is based must seriously impair the stability of the superstructure."—

and in a later letter he said—

> "When I picture to myself the Prime Minister, surrounded by his colleagues, endeavouring to stem the tide of migration, I cannot help thinking of the story of Canute."

I do not propose, at this late hour, to go into the objections which we Scotsmen have to this Bill; but we entirely refuse the Land Court. We have seen its results in Ireland. In Ireland you have the Land Court, together with every kind of crime, iniquity, and wickedness. We in Scotland do not want that, but we are very much afraid, if you give us similar laws, that the same kind of thing may take place in Scotland. We totally object to the crofterisation of the whole of Scotland. The condition of agriculture in the Lowlands of Scotland are the same as in England, and we ask to be treated in exactly the same manner as England was treated last year. We also think that a nineteen-years tenure is as much as is good for any man. It means practically half the lifetime of the tenant. We do all the improvements for him, he has simply to put his capital into the land which he works. We also strongly object to the severance of Scotland from the Board of Agriculture in England. Why should we be divided? We are perfectly satisfied to be under the Board of Agriculture of the United Kingdom, and we feel that to set up another body in its place for Scotland would be a fatal mistake. In conclusion I say that, if there is to be any conciliation or arrangement in regard to this Bill, we Scotsmen must insist upon the Land Court, the crofterisation of Scotland, and the separation from the Board of Agriculture being entirely given up.

Moved, That the debate be adjourned till To-morrow.—(*Lord Herschell.*)

On Question, Motion for adjournment agreed to.

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 10*th March*, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Greystones Gas Bill (by Order). Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.—(*The Deputy Chairman.*)

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill. Order [6th March] that the Report of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills be referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn. —(*The Deputy Chairman.*)

PETITIONS.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation: From Crossgates; and Upper Norwood; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions against: From Bristol; and Market Drayton; to lie upon the Table.

PURE BEER.

Petition from Hawkhurst, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Bromley; Croydon; Lingfield; Salford; and Tunstall; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Redhill Reigate (two); South Kensington; and Wandsworth; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

Copy presented, of Report on the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Royal Colleges of Science and of Art, the Geological Survey and Mseuum, and on the work of the Solar Physics Committee for the year 1906 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHTHOUSES, &c. (LOCAL INSPECTIONS)

Copies presented, of Reports to the Board of Trade by the Trinity House of Deptford Strond, the Commissioners of Northern Lighthouses, and the Commissioners of Irish Lights, of their Inspection of Local Lighthouses, Buoys and Beacons [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 85.]

MINES AND QUARRIES (SHAFT ACCIDENTS AT CERTAIN COLLIERIES).

Copy presented, of Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Professor R. A. S. Redmayne, M.Sc., M.I.M.E., F.G.S., on the causes of, and circumstances attending, the Shaft Accidents which occurred at the Foggs, Barrow, and Rawdon Collieries on 4th October, and 15th and 18th November, 1907, respectively [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EXPLOSION AT LORD ASHTOWN'S LODGE, GLENAHIERY, COUNTY WATERFORD.

Copy presented, of (1) the Report of District-Inspector Preston, Royal Irish Constabulary, to the Police Authorities dated 7th September, 1907; (2) The Statement of District-Inspector Preston dated 11th September, 1907, furnished to Lord Ashtown, to the County Council of Waterford, and to the Rural District Council of Clonmel, No. 2; and (3). The Statement of Sergeant Rielly, dated 22nd August, 1907, furnished to the same parties, and referred to in the Statement of District-Inspector Preston, dated 11th September, 1907 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POSTAL AGREEMENT (SURINAM).

Copy presented, of Additional Articles to the Agreement, dated 29th April–7th November, 1906, for the Exchange of Money Orders between the Post Office of Great Britain and Ireland and the Post Office of the Dutch Colony of Surinam, dated the 11th December, 1907–13th February, 1908 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Local Auditor at Gibraltar.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the local auditor at Gibraltar, who is the son of the Comptroller and Auditor-General's private secretary, passed any qualifying examination, general or technical, or was able to produce any academic credentials, before entering the service; and, if so, why was it necessary to prolong, at expense to Imperial funds, the visit for local test purposes of an experienced auditor from England so that the local auditor at Gibraltar might receive belated instruction in duties which could have been safely entrusted to any one of a number of really competent members of the Exchequer and Audit Department.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I am informed that the present local auditor at Gibraltar was appointed to the Colonial Audit Branch in 1891, under the arrangements in force at that time, by the then Comptroller and Auditor-General, who satisfied himself as to the qualifications of the candidate. The selection has been fully justified, as he has discharged his duties to the complete satisfaction of the successive heads of the Department. The duties of the local auditor at Gibraltar are mainly connected with the audit of the accounts of the Colony and only a limited portion of his time is available for the audit of the dockyard accounts. Owing to the great increase in the work at the dockyard at Gibraltar, it was considered necessary to send out an additional auditor last summer for some weeks, and for the same reason it has now been found essential to provide as a permanency, additional clerical assistance in the audit of the naval accounts at that station.

Thomas Dixon and Company and the Belfast Harbour Commissioners' Contract.

MR. J. DEVLIN (Belfast, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the firm of Thomas S. Dixon and Company, Limited, are contractors to the Belfast Harbour Commissioners; if so, whether he could state the nature and amount of the contract, the date on which it was entered upon, and the names of the directors, the date of registration, and principal shareholders of the company; whether one of the directors of the company is Sir Thomas J. Dixon, Baronet; whether Sir Thomas Dixon was present at any of the meetings of the Commissioners where the contract was discussed or has been present at any of their meetings since; and, if so, whether he proposes to take any action in the matter with a view to enforcing the penalties for such action provided under The Commissioners Clauses Act, 1847.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I am informed by the Belfast Harbour Commissioners that the circumstances were as follows: The Commissioners having, in accordance with their usual practice, advertised for tenders for the supply of stores, received a large number whereof that of Messrs. T. S. Dixon and Company, Limited, was the lowest for cement and slates, and was accordingly accepted on 3rd December last. Sir Thomas Dixon, who is chairman of the company, was not present at any meeting when these contracts were discussed, and, on learning what had happened, and previous to any orders being issued to that firm or any deliveries being made upon the contracts, he requested the Commissioners to cancel such contracts, and undertook to indemnify the Commissioners against any extra cost incurred in obtaining the supplies elsewhere. The Commissioner acceded to this request, and Sir Thomas Dixon has since attended meetings of the Harbour Board.

Mr. James M'Connell and the Belfast Harbour Commissioners' Contract.

MR. J. DEVLIN: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that Mr. James M'Connell, a member of the Belfast Harbour Trust, is the chairman and managing director of the firm of W. D. Henderson and Sons, Limited, and a shareholder therein to the extent of £9,930, out of a total nominal capital share of £10,000; whether this firm is or has been a contractor, sub-contractor, or agent for the supply of cement to the Harbour Commissioners; if so, what amount has been paid to this firm by the Commissioners since 8th July, 1903; and whether, in view of the 9th section of the Commissioners Clauses Act of 1847, which provides that there shall be no conflict of interest between a commissioner in his official capacity and a commissioner in his individual capacity, he proposes, after due inquiry, to take steps to have the full penalty provided under the 15th Section of the Act referred to enforced in this instance.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I am informed by the Belfast Harbour Board that Mr. James M'Connell is a director and presumably a shareholder in the firm of W. D. Henderson and Sons, Limited, but that this company has not to the knowledge of the Harbour Board been at any time a contractor, sub-contractor, or agent for the supply of cement or any other goods to the board, or received any payment from them since 8th July, 1903, or previously.

MR. J. DEVLIN: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that Mr. James M'Connell was a member of the Belfast Harbour Commissioners on 31st August, 1903, when the contract of Walter Scott and Middleton, Limited, for £206,000 odd was accepted by the Commissioners in connection with the construction of the new graving dock at Belfast, and took an active part in dealing with the tenders submitted; that on the 8th July, 1903, Mr. M'Connell's business was formed into a limited liability company, with a share capital of £10,000, £9,930 worth of which was held by him; that all the cement required for the dock has been supplied through this limited company, which trade under the style and title of W. D. Henderson and Sons, Limited; that the adulterant of Kentish ragstone has been used in the cement so supplied, contrary to the terms of the specification; and, if so, whether he will take steps to ensure that the provisions of the Commissioners Clauses Act of 1847, prohibiting a commissioner from participating in the benefit of any contract with the trust are duly enforced.

(*Answered by Mr. Lloyd-George.*) I am informed that Mr. James M'Connell was a member of the Belfast Harbour Board on 31st August, 1903, when the tender referred to was received, but that he was not present at any of the three meetings of the Commissioners when the contract was accepted and such acceptance confirmed. I do not know when his business was turned into a limited liability company, what its capital is, or how many shares he holds. The Commissioners state that they understand that Messrs. Walter Scott and Middleton, Limited, the contractors for the new graving dock, procure their cement largely, if not wholly, from the Associated Portland Cement Manufacturers, Limited, that each delivery of cement is accompanied with a certificate from the manufacturers as to its quality, and that the Commissioners employ a special expert to inspect and test each delivery of cement, in accordance with the requirements of the contract.

Scottish and Welsh Historical Monuments.

MR. LLEWELYN WILLIAMS (Carmarthen District): To ask the Prime Minister whether the Royal Commission, recently appointed to make an inventory of the ancient and historical monuments and constructions connected with or illustrative of the contemporary culture, civilisation, and conditions of life of the people of Scotland from the earliest times to the year 1707, and to specify those which seem worthy of preservation, has yet commenced its labours; whether it is the intention of the Government to take steps to preserve the ancient monuments specified by the Commission; and whether he is prepared to recommend the appointment of a similar Commission for the discovery and preservation of ancient and historical monuments in Wales.

(*Answered by Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.*) I understand that the Royal Commission on Scottish monuments has not yet begun its labours. The Government must wait for its Report before coming to a decision as to the subject raised in the second part of the Question. With regard to Wales, a country rich in monuments, my right hon. friend cannot make any announcement at the moment, but he will be prepared to consider any representations that may be made to him on the matter.

Telegraphists with Knowledge of Technical Telegraphy.

MR. SEAVERNS (Lambeth, Brixton): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he can state the number of telegraphists of both sexes who, on 31st December, 1907, possessed the increment for a knowledge of technical telegraphy; and whether he can state the number of telegraphists of both sexes who were eligible to obtain it.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am afraid I have not got the information desired by my hon. friend, and it could not be obtained without considerable trouble and expense.

Punishment of Minor Offences in the Post Office.

MR. SEDDON (Lancashire, Newton): To ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the notice recently issued regarding punishments for minor irregularities among the postal staff for the purpose of discouraging the practice of asking written explanations, and suggesting in place that verbal reproofs should be administered by supervising officials; whether he is aware that the superintendent of the Bristol telegraph staff has issued instructions to controlling officers that they should possess memorandum books and keep records of mistakes and minor offences; and whether, in view of this order, he will withdraw the recent notice, in view of its effect in securing the record of misdemeanours without the record of the officer's explanations.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The notice to which the hon. Member refers in the first part of his Question was issued by my special instructions for the benefit of the staff. Though the practice of recording minor irregularities has been discontinued experimentally, it will still be necessary to deal specially with cases of habitual carelessness, but where it is thought necessary to keep a record it should be an official record. There appears to have been some misunderstanding at Bristol, and I am taking steps to set the matter right.

Lawlessness in Karachi.

MR. HART-DAVIES (Hackney, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been drawn to the prevalent state of lawlessness and insecurity of person and property in the city of Karachi; and whether he will urge on the Government of India the necessity of a speedy reorganisation of the police.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I have seen reports in the newspapers, from which I gather that the Government of Bombay have recently made urgent representations on this subject to the Government of India. I have no doubt that the Government of India will deal with the question of reorganisation as expeditiously as possible, and I do not think that any action on my part is necessary.

Place of Worship of the Gordon Highlanders at Jullundur.

SIR J. JARDINE (Roxburghshire): To ask the Secretary of State for India, what arrangements, if any, have been in force in the Jullunder Cantonment to enable the 2nd Battalion of the Gordon Highlanders to have Divine Service according to Presbyterian rites; whether they have been allowed to worship in a consecrated church belonging to the Government of India; and whether they were allowed in that church to solemnise Holy Matrimony and Holy Communion.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I would refer the hon. Member to my Answer to his second Question on the same subject. I have no more precise information as to the arrangements made. As the hon. Member is aware, the Gordon Highlanders have now been moved to Calcutta, where there is a Presbyterian church

SIR J. JARDINE: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware that a licence was given by the Bishop of Lahore for the holding of divine service according to the rites of the Church of Scotland, and will he say whether that licence has been withdrawn;

and whether the removal of the Gordon Highlanders from Jullundur to Calcutta has been ordered with reference to the absence of church accommodation for Presbyterians at Jullundur.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I understand that the Bishop of Lahore authorised the use of the Anglican church at Jullundur for Presbyterian services other than the celebration of Holy Communion. I am not aware that the licence has been withdrawn. But orders have now been given that Scottish regiments shall not be posted, save in a temporary emergency, to military stations where there is not a Presbyterian or unconsecrated church for their use; and the transfer of the Gordon Highlanders to Calcutta was presumably directed in accordance with those orders.

Alleged Boycott of Irish Materials by the Irish Board of Works.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can explain the partial boycott of Irish materials by the Board of Works in Ireland with regard to the College of Science, the building in Tullamore, and other cases; and whether he can say why a copy of the specifications for buildings cannot be furnished to a Member of this House.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I am not sure what buildings the hon. Member has in mind in his reference to Tullamore and other cases. If he refers, as I suppose, in the case of Tullamore to the contemplated new post office, I am informed that the specification for this building has not yet even been preparedf I can assure him, however, that no boy. cott of Irish materials by the Board o- Works has taken place in connection with the College of Science or any other building in their charge, as Irish materials are being employed wherever their use is compatible with efficiency, suitability, and economy. In the case of the College of Science about 86 per cent. of the building material to be used is Irish. Specifications for buildings are only prepared with the object of enabling firms to tender for the works, and for the use of the contractors by whom the works are carried out. The only copy of the specification issued is that given to the contractor for the building, and it would not be in the interests of the successful carrying out of contracts that any other copies should be distributed.

Delay in Effecting Improvements to Irish National Schools.

Mr. FIELD: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that only £3,939 was expended by the Board of Works up to 10th February, 1907, out of the special building grant of £40,000, which was voted in addition to the usual Vote of about £30,000 per annum; whether he can explain the delay in expending this earmarked money; whether he is aware that it is voted to immediately remedy the unsanitary and unsafe condition of many existing national schools, and to provide better accommodation for children in Ireland; and whether he can state what steps he is prepared to take to compel the Board of Works to carry out the orders of Parliament.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) My hon. friend the Secretary to the Treasury has asked me to answer this Question. Since the hon. Member gave notice of the Question, I have given a very full Answer to a Question on the subject put by the hon. Member for North Kildare on 27th February. If the hon. Member will refer to that Answer, he will see that no avoidable delay has taken place in the departments of the Board of Works or the Commissioners of National Education in connection with the work of school building.

Licensing Statistics.

Mr. CROSSLEY (Cheshire, Altrincham): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will grant a Return (relating to county boroughs) of the retail licences for spirits or wine dealers granted by the Excise for premises which are exclusively used for the sale of intoxicating liquors or of intoxicating liquors and mineral waters or other non-intoxicating drinks, and which have no internal communication with the premises of any person who is carrying on any other trade or business, with particulars for each borough.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) The Return could not be given without the expenditure of an amount of time and labour quite disproportionate to the value of the information to be derived from it.

Fatal Accidents in Carnarvonshire Slate Quarries.

MR. ELLIS DAVIES (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what was the number of fatal accidents in slate quarries in Carnarvonshire during the year ending 31st December, 1907, to those employed inside, and outside the quarries; and what proportion the accidents to those inside bear to the total number of workmen inside the quarry.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The number of fatal accidents to those employed at slate quarries in Carnarvonshire during the year ending 31st December, 1907, was as follows—

Inside the quarries -	- 8
Outside the quarries -	- 2

The proportion the accidents to those inside bear to the total number of workmen inside the quarry was 1 in every 386, or nearly 2·6 per 1,000.

Swine Fever.

SIR W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he will publish the results of the recent investigations of the veterinary officers of the Board into the nature of swine fever with a view to its prevention; whether the pathology of swine fever shows it to be a disease against which the methods of slaughter, disinfection, etc., successfully employed against other epizootics, can be employed with similarly good results; and, if not, whether the Board considered the large expenditure involved in carrying out such methods in the case of swine fever is warranted.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) Full particulars of the investigations to which my hon. friend refers will be published as part of the Annual Report of the chief veterinary officer. The success of stamping out a disease by slaughter and disinfection, etc., does not depend so much on its pathology as upon its epizootiology, and the epizootiology of swine fever renders it very doubtful whether wholesale slaughter of affected and contact animals is a practicable undertaking. The Board do not consider that the large expenditure that would be involved in carrying out such an operation would be justified.

Education Bill—Effect of Clause 1, Sub-Sections (1) and (2) on Single School Areas.

MR. STEWART-SMITH (Westmoreland, Kendal): To ask the President of the Board of Education if he will state what will be the effect of Clause 1, Sub-Sections (1) and (2), of the new Act in the case of a single-area school administered under a trust scheme, and by which, under the terms of Section 13, Sub-Sections (1) and (2), of the Act of 1902, the whole of the rate levied for educational purposes has been paid from the trust funds since the appointed day of 1902; will the present Act empower the county council to demand this sum, or any part thereof, from the trust funds and apply the same to the relief of the rate; and, if so, will such sum be credited to the overseers of the parish by the county treasurer in reduction or extinction of the rate for the parish or area served by the said school.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) It is proposed to repeal Section 13 of the Education Act, 1902, and in that case no claims can in future arise under that section.

Appointment of Additional Magistrates for County Tipperary.

MR. CONDON (Tipperary, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Lord Chancellor has been called to the necessity for the appointment of additional justices of the peace in the County of Tipperary, and especially in the Cashel district; whether he is aware that at the last court day in Cashel the suitors and their solicitors were kept waiting for some hours, and that the proceedings were eventually abandoned, owing to no justice of the peace or resident magistrate attending; whether he is aware that in the Cashel district, which is Nationalist, there is no popular magistrate except *ex officio*; whether he can state if the Lord Chancellor's attention has been called to this condition of the magisterial bench; and whether he intends to deal with the matter immediately.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Lord Chancellor informs me that he has from time to time been considering the question of the appointment of additional magistrates in the several districts of the County Tipperary, including the Cashel district, and within the last two years he has appointed twenty-nine magistrates in that county. There are now 230 magistrates on the roll of the county, of whom twelve have been authorised to attend the Cashel Petty Sessions, in addition to the resident magistrate and the chairman of the local district council. Two of the twelve above-mentioned were appointed in August last. The Lord Chancellor had not been informed of the adjournment of cases referred to for want of the attendance of magistrates, but he will inquire into the matter.

Memorial of Transition Teachers in Ireland.

Colonel McCALMONT (Antrim, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a memorial and statement of claims from the transition teachers (Ireland); and, if so, whether he can see his way to giving them favourable consideration.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I have received the memorial referred to. I would refer to the Answer which I gave on 3rd instant to the Question on the subject put by the hon. Member for South Down.

Compassionate Allowance to West, Late of Royal Small Arms Factory.

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office whether a workman named West, in the Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield Lock, at the age of 62, after suffering the misfortune of a series of accidents during the last twelve years, has now been discharged without any sort of compensation; and, if so, whether this man's case will be taken into consideration.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) I am carefully considering whether I can do anything to assist this man, but the question presents great difficulties, and I am unable to announce any decision.

Territorial Army—Training of Officers on the Unattached List.

Mr. C. H. CORBETT (Sussex, East Grinstead): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether facilities for drilling, attending annual trainings, and the like, will be given to officers of the Territorial Army, posted to the unattached lists of their counties, who may desire to maintain their military efficiency pending absorption in other units as vacancies occur.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Officers who become supernumerary in their units or are placed on the unattached list on transfer to the Territorial Force may attend the annual training in camp, provided that they take the place of an officer of the same or higher rank and that the total number of officers trained in camp does not exceed the total number on the establishment of the units. Officers on the unattached list may train under these conditions with any unit in the command. Pay and allowances will be admissible to officers attending training under these conditions.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Naval Gun Reserves.

Mr. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether in 1904 the whole of the guns in the naval and marine gunnery training establishments were part of the reserve guns of the Fleet; whether he is aware that about two years ago nearly the whole of these guns were withdrawn and their places taken by specially made cast-iron guns; and whether the reserve of guns is now less in proportion to the guns afloat than it was before these guns were withdrawn.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The reply to the first Question is in the negative. Only 24 per cent. of these guns were then included in the reserve. As regards the second Question, only a portion of the guns belonging to these establishments were withdrawn for fleet use, and replaced by cast-iron guns for drill purposes. As regards the third Question, the reserve remains unaltered.

Territorial Army—Regimental Sergeant-Majors and Bandmasters.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in the Territorial Army, the regimental sergeant-majors and bandmasters will be given the rank of warrant officers as is done in the case of similar non-commissioned officers in the Regular Army.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): The reply is in the negative.

Service Abroad—Furlough Regulations.

SIR BERKELEY SHEFFIELD (Lincolnshire, Brigg): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is prepared to grant facilities to non-commissioned officers and men of good conduct serving in India or on foreign service for the means of returning home on furlough, as enjoyed by commissioned officers, in view of the fact that such a privilege would stimulate their re-engagement with the Colours.

MR. HALDANE: This subject is now under consideration with the India Office. It is one which involves important considerations, such as increase in the pension list, diminution in the strength of the Army Reserve, and the effect of climate on the constitution of the soldier. These are matters which do not admit of being settled off-hand.

Army Clothing Contracts.

MR. RAMSAY MACDONALD (Leicester): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been drawn to the wages paid by a firm of clothing contractors upon Government work, showing that the men's coats were being made and finished at the rate of 1s. 5½d. each; whether such a firm comes within the scope of the Fair Wages Clause; and whether he proposes to take any action.

MR. HALDANE: As far as I have been able to ascertain, the rate of wages quoted by the hon. Member are somewhat below those actually paid by the contractor referred to. The case clearly does come within the scope of the Fair Wages Clause, but the difference in the methods by which work is carried on in this particular trade makes it extremely difficult to compare rates paid by one firm with those of another and thus ascertain what the current rates really are, and I am not prepared to say that this contractor is actually infringing the Clause. As the hon. Member is aware, a Committee is now sitting to consider whether improvements cannot be made in the administration of the Fair Wages Clause. An inspector is now engaged in investigating the conditions under which the Army clothing contracts are being carried out, and no conclusion can be arrived at until he has completed his inquiry, and I have called for a special report, as soon as this is done, on the case.

MR. CURRAN (Durham, Jarrow) asked whether it was not possible for the Government to establish factories for the purpose of the manufacture of clothes for the civil, military, and naval servants under direct Government supervision, instead of letting the work out to sweating contractors.

MR. HALDANE: It is possible, but everything the Government does is so costly. It could only be done by an enormous increase of the Army Estimates.

MR. CURRAN: Is it not the case that sweating contractors make handsome profits by robbing the workmen? Can not that profit be employed in establishing factories?

MR. HALDANE: We are doing everything we can to prevent sweaters from being engaged in making Army clothes. In some cases we fail.

Volunteers and the Social Democrats.

Mr. GEORGE ROBERTS (Norwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the action of a body of men, some thirty in number, belonging to the 1st Herts Volunteer Battalion of the Bedfordshire Regiment, who, fully armed with rifles and side-arms, and headed by three staff sergeants in uniform, are alleged to have been guilty of disorderly conduct at a public meeting held under the auspices of the Social Democratic party at Letchworth on 2nd March: whether it is to be understood that members of the new Territorial force are encouraged to attend in force at public meetings held to criticise military matters for the purpose of disturbing and breaking up such meetings; and whether he will take steps to prevent a recurrence of such conduct in the future.

Mr. HALDANE: A number of Volunteer recruits on returning from evening parade went into a hall where a lecture purporting to be on the subject of the Territorial Army to which the military were invited, was being given, and were joined there by their sergeant-instructor. On finding that the lecture consisted of a series of abusive statements interspersed with what he considered to be untrue allegations against the Army and its officers and men, the sergeant-instructor protested vigorously. The meeting was noisy, but it is not the case that it was broken up by the Volunteers. The officer commanding the regiment has drawn the attention of all concerned to the provisions of the King's Regulations dealing with the attendance of soldiers at public meetings.

Mr. JOHN WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): Is this the sort of interruption of public meetings we might expect if the policy of compulsory military training suggested by the Social Democratic party were adopted in this country.

Mr. HALDANE: These are high matters into which I will not presume to inquire.

Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield—Compensation for Accidents.

Mr. BRANCH (Middlesex, Enfield): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he is aware that J. West, an employee at the Royal Small Arms Factory, Enfield, received an injury to his arm in 1885; that he met with a serious accident to his leg in 1886, and also an accident by which he lost the sight of one eye in 1887; that he was ruptured in 1895; and that he met with a further accident in 1897 which injured the sight of his remaining eye, and a subsequent injury which destroyed the use of two fingers of the right hand; whether he is also aware that in 1887 he received the sum of £73 compensation for the loss of his eye, which sum, upon his being restored to work, was deducted from his weekly wages until it was repaid; and that, upon reaching the age of sixty-two, he has now been discharged without any allowance or compensation for injuries received; and whether he will consider if a sympathetic allowance can be made to this man.

The FINANCIAL SECRETARY to the TREASURY (Mr. Runciman, Dewsbury): I am carefully considering whether I can do anything to assist this man, but the question presents great difficulties and I am unable to announce any decision.

Communication with the West Indies.

Mr. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether an extra total payment of £35,000 is to be made by the British Treasury to some steamship company in order to facilitate communication between the various West Indian Islands; and, if so, what compensating benefits accrue therefrom to the British taxpayer.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: An increased payment of £3,750 a year for ten years is payable to the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company by the British Exchequer in respect of an improved Inter-Colonial Mail Service in the West Indies under a contract dated 29th August last. Full particulars will be found in House of Commons Paper No. 24 of 1908 recently circulated.

Mr. HAROLD COX (Preston): When is it proposed to take the Motion approving this contract?

MR. RUNCIMAN: At the earliest possible moment so that there may be no interruption of the service.

MR. WEDGWOOD: Can the hon. Gentleman answer the last part of my question?

MR. LEIF JONES (Westmoreland, Appleby): What will happen if the contract meets with the disapproval of the House of Commons?

MR. RUNCIMAN: If the House disapproves the arrangement will fall through. As to the last part of the question that is largely a matter of opinion, and the benefits could only be stated at considerable length. No doubt my hon. friend will have an opportunity of hearing them.

Income-Tax Abatements.

SIR F. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether abatement of income-tax can be claimed on an income of £690 per annum when that income is derived from dividends which are paid free of income-tax.

MR. RUNCIMAN: An income of £690 free of tax represents a gross income of over £700, and does not therefore fall within the statutory limits of abatement.

British Trade Agent at Gyantse.

*MR. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the British trade agent at Gyantse has been withdrawn; and whether the like official at Gartok has been, and will be, retained.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): No, the British trade agent at Gyantse has not been withdrawn, nor the agent who was appointed at Gartok under Article 5 of the Lhasa Convention.

Indian Penal Code—Punishment for Sedition.

MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is aware of the many cases of printers and editors of papers in India generally who have been sentenced to long terms of rigorous imprisonment and mulcted in large amounts in fines, under the sedition clauses of the Penal Code, for publishing what the police term seditious articles; whether the charge of sedition is simply that of Nationalist propaganda in the majority of cases: whether the persons charged have usually been young men, many of them under twenty years of age; and whether, in view of the fact that the campaign against the Press by the Government is, in native opinion, a campaign against the faith and aspirations of a people, and having regard to all the circumstances of the matter, he will take steps to have an inquiry with a view of defining sedition within the meaning of the Code, or with a view of amending the Code.

MR. MORLEY: My hon. friend has not acquainted himself precisely with the subject about which he questions me. The word "sedition" does not occur in the text of the Penal Code, and persons are not sentenced for "what the police term seditious articles," but for what duly constituted courts, and, in some cases, juries mainly composed of Indians, find to be violations of the law. All the terms under which charges are framed are explained in the Code, and I see no need for inquiry. So long as the persons concerned give expression to their "faith and aspirations" without attempting, in the language of the Code, to excite hatred, contempt, disaffection, or enmity between class and class, they will, I am quite sure, not be disturbed.

*MR. REES: Are not these young men the agents of syndicates for the propagation of sedition who themselves escape prosecution by elaborate precautions; and in these articles is not British India described as a hell upon earth, and Englishmen as worse than Nero, Nadir Shah, and the devil?

[No Answer was returned.]

Bengal Opium Exports.

MR. O'GRADY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the fact that the export of Bengal opium has fallen from 53,588 chests in 1906–7 to 48,000 in 1907–8, and the further fact that the area of cultivation has extended from 553,697 in the former period to 562,500 in the last year quoted, he can inform the House whether the resulting crops of such extended area is or will be exported to other countries than China, or whether the habit of opium consumption is growing among the peoples of India; and that such extended area of cultivation is to meet such home demand; and, if so, whether steps will be taken to drastically reduce the area of cultivation below that of 1906–7.

MR. MORLEY: There has been no extension of the area under poppy. The standard or maximum area fixed for regulating the grant of licences to cultivate was fixed for 1906–7 at 594,000 acres. The area actually harvested in that year was 553,697 acres. For 1907–8 the standard area was reduced to 562,500 acres. The actual area, when returned, will prove to be below this figure. For 1908–9 the standard area has again been reduced to 500,000 acres. I am afraid the drastic reduction demanded by my hon. friend would hardly extend employment.

Calcutta Police Court—Whipping for Political Offences.

MR. O'GRADY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the official statement made in the Bengal Legislative Council that the number of persons sentenced to whipping in the Calcutta police court during the last three years is as follows: 1905, 376; 1906, 321; and 1907, 402; whether he will inform the House in how many cases of political offences the punishment of whipping has been inflicted; and whether, in view of the fact that the increase of punishment by whipping has taken place while Mr. Kingsford has held the office of chief magistrate, steps will be taken to limit or abolish such form of degrading punishment.

MR. MORLEY: I have seen the statement quoted. Under the existing law political offences are not punishable by whipping, so far as adults are concerned, and the Bill to amend the Whipping Act, which has been introduced into the Viceroy's Legislative Council, exempts juveniles also.

Indentured Labour in Trinidad.

MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the number of indentured coolies introduced into Trinidad during the year 1907; the total cost of importing such coolies; and also the proportion of such total cost contributed by the Government and the planters on whose behalf such coolies are introduced.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): According to the latest information available, it was estimated that 1,800 immigrants would be introduced during the year 1907–8. The estimated expenditure of collecting and introducing immigrants during that period was £24,450, and of this sum one-third only is charged to the general revenue. I regret that I cannot furnish the hon. Member with figures for the calendar year, as the Estimates in Trinidad are prepared for the financial year running from 1st April to 31st March.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.): Are these coolies imported under servile conditions?

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): And do they live in compounds?

MR. CHURCHILL: The conditions are not the same as those under which Chinese labour was introduced into South Africa.

Game Reserves in Southern Nigeria.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON (Lanarkshire, N.W.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the statement on page 42 of the Report on Southern Nigeria for 1906 (No. 554 of 1906), that the only outcome of the present legislation in game preservation has been to limit the shooting of a few *bona fide* European sportsmen, whilst the constant drain of animal life caused by literally tens of thousands of native hunters, who shoot everything they see night and day, in season and out of season, throughout the year, remains unchecked; and whether steps can be taken to put some effective check on this wholesale destruction of wild life.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Government of Southern Nigeria is taking reasonable steps, by the creation of game reserves in various provinces, to check the indiscriminate destruction of animal life. It must, however, be recognised that with the small staff at the disposal of the Government it is not practicable to enforce the observance of game regulations over vast areas of densely populated forest country, where such legislation is not understood, and where in many districts every able-bodied man has been a hunter from time immemorial.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: Is any attention to be paid to the statements in the Report from which this Question is a quotation?

MR. CHURCHILL: Yes, Sir.

Dinizulu.

MR. HERBERT (Buckinghamshire, Wycombe): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any evidence obtained at the preliminary examination of Dinizulu can be used against him at his trial; and whether having regard to the acknowledged obligations of His Majesty's Government to see that he has a fair trial, His Majesty's Government propose to allow him to be brought to trial in which evidence can be used against him, obtained upon charges so vague that he cannot defend himself against them, in a fishing inquiry.

MR. CHURCHILL: The English law of evidence has been applied to Natal by local legislation and the Secretary of State has no reason to suppose that the Judges of the Supreme Court will allow Dinizulu's trial to proceed on inadmissible evidence. I may add that Lord Elgin has received the following telegram upon this subject from the Governor of Natal: No arrangements have been made for the trial of Dinizulu. No date has been or can be fixed pending conclusion of the preliminary examination. After the Crown has led its evidence at the preliminary examination the defence can at that inquiry lead evidence on behalf of the prisoner. An intimation has, I understand, been given by Dinizulu's counsel that he will require some weeks to obtain evidence when the Crown's leading of evidence is completed. Any such request by an accused person is always acceded to. Local counsel has been engaged to defend Dinizulu and Mr. Jellicoe an English barrister has officially informed His Excellency that he came to Natal with the concurrence of the Colonial Office to defend the prisoner. The utmost access has all along been given his counsel to the prisoner. Mr. Jellicoe before he was admitted to the bar here was allowed to see the prisoner to confer and act as counsel. It is impossible to say when the decision of the magistrate who is conducting the examination may be expected. If committed the trial of the prisoner will follow without any undue delay unless the Attorney-General in the exercise of his discretion thinks it desirable to remit the case (after perusal of the preparatory examinations close) to the magistrate for further investigation: or unless the Attorney-General directs that the prisoner be liberated forthwith. The Government have been informed that the friends of the prisoner have ample funds to apply to the prisoner's defence, but on this point in view of what has been suggested from other quarters it is not possible to reply to this question with any certainty

Che-Kiang Railway Loan.

MR. MITCHELL-THOMSON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether an agreement has been arrived at with the Wai-wu-pu regarding the Che-Kiang Railway loan; and, if so, whether he can state its terms.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir EDWARD GREY, Northumberland, Berwick): I am informed that an agreement has been signed; but I cannot state its precise terms, which have been arranged at Pekin with the British and Chinese Corporation.

Care of Children.

MR. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in the inquiry about the re-arrangement of the duties of Government Departments, he will include the consideration of the advisability of combining the care of the interests of children under one Department or under a council representing the various Departments concerned.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): Similar suggestions have been made from several quarters, and, in principle, I have much sympathy with them. The practical and administrative difficulties in connection with the adoption of the proposal would be very considerable; but I will take care that the matter is borne in mind in connection with the inquiry to which my hon. friend refers.

Licensed Property and Death Duties.

MR. GEORGE FABER (York): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether, in the case of licensed properties which have been valued for purposes of death duties by the Commissioners of Inland Revenue at a greater number of years' purchase than that provided by the Licensing Bill, 1908, the excess in the amount of the duties so demanded and paid will, in the event of the Bill becoming law, be repaid by the Commissioners; and on what basis of value will licensed properties be assessed by the Commissioners for death duties during the period of time before the Bill becomes law.

MR. ASQUITH: The functions of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue in assessing properties to estate duty is not primarily the making of valuations, but the checking of valuations submitted by the accountable person. Valuations so arrived at in the past in accordance with the provisions of the Finance Act of 1894 cannot be affected by subsequent legislation, and consequently there is no ground on which—even on the hypothesis of the hon. Member—such repayment as that suggested could be made. The introduction of the Licensing Bill does not alter the basis of valuation, which remains, and will remain, if the Bill becomes law, the market value at the date of death, the accountable person having a right of appeal, in the event of disagreement, to the courts.

*MR. GEORGE FABER: Will the state of affairs be this, that on the one hand the duty will have been assessed on the full monopoly value of the license, and on the other hand the Treasury intend to confiscate the monopoly value?

[The Answer, if any, was inaudible.]

Factory Inspection.

MR. JOWETT (Bradford, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether until within the last twelve months it was considered necessary for all candidates for inspectorship of factories, probationary and otherwise, to qualify in factory law and sanitary science; and, if so, whether he will state what recent events or considerations have led him to the abandonment of this principle.

I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what distinction will be made to enable occupiers of factories and factory operatives to know whether they are being interviewed by an inspector who is, or by a probationary inspector who is not, qualified to express an opinion as to whether the Factory Acts are being complied with and sanitary requirements are being met.

I beg further to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, having regard to the fact that the duties of inspectors of factories are comprised in the administration of factory law and the application of sanitary science, he will consider the desirability of issuing an alternative syllabus, under which persons who have received nominations for inspectorships may, if they so desire, qualify for appointment in these two subjects, and postpone their examination in literature, languages, etc., until the end of two years probation.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): The principle referred to by my hon. friend has not been abandoned. As I informed him last week, all inspectors, with one or two special exceptions, such as the medical inspector, are required to qualify in factory law and sanitary science. The only change is that, whereas these two subjects previously formed part of the entrance examination, they are now deferred until a subsequent examination, which takes place at the end of two years' probation. The reason for this is that a candidate's knowledge of them can be more thoroughly tested after he has had practical acquaintance with the administration of the Acts, than before his appointment, when his knowledge will be mostly book knowledge crammed for the purpose of the examination. It is not the case that under the old system a candidate entered the service fully qualified to administer the Act, and express opinions whether its requirements were complied with. Under that sytsem, as under this, he had to learn his work under the direction and supervision of his superior officer, and no system could be devised which would do away with this necessity. I do not propose to make any alteration in the present scheme of examination.

Earthenware Manufacture—Special Rules.

MR. JOHN WARD: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he is contemplating the appointment of a Departmental Committee to consider the revision of the special rules for the manufacture of earthenware and china, as a consequence of the passing of the Workmen's Compensation Act, 1906; and whether, having regard to the technical nature of some of the processes, he will appoint a representative of the workers and a representative of the manufacturers upon such Committee.

MR. GLADSTONE: Yes, Sir; I propose to appoint such a Committee. It is required on other grounds besides the passing of the Workmen's Compensation Act, and its scope will be somewhat wider than the mere revision of rules. I propose to include in the Committee representatives of the workers and of the manufacturers.

Hamstead Colliery Disaster.

MR. HAZEL (West Bromwich): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, when a fire broke out recently in the Hamstead Colliery, South Staffordshire, entombing more than twenty men, no properly equipped rescue-party could be found nearer than Yorkshire; whether the only fully equipped colliery rescue-parties in England are at Barnsley and Normanton, in Yorkshire; and whether, in view of the importance of beginning rescue operations at the earliest possible moment when a colliery disaster has occurred, he can take any steps to require or encourage the provision of the latest and best form of rescue-apparatus within easy reach of all important mining districts.

MR. BYLES (Salford. N.): Before the Question is answered, may I ask whether the local miners have not shown extraordinary courage and readiness in going to the help of their imprisoned fellow-workmen?

MR. GLADSTONE: Oh, yes, most certainly. As regards the Question on the Paper I have to say that the two places mentioned in the Question are the only ones at present possessing stations at which breathing apparatus are provided and men are regularly trained in their use. The Royal Commission on mines considered this subject at an early stage of their inquiry, and issued an interim report upon it last year. In view of the risks attending the use of such apparatus, risks only too clearly demonstrated at Courrieres and at Hamstead, and the difference of opinion as the best appliance, they did not feel justified in recommending that its provision should be made compulsory at the present time; but they made certain proposals for the establishment of central rescue stations. I have been in correspondence with the Mining Association of Great Britain on the subject, with the result that steps are being taken towards the formation of other stations, and one station recently completed in Lancashire will shortly be available for use. What is much needed is further improvement in the construction of rescue apparatus, and I hope the establishment of these stations will give a stimulus to such improvements as well as to the further organisation of rescue work.

MR. W. E. HARVEY (Derbyshire, N. E.): Can the right hon. Gentleman give the House any information as to what is going on at the mine?

MR. GLADSTONE: I have given instructions to the Inspector of Mines to let me know if he has any information with regard to the men, but I regret to say I have received no information up to the present.

MR. BRACE (Glamorgan, S.): Is it the intention of the Government to assist financially in the establishment of these rescue stations?

*MR. GLADSTONE: We are doing all we can to promote the establishment of these rescue stations. With regard to the appliance itself, experiments will soon be made on a large and effective scale to test the various forms of apparatus at present under our notice. I should be prepared to consider the giving of financial assistance if I was assured that the present position of the question is sufficiently advanced to make such assistance of real practical service. At present our knowledge on the subject is imperfect, and we do not know what appliance to recommend. In two cases—at Courrières and Hamstead—the use of two different appliances has been accompanied by loss of life. It is too soon to consider the question of a Treasury grant.

MR. BRACE: The House will perhaps forgive me if I press this matter urgently, but I want the right hon. Gentleman to try and realise the point I am endeavouring to make. In the effort to provide the necessary appliances in the respective districts, will the Government give financial assistance to those experimenting, because if it is left to voluntary effort alone that will rather defeat the object of the right hon. Gentleman?

MR. GLADSTONE: We are giving every assistance we can to promote invention, and I would remind the hon. Member that this particular question is still under the consideration of experts, representing both masters and men, on the Royal Commission. We are anxious to do anything practical on the subject, but I can add nothing to what I have said.

Mines (Eight Hours) Bill.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether, in view of the depressed condition of some of the industries of the country, and especially those industries which use large quantities of coal and are therefore largely dependent on the price of coal, he will defer the further progress of the Mines (Eight Hours) Bill until another session.

MR. GLADSTONE: The Answer is in the negative.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.) asked the right hon. Gentleman whether he was aware that there was a growing feeling in the country against this Bill on the ground that it was for the benefit of the few and would inflict incalculable hardships on the many.

MR. W. E. HARVEY asked whether that growing feeling was not due to the inaccurate statements which had been and were being made.

MR. GLADSTONE: I would refer the hon. Member for East Down to a speech I made a year ago in the House, in which he will find my views fully stated, and in which I deliberately called the attention of the country to the possible risks to the consumer which were involved in, at any rate, any hasty legislation on this subject. I would remind the hon. Member that he took no part in that discussion.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: Is it not the fact that since that time the feeling in the country has emphasised the very expressions he made use of in that speech?

[No Answer was returned.]

MR. WATT asked whether it was not the fact that much of the unemployment in the country was due to the high price of coal.

Mr. GLADSTONE: No, Sir. The state of the coal industry has given employment to a great number of men previously unemployed. I may say that last year that reached the extraordinary total of 58,000.

Mr. JOHN WARD asked whether it was not the fact that similar statements as to its injurious effect have been made against all industrial legislation during the last fifty or sixty years.

[No Answer was returned.]

Mr. GEORGE FABER: May I ask the hon. Gentleman whether, in view of the speech he made the other day to a deputation, he has not himself changed his views on the advisability of this legislation?

Mr. GLADSTONE: Certainly not.

Coast Erosion—Damage to the Humber.

Mr. STANLEY WILSON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the fact that evidence has been recently given before the Royal Commission on Coast Erosion that, unless some immediate steps are taken to further protect the sea banks in the districts of Kilnsea and Easington, there is danger of the sea breaking through into the Humber and causing damage to the navigable channel, the Government will be prepared to make special provisions for the adequate defence of the Humber and of the Spurn.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Lloyd-George, Carnarvon Boroughs): As I informed the hon. Member on 30th April last the protection of the lowlands of Kilnsea and Easington is a duty devolving not upon the Government, but upon the owners of the land liable to be flooded and upon the Commissioners of Sewers for the east parts of the East Riding of York. Any proposals which may be submitted to His Majesty's Government by the Commissioners of Sewers will receive careful consideration.

Mr. STANLEY WILSON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this danger is likely to become national and not merely local, if it interferes with the navigable channel of the Humber?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: That is not my information. There is a Commission inquiring into this and other matters concerning the erosion of the coast.

Mr. STANLEY WILSON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that this Commission is not likely to report for a considerable time and that this question is one of immediate and pressing urgency?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: If the matter is pressing surely the landowners immediately concerned will deem it their duty to protect their own property.

Mr. STANLEY WILSON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that 300 acres of land is lying absolutely derelict and is being sacrificed altogether by the landowners of this district?

[No Answer was returned.]

Dock Accident.

Mr. JOHN WARD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to an accident which happened on 3rd March, during the construction of the King's Dock, Swansea, by which a train of muck waggons ran into a gang of navvies, killing two and injuring several others; whether, in view of the recent increase in accidents of a similar character upon public works, he will order a Government inquiry under the Notice of Accidents Act, 1894, into the cause and circumstances of such accident; and, if so, when and where will such inquiry be held.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: The accident in question has been reported to the Factory Inspector under the provisions of the Factory and Workshops Acts, and is not one coming within the scope of the Notice of Accidents Act, 1894, as amended by subsequent Acts. I understand that an investigation of the circumstances attending the accident has already been made by the Factory Inspector.

Mr. JOHN WARD: Do I understand the right hon. Gentleman to say that docks do not come under the Notice of Accidents Act, 1894? Has his attention been drawn to the schedule in which docks are particularly mentioned as being still under the operation of that Act?

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE: It is very important that cases of this kind should not be inquired into by two Departments. I understand that the Home Office, under the later Act, have assumed the responsibility for that, and the Board of Trade therefore cannot interfere. Any further question should be addressed to the Home Secretary seeing that a Factory Inspector is inquiring into the matter already.

West Riding Appeal.

Mr. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash): I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether he has yet been able to come to a decision upon the appeal made to the Board on 21st March, 1907, against the decision of the auditor of the accounts of the West Riding County Council, that sums representing fees in respect of the instruction of pupil teachers could be charged in the accounts as expenditure in respect of elementary education.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. John Burns, Battersea): The appeal is still under consideration, but I hope shortly to be in a position to give my decision with regard to it.

Government Employment.

Mr. JOHN WARD: I beg to ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that while some Government Departments are discharging workmen other Departments are working numbers of their workmen long hours; and whether, under these circumstances, he will ask for a conference of the heads of the great employing Departments, such as the War Office, Admiralty, and Office of Works, with a view to devising means for automatically reducing the hours of labour in cases of general shortage of work, or the exchange of suitable workmen from one Department to another as occasion requires, and so prevent the unnecessary discharge of Government workmen.

Mr. JOHN BURNS: My hon. friend has called my attention to the replies given by the Secretary of State for War and the Secretary to the Admiralty respectively, to Questions put to them with regard to the discharge of men at Woolwich, and the working of men overtime at Devonport. I cannot say how far the suggestion which he makes would be found to be feasible, but I will bring it under the notice of the head of each of the Departments mentioned by him.

Non-Provided Schools.

Mr. LANE-FOX (Yorkshire, W.R., Barkston Ash): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, under the provisions of the Education Bill, non-provided schools which contract out will, while remaining subject to the control and inspection of the board, be entirely free from the control, inspection and interference of the local education authority.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of EDUCATION (Mr. McKenna, Monmouthshire, N.): Yes, Sir subject to qualification in regard to anything that may be necessary for the purpose of medical inspection and the School Attendance Acts.

Royston School Teacher.

Mr. LANE-FOX: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he is aware that last year the West Riding local education authority refused to confirm the appointment of Mr. O. B. Milnes as head teacher to the Royston School on educational grounds; whether the Board confirmed such refusal; whether he has now been appointed head teacher to a larger school at a higher salary; and whether the Board have confirmed such appointment.

Mr. McKENNA: The Board decided that the grounds upon which the local education authority refused their consent to Mr. Milnes' appointment to the headmastership of the Royston School were educational. They have received no notification of his appointment to another school, and such appointment would not require the board's confirmation.

MR. LANE-FOX: Has the right hon. Gentleman refused the request of the managers to conduct an inquiry into the circumstances of the case.

MR. McKENNA: If the hon. Member is referring to something which occurred months ago, I must ask for notice. I shall have to refresh my memory.

MR. RAWLINSON (Cambridge University): Will the right hon. Gentleman make further inquiries into the subject-matter of the Question?

MR. McKENNA: If the hon. Gentleman wishes I will do so.

Commons Interest in the Lords.

MR. GULLAND: To ask the First Commissioner of Works, in view of the advisability that Members of this House should be aware of the proceedings in the other House, whether he could make arrangements to place in the Member's Lobby an indicator showing the subject under discussion and the name of the speaker in the House of Lords.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: Before the right hon. Gentleman answers, is not this Question, in view of the fact that legislation is to be brought in which would destroy the House of Lords, entirely unnecessary?

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, Rossendale): I am not certain whether the gain to Members of the House would be commensurate with the cost entailed upon the taxpayer. I will, however, consider the matter thoroughly, though it is impossible now to insert any provision in the Estimates for the coming year, and therefore I shall have time to consider the eventualities foreshadowed by the supplementary question.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: Leave it till after the next general election.

Kew Gardens.

MR. SUMMERBELL: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he can state the number of British gardeners now on the books as qualified applicants for service in the Royal Gardens at Kew.

MR. J. A. PEASE (Essex, Saffron Walden; for Sir EDWARD STRACHEY): Eleven.

MR. SUMMERBELL: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he can state whether the Richmond Borough Council recently appealed to his Department for better wages for the gardeners employed at the Royal Gardens at Kew; whether in such appeal the council drew specific attention to the high rate of living in the district as a reason for such increase; and, if so, will he state whether any action was taken thereon.

MR. J. A. PEASE: A communication on this subject was received from the Mayor of Richmond and was carefully considered. As my hon. friend is aware it has been decided that the present weekly allowance made to the gardeners is sufficient to provide them with adequate means of subsistence. The gardeners are not to any very great extent affected by the somewhat high rentals charged in the district inasmuch as they are all of them unmarried.

MR. SUMMERBELL: I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he is aware that his Department recently paid £1 per lecture for two courses of such lectures, that only one student attended, and that such student was not on the staff at Kew; and, if so, would he state what fees were paid by such student.

MR. J. A. PEASE: The reply to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. The student to whom my hon. friend refers was employed as a temporary technical assistant and on that account was allowed the privilege of attending the lectures without payment of a fee.

Scottish Veterinary Surgeons.

Mr. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether all local authorities, either county or borough, in Scotland are bound to appoint a veterinary surgeon; whether the duties to which he is appointed include the inspection of all live animals exposed for sale for human food in all markets within his jurisdiction; and, if not, will he see, in the interest of public health, that the duties and regulations of the office of veterinary surgeon are so amended as to secure that all animals intended for human food and offered for sale in any public market shall be inspected and certified as being free from disease.

The SECRETARY for SCOTLAND (Mr. Sinclair, Forfarshire): A local authority may appoint a veterinary surgeon for purpose of dealing with inspection of any animal alive or dead intended for food of man, and, while such an appointment is not expressly imperative, the Local Government Board use every influence to induce local authorities to make one. A veterinary surgeon appointed under Public Health Act is not bound to inspect all animals exposed for sale for human food in all markets within his jurisdiction. The duties of their veterinary surgeon have been extended by special arrangement by certain authorities to include matters other than those specifically mentioned in Sections 43 and 60, but any general amendment of duties of veterinary surgeons, contained as they are entirely in the above sections, is a matter for legislation. I cannot at present give any undertaking in this respect.

Mr. WATT (Glasgow, College): May I ask if the Local Government Board in Scotland have yet established uniformity of inspection throughout the country?

Mr. SINCLAIR: They have no such power, so far as I am informed.

House Rating at Stenhousemuir.

Mr. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that in parts of Stirlingshire, notably in the Stenhousemuir district, strong feeling has been aroused by the rating of the houses of the working classes as compared with the houses of the leisured classes; that in the district named it is alleged that houses of annual value under £20 are subjected to systematic increased rating every alternate year; that the local co-operative building society, which has existed for forty years and has built many streets of workmen's houses in Stenhousemuir, is being killed by the gradual crushing process; that the houses of the leisured class are under-assessed: and whether he will cause an immediate public inquiry to be made and redress given.

Mr. SINCLAIR: I have no information on the subject referred to by my hon. friend. He is no doubt aware that householders aggrieved at the valuation put upon the houses they occupy by the assessor are at liberty to appeal to the Valuation Appeal Court, and I am unable to take any special steps in the instance referred to.

Mr. SMEATON: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the tribunal to which working men have to appeal is composed of the very men whose houses are under-assessed?

Mr. SINCLAIR: No, Sir.

Mr. SMEATON: May I give the right hon. Gentleman a list of houses under-assessed?

Mr. SINCLAIR: We shall be glad to have any information the hon. Member can give.

Illegal Trawling in the Moray Firth.

Captain WARING (Banffshire): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether the gunboat H.M.S. "Skipjack" has been detailed for special duty off the coast of Donegal for the purpose of protecting the line fishermen against the trawlers; if so, whether he will cause a gunboat to be detailed to the Moray Firth, where the line fishermen are also greatly in need of additional protection.

Mr. SINCLAIR: On the first point raised by my hon. friend I have no information. Special instructions have already been given to use every effort with the fleet at the disposal of the Fishery Board to afford protection to the interests of the fisheries in the Moray Firth.

Carrickfergus Harbour.

COLONEL McCALMONT (Antrim, E): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury, whether he has received a memorial from the Urban District Council and the Harbour Commissioners of Carrickfergus relative to the free use of the harbour by Government vessels, and the expense thereby to which the local authorities are put; and, if so, whether, in consideration of these facts, he will give favourable attention to the prayer of the memorial by giving pecuniary assistance to the local authorities, as has been done recently in Sligo and other places.

MR. RUNCIMAN: As regards the memorial and the general question of giving further assistance to the harbour, I must refer the hon. and gallant Member to the Answer which I gave yesterday to the hon. Member for South Down. I cannot admit that the statutory exemption of Government vessels from harbour dues affords any reason for altering the conditions of this loan.

COLONEL McCALMONT: Is it proper for the Government to make use of harbours constructed by private enterprise, and the quays and roads leading thereto, without paying anything for them?

MR. RUNCIMAN: The Carrickfergus Harbour is treated in exactly the same manner as every other harbour in the United Kingdom.

MR. J. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Has the hon. Gentleman now received the memorial as to which I asked yesterday?

MR. RUNCIMAN: Yes, Sir.

MR. J. MACVEAGH: When? Yesterday you said the Treasury had not received it.

MR. RUNCIMAN: A day has intervened since then.

Ballintubber Prosecution.

MR. HAYDEN (Roscommon, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the remarks at a recent prosecution in Ballintubber, County Roscommon, made by Mr. Rice, resident magistrate, to the effect that, in any other country but Ireland, a man situated in the position of one of the witnesses would have drawn firearms on the crowd, and of the protest made on the occasion by the defendant's solicitor against such an incitement to a breach of the law made from the bench; and whether, under the circumstances, he will direct that this magistrate be not permitted in future to adjudicate in cases of this description.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): I have referred this Question to the resident magistrate mentioned, who informs me that his remarks are not quite correctly stated in the Question. A case was being heard in which five men were summoned by the police to give sureties to keep the peace. The evidence showed that these men formed part of a crowd of about thirty persons who pursued the occupier of a grazing farm along the public road for almost a mile, yelling, screaming, booing and blowing horns at him. The police who were protecting the man were obliged to surround him in order to protect him from the violence of the crowd. In calling on the defendants to find sureties to keep the peace, Mr. Rice remarked that in many countries a man so attacked would be tempted to use force and even firearms to protect himself, and that it showed wonderful forbearance on the man's part to have put up with it for so long. The Government do not propose to take any action in the matter.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: Is not that exactly the same advice as the right hon. Gentleman himself gave to the House?

MR. BIRRELL: No, Sir; it is not. [Cries of "Very nearly."]

Irish Arterial Drainage.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the serious and pressing need for drainage works in Clare and other parts of Ireland, the Government will give the matter their immediate consideration.

Mr. BIRRELL: The question of arterial drainage in Ireland is one of considerable magnitude. Legislation would be necessary, and a very large amount of money must be forthcoming before the many drainage schemes brought to my notice can be taken in hand. It would therefore be futile for me to promise the immediate consideration which the hon. Member asks for. I can only say that the Government will consider the matter at the earliest possible opportunity.

Butler Minors Estate, Clare.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the Butler Minors estate, Ballylire, county Clare, there is a landlord in the county Galway, Mr. William J. De Blacquiere, who resides at present in America, and who holds a farm of untenanted land on the above estate containing about 80 acres at Carrowcraheen, in the parish of Kilkeedy, county Clare, and has the same let on the eleven months system; whether his mother, Mrs. Annie De Blacquiere has signed the purchase agreements on his or her behalf for its purchase; and will the Estates Commissioners sanction the advance of money in this case, to the exclusion of small occupiers and farmers' sons.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners inform me that they cannot trace any proceedings as having been instituted before them. I have not yet heard whether proceedings for the sale of the estate are pending in the Land Judge's Court, but am making inquiries on the subject.

Return of Evicted Tenants.

Mr. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say when the quarterly Returns which are required under Section 3 of the Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Act, 1907 will be laid upon the Table.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners inform me that the Return for the period ending 31st December last is in a forward state of preparation, and they hope that it will be ready for presentation before the end of the present month.

Lisburn Registrar of Births and Deaths.

Mr. J. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that Dr. Orr has resigned the position of registrar of births and deaths to the Lisburn Board of Guardians; whether the guardians have refused to appoint a successor; whether he is aware that the difficulty has arisen in consequence of the fact that the Belfast Corporation erected an infectious diseases hospital outside their city boundary and within the Lisburn Union, thus throwing upon the Lisburn Union the cost of the registration of deaths in that institution; whether he is aware that two deaths have occurred in the union owing to infected diseases communicated to residents by persons visiting patients in the Purdysburn hospital; and whether he will use his influence with the Local Government Board to exercise its powers to make the hospital a separate area, and thus place the cost on the Belfast Corporation instead of the Lisburn Union.

Mr. BIRRELL: Dr. Orr has tendered his resignation as registrar of births and deaths because he objects to persons from fever-infected areas in Belfast attending at his office to register the deaths of persons in Purdysburn hospital. The board of guardians have declined to appoint a successor to Dr. Orr, and the appointment now rests with the Lord-Lieutenant. No difficulty is anticipated in finding a suitable successor to Dr. Orr, if he should persist in his resignation. It is the fact that the fever hospital in question was erected by the Belfast Corporation outside the city boundary, and in the Lisburn Union. The Local Government Board are aware that one death from spotted fever in that union last year was attributed to the cause mentioned in the Question, but the medical officer described the source of infection as unknown. The Local Government Board have no power to make the hospital a separate registration area. That power, however, rests with the Registrar-General, who regrets that he cannot accede to the proposal. It would, he informs me, be entirely without precedent, in England, Scotland, or Ireland, to constitute a public institution, situate in a certain union, into a separate district to form part of another union.

Irish School-House Plans.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the official plans for the erection of school-houses in Ireland are yet ready; and, if not, when are they expected; and whether, owing to this delay, the manager of Ardamore National School, Lispole, county Kerry, has been unable to build, though Dr. Starkie described the existing school as one of the worst, if not the very worst, in Ireland.

MR. BIRRELL: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that the standard official plans are now ready for issue. As regards the proposed new school-house at Cloncurra which is intended to replace the present Ardamore School-house, the manager in November last intimated to the Commissioners that he would have special plans and specifications prepared, but these have not yet been submitted to the Commissioners. If the manager does not now desire to furnish the special plans, the Commissioners are prepared to proceed with the case according to the standard official plans.

The Ventry Estate, Kerry.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board agreed to open negotiations for the purchase of the Ventry estate; whether, as a result of this, landlord and tenants came to arrangements as to price, arrears, etc., which they thought would end the connection between them; whether, after months of waiting, the Board returned maps, papers, etc., to the landlord, saying they could not buy because they had no money; and whether, seeing the injustice done both to landlord and tenant, and the certainty of trouble and confusion in the district through the action of a Government Department, immediate action will be taken to provide money for the Congested Districts Board to carry out the sales which they undertook and led the public to believe they could carry through.

MR. BIRRELL: The Congested Districts Board decided at their meeting in November last to open negotiations for the purchase of the Ventry estate, and they conveyed this information to the agent and asked him for particulars of the property. Subsequently, owing to the want of funds for the improvement of estates, the Board had to postpone negotiations in this and other cases, and consequently the particulars of the estate were not furnished to them. The Board were not cognisant of any arrangements between the landlord and the tenants. They informed the hon. Member a month ago that they had postponed negotiations solely on account of the want of funds for effecting improvements. As regards the concluding part of the Question, I can only refer the hon. Member to the very full statement which I made on the subject last Wednesday.

County Cavan Lieutenancy.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state when the present lieutenant of county Cavan received his appointment, and the name of the first magistrate who was appointed on his recommendation, with the date of appointment.

MR. BIRRELL: The present lieutenant of county Cavan was appointed by Letters Patent dated 15th March, 1907. The Lord Chancellor informs me that the lieutenant's first letter recommending the appointment of magistrates contained the names of four gentlemen, Messrs. P. McQuaid, E. Kieran, S. Saunderson, and S. Whyte. These gentlemen were forthwith appointed, and their

Commissions bear the same date, namely, 18th June, 1907.

Mr. MOORE: Is it the fact that no statutory qualification is required to enable a gentleman to be appointed lieutenant of a county?

Mr. BIRRELL: My ignorance is so great that I cannot answer that Question without notice.

Mr. LANE-FOX: Are there any military duties appertaining to the office and, if so, are they satisfactorily carried on?

Mr. BIRRELL: I hope so; I know nobody so well qualified to fulfil them as my hon. friend.

Business Arrangements.

Mr. BRAMSDON (Portsmouth): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether, for the convenience of Members of the House, he will arrange that an announcement shall be made as early as possible in the No Lobby of the items of Government business that will be taken on the following day.

Mr. ASQUITH: It is usual to make an announcement every Thursday of the business to be taken during the following week, and, when the course of business so outlined is departed from, due notice is given to the House.

Goodall Estate, Roscommon.

Mr. HAYDEN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many agreements have been lodged with the Estates Commissioners on the Goodall estate, county Roscommon; how many of those applications are for an advance in respect of holdings not in the occupation of the applicants; can he state how many years purchase have those owners agreed to give the landlord; what is the estimated average number of years purchase of the Estates Commissioners' inspector on the holdings of the non-purchasing tenants; have the Commisioners excluded those tenants from the sale, and, if so, for what reason; have the Estates Commissioners received any applications on behalf of evicted tenants, and, if so, have they taken steps to bring about their reinstatement; and, if not, is it their intention to take such steps.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners inform me that twenty-five purchase agreements have been lodged in connection with the estate referred to in the Question. All the applicants for advances are in occupation of their holdings. The average number of years purchase is twenty-one and one-third. The report of the inspector is confidential and it would be contrary to practice to disclose the details of the report as regards the tenants who have not agreed to purchase. The Commissioners propose to make advances to the tenants who have agreed to purchase, with the exception of three occupiers of grazing farms, portion of whose lands the Commissioners hope to acquire for the enlargement of some of the other holdings, and for the reinstatement of two evicted tenants from whom applications have been received.

Glenahiery Outrage—Suggested Public Inquiry.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) asked the Irish Secretary whether, having regard to the fact that the appeal in the claim for damages for malicious injury made by Lord Ashtown in respect of the explosion at Glenahiery, had now been disposed of, and having regard to the fact that the only issue in that appeal was the question of malice, the Government would now institute a searching public inquiry into all the circumstances surrounding this case, with the view of discovering the guilty parties.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Irish Government are not at present in possession of any information which would justify the belief that a public inquiry upon oath would secure proof of any facts which would lead to the discovery of the guilty parties. Such information may, however, be hereafter forthcoming, and whenever it is we shall be perfectly willing to take the steps most likely to discover the real authors of this outrage.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: In view of the fact that the circumstances connected with this outrage are surrounded by a cloud of suspicion, and that insinuations of all sorts have been made, does not the right hon. Gentleman think that, in the interests of the public as well as of individuals, a full inquiry ought to be held ?

MR. BIRRELL: I wish I could attach the same importance as the hon. Member to the results which must follow from a public sworn inquiry. If I thought there were any facts which we could lay before such a body which would result in the removal of these insinuations, I should be the very first to adopt the suggestion. We are watching to see whether such information can be obtained, but a public sworn inquiry by itself is no certain instrument for the discovery of truth.

MR. BYLES: Is the right hon. Gentleman keeping in mind the fact that this gentleman is the author of a publication called "Grievances from Ireland"?

MR. JOHN REDMOND: If the right hon. Gentleman thinks a discussion in this House would be unsatisfactory, is it not desirable to have a tribunal which could hold a public inquiry ?

MR. BIRRELL: I will consider what the hon. Member says, but I do not see what the reference to this inquiry would be or what evidence could be laid before it which is not already before the public. Some day soon we may become possessed of further facts which would enable a public inquiry to be of some utility, and not merely a means of spending public money.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: If the Government maintains that attitude it will be necessary for us to raise the whole question in this House.

MR. MOORE: If you do not, we will.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I hope you will move for an inquiry. I will second the Motion.

NEW BILL.

FRUIT GROWERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To give increased security of tenure to Fruit Growers in Scotland," presented by Mr. Menzies; supported by Mr. Gulland, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Eugene Wason, Mr. Beale, and Mr. Dundas White; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 148.]

POLICE (WEEKLY HOLIDAY).

*MR. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn) asked permission to introduce a Bill which he was sure would command the sympathy of every Member of the House, viz., one which sought to give one day's rest in seven to members of the police force of this country. He did not propose to dilate on the excellence of that force which was admitted and appreciated by everybody who lived in this country as well as by a great many who lived out of it. But he felt that he must call attention to the extraordinary diversity of the duties of the police, a diversity so great that it became almost bewildering. The more one became acquainted with the work of the constabulary the more one recognised the absolute necessity that great strength of character should be possessed by every member of that force, especially when they considered the forbearance necessary to be shown in dealing with various sections of the community, and that the police officer had himself in his own person to give an example of order, sobriety, integrity, and propriety of conduct to the rest of the country. Might he remind the House of the position to-day with reference to the rest given to members of the Metropolitan Police Force, with which he was more closely connected. When a man joined that force he became entitled to one Sunday out of every four, and as a sort of set-off to that he was granted thirteen weekdays in the course of the year. He had to work full time on Christmas Day, Boxing Day, Good Friday, and Bank Holidays. He was allowed ten days leave during the year. He was allowed no extra pay for overtime. He was in a much worse position than the ordinary working-man, who in addition to his Sunday's rest enjoyed his Saturday half-holiday, and had in fact to give up the equivalent of eight weeks of six working days in the course of a year. Surely those facts ought to be sufficient to justify the demand which was being made for this small boon to the members of a very deserving force. They had only to recollect the very exacting duties which they were called upon to perform, and which they performed in a fashion whose excellence was admitted on all sides, and the demand became almost unanswerable. There was no body of men in whom it was more important that they should find a very high standard of physical and moral strength. New York had got the one day's rest in seven. In France, members of the force had one day off in ten, and they were shortly to get one day in seven. Why was it that we lagged behind those two authorities, who, at all events, amongst others had learned to recognise that the health and strength of their police constituted a very valuable civic asset? His hon. and learned friend the Member for Reading, if he were present, would be able to support him when he referred to the borough which he represented. At Reading where they had put this scheme into practice, it had worked smoothly, and with admirable results, and had set the rest of the country an example which it might well follow. What was it that stood in the way of this great reform? Was it the same cause that stopped so many other urgent and necessary reforms? Money? He was afraid it was, but surely in a matter like this, demanding but a small sum of money compared with its great results, it behoved them to take the question firmly and courageously in hand to see whether they could not meet the expense. The Home Secretary in answer to two or three Questions he had addressed to him in the House, had named a sum of £148,500 as the likely expenditure in regard to this one day's rest in seven to members of the Metropolitan Police Force. In his opinion, he did not think the expense would be £50,000, and he was supported in his conviction by authorities outside the House. But let them take the figures of the Home Secretary; let them put it at £150,000 excluding the superannuation allowance. The Home Secretary, in answer to another Question of his, had stated that the increased rate produced by the last assessment amounted to close on £33,000. It was admitted that in the hands of the Commissioners of Police there was a surplus balance from the rates collected in the past of £750,000. If that sum were allowed to be used in granting this great boon it would very materially reduce the expense which was estimated by the Home Department. No allowance was made in the estimate of the right hon. Gentleman for the reduction which was likely to be caused in the sick list if this boon was given. Allowances might properly be made in other directions to further reduce the Government's estimate, and therefore they must take it that the official estimate was one that would and could be considerably reduced. When Mr. Ritchie was Secretary for the Home Department, he gave the extra 1s. 6d. allowance to the police force per week, plus 1s. 6d. extra lodging money, on the official estimate of £90,000 to £100,000, but according to the statement issued by the Government quite recently, the cost of this change did not exceed £50,000. They had a splendid example in Reading, where the change had led to a reduction of no less than 40 per cent. in the sick list; the men were contented, and appreciated the boon, and remained longer in the service than before. He hoped hon. Members would not regard this in any Party sense, but join in helping forward this great movement to give the police force what they so richly deserved, viz., a small relaxation from the hardening influences of their occupation, an occupation which must unhappily bring them more in touch with the darker than the brighter side of life. This gift of one day's rest in seven, he was sure the country would feel, was worth the small cost which it might entail. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to provide one day's rest in seven to the police," — (*Mr. Remnant.*) — put, and agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Remnant, Mr. Goulding, Sir William Bull, and Mr. Claude Hay.

POLICE (WEEKLY HOLIDAY) BILL.

"To provide one day's rest in seven to the Police," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed [Bill 149.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Proceedings on the Business of Supply, if under discussion when the Business is postponed this day, be resumed and proceeded with, though opposed, after the interruption of Business."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The House divided.—Ayes, 270; Noes, 87. (Division List, No. 34.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C. R.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Armitage, R.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.)
Beale, W. P.
Beauchamp, E.
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo
Bennett, E. N.
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Boulton, A. C. F.
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Buxton, Rt. Hn. Sydney Charles
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Clancy, John Joseph
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm. J. (S Pancras, W.
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cornwall, Sir Edwin A.
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cowan, W. H.
Cox, Harold
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Delany, William
Dewar, Sir J. A. (Inverness-sh.
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dobson, Thomas W.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunne, Major E. Martin (Walsall
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Findlay, Alexander
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Freeman-Thomas, Freeman
Fuller, John Michael F.
Gill, A. H.
Glen-Coats, Sir T. (Renfrew, W.
Glendinning, R. G.
Goddard, Sir Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Grant, Corrie
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Gulland, John W.
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Haslam, Lewis (Monmouth)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon., S.
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hogan, Michael
Horniman, Emslie John
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Sir D. Brynmor (Swansea)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kavanagh, Walter M.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kilbride, Denis
Kincaid-Smith, Captain
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Lyell, Charles Henry
Lynch, H. B.
Macdonald, J. M. (Falkirk B'ghs
Maclean, Donald
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
Mallet, Charles E.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marnham, F. J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meehan, Francis E. (Leitrim, N.)
Menzies, Walter
Montagu, E. S.
Mooney, J. J.

Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morrell, Philip
Morse, L. L.
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John (Kerry. East)
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James(Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Pearson, W. H. M. (Suffolk, Eye
Perks, Robert William
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E.(Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, Thomas (W.Monmth
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E (Dundee)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scott, A. H.(Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seely, Colonel
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S.)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Verney, F. W.
Vivian, Henry
Walton, Joseph
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Rt. Hn. E.(Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart(Orkney)
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Williamson, A.
Wilson, Hon. G. G. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Winfrey, R.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (City Lond
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Baring, Capt. Hn. G (Winchester
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Bellairs, Carlyon
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cavendish, Rt. Hn. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Worc
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Clive, Percy Archer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fell, Arthur
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Glover, Thomas
Gordon, J.
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Guinness, Walter Edward
Hamilton, Marquess of
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Hill, Sir Clement
Hunt, Rowland
Jenkins, J.
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Lee, Arthur H.(Hants, Fareham
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A. R.
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Arthur, Charles
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Pease, Herbert Pike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seddon, J.
Sheffield, Sir Berkeley George D.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Starkey, John R.
Staveley-Hill, Henry (Staff'sh.)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia.

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT, Oldham, in the Chair.]

NAVY ESTIMATES, 1908-9.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £7,129,700, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expenses of Wages, etc., to Officers, Seamen and Boys, Coast Guard, and Royal Marines, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1909."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London): I understand that by common consent between the two sides of the House it was arranged that the general debate on the Navy should be continued on Vote 1. This is not permissible unless some such arrangement has been concluded by common consent. I do not rise to make a second speech upon the broad question of the naval shipbuilding policy of the Government, but I wish to repeat a question which I put at some length yesterday and which I will content myself with restating in terms which are, I think, quite unmistakable. The question is whether in the latter months of 1911 there will not be thirteen ships of the "Dreadnought" and "Invincible" types belonging to Germany and only twelve belonging to Great Britain, it being assumed, in the first place, that the ordinary date at which they (both Germany and Great Britain) begin to build is adhered to; in the second place, that the German statutory shipbuilding programme is fulfilled—and up to the present date it always has been fulfilled; and in the third place that the rates of shipbuilding in Germany and Great Britain are, as it has been asserted by the German Minister of Marine, practically identical or largely identical. That is a very clear and specific question which I have isolated from all the details which encumber the debates on the Navy Estimates. I am quite sure that the Government will be doing a great public service not only to the House, but to those of us who are deeply interested in this naval problem, if they can give us a clearer answer than was to be expected or indeed was possible yesterday from the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty to whom I gave no notice and to whom I could give no notice because the question itself was suggested in the course of last night's debate.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): I do not in the least complain of the spirit in which the right hon. Gentleman has addressed himself to the matter or to his putting this question, which I agree with him is of the greatest interest to the community at large. Before I proceed to answer to the best of my ability let me repeat what I said more than a week ago, that I do not think there is the faintest difference of opinion between us on two points—one of which may be said to involve the other. The first is that we must maintain the unassailable supremacy of this country at sea; and that for that purpose the two-Power standard, as it is commonly called—whether a scientific formula or not—is a good practical and workable one. There is no difference of opinion—as was pointed out by the First Lord of the Admiralty in his Memorandum—between successive Administrations. The question of the right hon. Gentleman, however, does not affect the second question at all, because in dealing with the two-Power standard you must not simply consider the "Dreadnoughts" and "Invincibles." Everybody will agree that there are other classes of ships which must be brought into account also. I myself am not an expert, but from such knowledge as I have of the subject, I should say that the "Lord Nelson" and "Agamemnon," although they may not be quite in the same class as the "Dreadnought" and "Invincible," yet are so superior to other battleships, and in some degree so little inferior to the "Dreadnought," that they ought to weigh very heavily in the balance. But the question put by the right hon. Gentleman is confined entirely to the vessels of the "Dreadnought" and "Invincible' class. First of all, let us see what the assumption is with regard to Germany. The right hon. Gentleman's assumption is that in the months of December or

November, 1911—I think I can safely say within the last two months of the year 1911—Germany will or may be in possession of thirteen ships of this class. That, of course, is based on two preliminary hypotheses. The first is that the whole of the German programmes laid down between now and then will be carried out to the letter; and next, that the German rate of construction will be such as at any rate to admit of the building of one of these vessels within thirty months of the date of its being laid down.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I agree with you.

*MR. ASQUITH: I think it is mathematically demonstrable that if the ship takes longer than thirty months from the date of its being laid down, the thirteen vessels will not be there at the time the right hon. Gentleman mentions. I need not say I am not going to discuss whether these two hypotheses are or are not well founded, or whether the Germans will find it possible to adhere to their programme or whether they will be able to maintain this rate of construction. I think there is very grave reasons to doubt whether they will maintain this rate of construction. Let us admit that they will, but it must be clearly understood that it is on these two hypotheses—these two assumptions—that the problem presents itself. Let us look at the other—the British side of the question. By the end of the year 1910—to be quite accurate by January, 1911—when the battleships and cruisers which form part of the programme of new construction for this year will be completed, to put it at the latest, in the month of January, 1911, we shall be in possession admittedly of twelve ships of this class. Therefore, the right hon. Gentleman's proposition is this. He says: "I admit that by January, 1911, we here shall have twelve ships of this class, but when you come to the month of November or December, 1911, the Germans, if they have completed their paper programme and are able to carry on their shipbuilding in the time I have suggested, will have thirteen. In other words, we shall be one short." That assumes either that nothing at all is done next year in the way of new construction, for the twelve vessels referred to are provided for in the programme of past years and the present; or that whatever is done in the way of new construction or whatever is proposed, the vessels will be laid down at such a date that they will not be completed in the months of November or December, 1911. I agree that upon those assumptions that will be so, but without in any way forecasting the shipbuilding programme for the next year, I will say this without the faintest hesitation, that if we find at that time there is a probability or a reasonable probability of the German programme being carried out in the way the paper figures suggest, we should deem it our duty to provide and we should provide not only for a sufficient number of ships, but for such a date for laying down those ships that at the end of 1911 the superiority of Germany which the right hon. Gentleman foreshadows would not be an actual fact. I hope that is quite explicit. That is the policy of His Majesty's Government. It remains on record and I think it ought to reassure the House that we do not intend in this matter to be left behind.

*MR. BRAMSDON (Portsmouth) said there had been considerable discussion on the subject of providing ships for the Navy, and on the number of men to be employed. He wanted to change the venue of the discussion a little, and to deal rather with questions of the discipline of the men, and of their comforts, and to ask that justice might be done to them in their various positions in the service. He wanted in the first place to say how grateful the men of the Navy were for the great benefits which had been bestowed upon them in the past year. He wished to thank the Admiralty, and his right hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty, and those associated with him, for a great number of boons which had been bestowed on the men. He put in the forefront the question of victualling, canteen reform, the reforms concerning officers' cooks and stewards, and the ships' cooks of the Navy. This was a very large and comprehensive programme. It meant that the men of the Fleet had had a very great blessing bestowed on them of better food, cooked and served in a better way. The question of the cooking of the food had been a very long and tiresome subject, but he thought at last the difficulty in connection with the serving and supply of food had been met, and he desired as in some sense representing the men, to thank the Admiralty for the great efforts which had been successfully made in this matter. He wanted to thank them also for the new regulations as to clothing, which had bestowed a great boon on the men. During the past year also there had been established the wireless telegraphy class, creating more petty and warrant officers, and enabling the men to obtain speedier promotion and better positions in the service. He wanted to thank them, too, for the extra pay and the better conditions among the military branch of the warrant officers, but he wished the Admiralty could have seen their way clear to show some appreciation towards the carpenters branch of the Navy, which he thought richly deserved it. He hoped the Admiralty had this matter still under consideration, and that something would yet be done. There had been a new scale of pay for the seamen and signal class, and he undertsood that that new pay was in some sense a benefit to the men. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would forgive him when he said that the men were unable to appreciate that new scale of pay. They were unable to understand that it was any further benefit. In the First Lord's statement it was mentioned that arrangements would have to be made to meet some difficulties, and he would be glad if the right hon. Gentleman could tell him if as the result of the issue of this scale there was to be an extra grant of money supplied, as then the men would understand it would be of benefit to them. At the present time it was a sort of Chinese puzzle, and there were many parts which the men were unable to understand. If his right hon. friend could tell him that it would result in an extended grant he thought they might assume that more benefits were being given to the men. He wished to thank the Admiralty very heartily also for the attention they had given to the numerous letters which he, as a representative of a dockyard constituency, had had to address to them. There had been a great improvement made this year in the lot of the general body of naval men. Upon this improvement he had to congratulate his right hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty, especially as it was a greater advance than had perhaps ever been recorded in any year in modern times or in the history of the Navy. That was a great deal for a Member representing a naval port to admit, but whilst tendering his thanks in that respect he must say that there was a good deal more to be done, and in this connection he would mention the important question of disrating in the service. In 1905, no fewer than 951 men were disrated summarily, which meant that their careers were spoiled, as it were, in consequence of the summary act of the officer of a ship. He took it that the commanders of ships meant to do justice to the men when they disrated them, but it was done in such a summary way and without proper evidence that the men had to contend with a very great injustice. In 1906, 902 men were disrated. He would explain the procedure which was followed in these cases. A man got into disgrace and was put into the report, and on the following morning he was brought up on the quarter-deck; no evidence was taken in writing, but there was some general evidence taken upon which the captain of the ship decided that the man should be disrated. That was especially hard upon the ship's steward, because if he was disrated he was disrated from the position of a chief petty officer to that of a leading seaman, and if once a man was disrated his career was practically gone. He might recover his position in the ordinary military branches after six months if his superior thought fit, but if he was an assistant steward it would take him two years before he could hope to be restored to his old position. He thought the committee would appreciate what that as regarded pay and pension meant, viz., a serious injury to a man throughout the whole of his career, and if the money alone which it meant to him were computed it would mean a very large sum. He wished to make a suggestion to remedy this state of things, viz., he wanted his right hon. friend to consider the advisability of taking down the evidence in writing, and keeping it as a record. He firmly believed that if that were done the number of cases of disrating would be reduced by one half in twelve months. The men complained that they did not get justice done to their cases as they were not properly considered at this hasty trial on the quarter-deck, and if they tried to get a word in they were told that they were rude and must not speak, and were in various ways prevented from making a statement. This was a very serious thing to many men in the Navy, and he made this appeal, that as the Admiralty had during the past year done so much, they would try and consider this measure of justice which would be very much appreciated throughout the Navy. The existence of a feeling that justice was not done could not be for the good of the service. He also wanted the right hon. Gentleman to consider the question of badges. One set of men got badges and were paid for them, another set of men got badges and were not paid for them, while a third did not get any badges at all. One general system should be adopted so that these anomalies should be done away and all ratings should be allowed badges and paid a penny per day for each. The main question upon which he wished to address the Committee that day was in connection with the *status* of the engineer officers of the Navy. He supposed that if one were to ask anyone connected with the Navy what was the most important thing in regard to the *personnel* they would reply that it was the question of discipline. Unquestionably it was. Our ships would be nothing and our *personnel* would not be able to be properly organised if it were not for the discipline carried out in the most effectual manner. That discipline meant that every man connected with the military branch of the Navy—he meant the fighting force of the Navy—should readily respond to the order of his superior officer and carry out that discipline which alone could bring about the best results in all matters connected with our ships and the fighting of our ships. That existed throughout the military part of the Navy, but there was one part of the ship in which that discipline could not be said to be carried out with that perfection that it ought to be, and that was in the engine-room and stokehole part of the ship. The men were loyal enough and respectful enough, but unfortunately, the engineer officers who had charge of them, and who had their supervision, had no control over them, no command over them, and when he told the Committee that the Engineers' Department of His Majesty's Navy consisted of one-third of the whole of the *personnel* of the Navy they would see how important this question was. There were few hon. Members of this House who knew that the engineer officer, no matter what his position was on board ship, had absolutely no power to enforce an order except that he could in case of disobedience take a man to some officer of the military branch. They ought to have some departmental power. This was not a matter that had arisen to-day, but one which arose many years ago. The engineer officers of the Navy demanded that there should be amongst the engineer officers of the Navy disciplinary power to command and control their men. In the case of war what was more important than the engine department of His Majesty's Navy? The ready response to an order, the way in which it should be carried out, the readiness for war, in fact, the instant an order was given that it should be immediately complied with throughout the whole of the engineer's staff, he thought they would agree were matters imperative. Let them consider that there was a war going on, and that the ships were either chasing the enemy or being chased by the enemy. In that particular case one could easily see that the parts of the ship which stood the most severe strain were the engine departments, because if they had to chase another ship it was absolutely imperative that the whole organisation in connection with the engine department should be placed on a perfect footing, and every order should be immediately obeyed; and the same thing applied if they had to organise the chase from an enemy or had to approach the enemy; but no power whatever was given to an engineer officer to punish his men, however slightly. He could not keep his men in even for an hour, he could not give them extra work for an hour, he could not stop their leave for an hour, and he was not able to give the slightest possible punishment in order to control and command his men. He had no control or command of his men as he should have. In two navies of the world which had recently been engaged in battles, an alteration in this respect was brought about. He referred to the United States and Japan. The United States had given to the engineer the position of a military officer, and so had Japan. After the great battles with the Russians, the Japanese had come to the conclusion that the engineer officers in their department should have complete command and control of their men, and that they should be made military officers. Indeed, the Admiralty themselves had admitted that this was a proper thing to do, because the new officers to be created were to be military officers, and they were to have the same powers as regards the command of their men as officers in the executive branch of the Navy. With reference to the old engineer officers and the present military officers he would like to read to the Committee a statement made by Lord Selborne, who, was First Lord of the Admiralty in a previous Administration. Lord Selborne said :—

> "I ask you and the country, What is the most important thing on board a battleship to-day? The machinery. I defy anyone to give any other answer. It has been said that these engineer duties proposed for executive officers are not really duties for combatant officers. Brushing technicalities aside, who are the combative officers? I say he (the engineer officer) is one of the officers essential to the fighting of a ship. It might be very unfortunate for a ship, but if you land every doctor, surgeon, servant, chaplain, and accountant before action, the ship could be fought just as well as if they were on board; but if you landed seamen, marines and their officers, the ship would be helpless, as she would be if you landed the engine-room *personnel.*"

He hoped he had made it clear that the engineer officer of the future was to be, and in fact, was admitted by the Admiralty to be a military officer with control and command of the men under him. But then they would have this anomaly, that when these young officers came to be commissioned officers, they would, in accordance with an answer given by his right hon. friend, pass into the engine-room, and they would have this peculiarity, namely, engineer officers under the new *regime* with military authority, while the old engineers, holding higher positions than they, would have no power of control over their men. He wanted his right hon. friend to tell him what was to happen in such a case, would the military officer, in any respect, have command of his senior officer? Such a thing as that would be ridiculous. It would be the *reductio ad absurdum*, because they would get back to the anomaly under these regulations that the military officer of junior rank would take precedence in certain cases of officers of superior rank. He thought the Committee would fully understand the relative rank which existed between officers in the engineer branch and those of the military branch. There were lieutenants of the military branch, and commanders and captains, and some few years ago the Admiralty, in considering this question, conceded military rank to the engineer officer, but without conceding military control or military powers. The engineer officers had consistently and persistently pointed out that unless they got power of control over their men, it would be a positive danger to this country should there be at any time in the future a battle fought when the urgency and importance of the discipline and organisation of the Fleet became absolutely necessary. The present engineer officer would remain in the Navy for some fifteen or twenty, or twenty-five years. Yet there would be in the Navy young men holding military positions, and unless something was done to bring about a change it would be a great disadvantage to the Navy and to this country in time of trouble. The only way to enforce discipline was for the engineer officer to have respect shown to him by those beneath him, and how could a man have respect shown to him when he had no power to enforce his orders? Why, in civil life a man had power to discharge. Of course, they could not do that in the Navy. What engineer officers asked for was really more modest in character. What they said was that they wanted the power to punish on a similar basis to that of the Marine officers of the ship. Marine officers of the ship had control of nothing like the proportion of men that were under the engineer officers in the Navy. There were 34,000 men in the engine departments of the Navy, and if anything arose to create discord, it would affect the security of the ship and lead to that want of readiness for war and ready response to orders which were so necessary. If the orders of the Engineer Department were not fulfilled in a perfect manner, then he suggested that a very serious danger would arise. He thought the House was entitled to say to him that if this thing had been going on so long, why had this measure of justice not been granted to the engineer officers before? He would tell them why. It was simply prejudice on the part of the officers who now had command in the Service. They did not like to concede to other branches the position which they themselves held. At the same time the House might say: "But surely we shall get the new officers and, in the long run, things will right themselves." He would be very sorry if that view were taken for a moment, because it must be fifteen or twenty years before any military officers could obtain high positions which others held at the present time; and if they had friction between the two it must be to the disadvantage of the Navy. Let him again read what Lord Selborne said upon this question, in a speech which he made in another place. He said—

> "There is a school which says 'Let things alone'; but things, when they are great forces, will not let you alone, and it is not my idea of the functions of the Board of Admiralty that it should sit still and be moved in spite of itself by forces which it did not recognise until it was overwhelmed by them. Again, I am told that everything that is given to any other officer is so much detracted from the value of the executive officers' positions. That is base coin, and it exasperates me when I hear it jar on the counter."

There had been several Departmental Committees on this question, and he thought he was right in saying that there was only one answer to this point, and that was that the power to control and command their men, the power of punishment, must be given to the engineer officers; it was the logical outcome of all discussions and all reasoning. There was a Committee presided over by Admiral Douglas, which sat not very long ago, and in which this question was asked to be decided. The Committee sat for some time. It was composed of some six executive officers, four marine officers and four engineer officers, and the result was a Report which used most hostile and injudicious language on the part of the military branch of the Navy. His right hon. friend on a question being asked him by the Member for Dulwich, as to whether this Report was to be made public, and in reply to two other questions, said—

> "This Report is still under consideration. As the Committee was appointed for the confidential guidance of the Board in contingencies which have not yet arisen, it is not proposed to publish the Report."

He would like his right hon. friend to promise that the Report would be published, because he believed if it were published it would be in itself a sufficient justification for all that the engineer officers demanded. It would show the reason why there was a very great necessity in the organisation of the Service. He hoped that even now his right hon. friend would consider the advisability of making this Report public. What he was afraid of was that his right hon. friend, acting on the part of the Admiralty, would have the usual stereotyped answer which had been given in reply to this question so many times. He would say, perhaps, that the matter was not ripe yet, and was still under discussion. But the matter was ripe, and it had been discussed twenty or thirty times. They kept on giving concessions to the engineer, and he observed, in connection with the First Lord's statement, that now they proposed to give the engineers more pay, which they had been demanding for years, and which they deserved. But on this very vital question which the engineer officers of the Navy had asked for several years—that they should be given not anomalous military positions, but a real power of control over their men, so that they might be able to punish them in a departmental way for breach of duty—they had never got a reply. It was not meant that the engineer officer desired to assume the powers of the captain of the ship; all he wanted was, in connection with his own department, that he might be able to give some correction to his men—all he wanted was that he should have the same power as a marine officer at the present time. He thought it was called seven days 10A. He could stop their leave or their grog for seven days or less, or he could keep them in for an hour to discharge extra work in consequence of disobedience on their part. He introduced this question solely from its national importance, and because it was demanded by every engineer officer and everyone who had any knowledge whatever of the duties of the Engineer Department of the Navy.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) said the pronouncement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, although extremely satisfactory as far as it went, did not materially advance the question of whether or not the Government were going to adhere strictly to the two-Power standard. The fact that we were going to have a superiority of heavy ships over Germany in December, 1911, did not put forward the question of the two-Power standard any further than it was before. Though probably the majority of Members opposite were perfectly sound on this point of the two-Power standard, there was, as they knew, a considerable section of them which accidentally or otherwise seemed to be led by the hon. Member for Falkirk, who did not appear to think it necessary to maintain that standard. There was nothing in the hon. Member's speech to show really what he meant in reference to the two-Power standard. His Motion was that there should be a reduction of armaments because of the friendly relations which at present existed between this country and foreign nations. The burden of the hon. Member's argument was that there was not now the same necessity for heavy armaments as before the Japanese Alliance and the Agreements with France and Russia. He would like to ask the hon. Member and those who followed him what they meant by there not being the same necessity for the same armaments. Did they mean that we had more than a sufficient margin over the two-Power standard or, as on the whole he gathered from the speech, that we should give up the two-Power standard altogether and go back to the one-Power standard.

Attention called to the fact that forty Members were not present.

House counted and forty Members being found present.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (continuing) said there was a certain amount of doubt in certain Members' minds as to the exact meaning of the mover of the Resolution, but they had no doubt as to the exact meaning of the hon. Baronet who seconded it, and who said in the most plain and straightforward way that the reason for a two-Power standard was gone, and that no attempt should be made in the future to keep it up. The hon. Baronet also warned the Government in very strong terms that if all the members who sympathised with the Motion voted against the Government, His Majesty's Ministers would be in a minority. That was a point which it would be well to clear up. They had had a comparatively specific statement from the Government that they were determined to maintain the two-Power standard, although they had refused to allow those words to be introduced at the end of the Motion the other day. They also had it from the mover and seconder of the Resolution that a large section of members opposite felt so strongly on the subject and held the views which were held by the hon. Baronet, that if they had allowed themselves to vote according to their feelings and consciences they would have voted for the Resolution. That was a very serious state of affairs. He did not approach the question at all in a Party spirit. He believed the majority of Members opposite agreed with him rather than with the hon. Member for Falkirk. But it seemed worthy of being cleared up, and the House and the country should know what section of the present Members of Parliament felt that we could safely fall off from the standard which this and preceding Governments had set up as being absolutely necessary for our welfare. He hoped the hon. Member for Falkirk would make it perfectly plain what he meant. Let him say in specific terms that the time had come when it was no longer necessary to maintain the two-Power standard, so that they might know exactly where they were and what they were voting on.

Abstract resolutions no doubt gave an opportunity for Members to express their views.

THE CHAIRMAN: We are not dealing with an abstract Resolution, but with a very concrete one.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG submitted that the question of the two-Power standard and the general reduction of the Navy was the whole essence of the debate. He regretted that in the whole of these discussions the representatives of the Admiralty had sheltered themselves too often and too completely behind the expert advisers of the Admiralty, and he submitted that they had entirely misconceived their position with regard to the Navy and the position which the Admiralty bore with reference to that House, and which that House bore with reference to the Admiralty. In a debate on affairs dealing with the Home Office or the Board of Trade it was very rarely that one heard the responsible Ministers quoting the permanent Civil servants who were their subordinates. The Admiralty was subservient to that House in precisely the same way as any other great public department, and the Secretary to the Admiralty was absolutely responsible for all the acts that were done, whether by himself or by the Civil Lord or by the naval members of the Admiralty, or the Civil servants employed in the office. In all departments Ministers were to a certain extent guided by the experience and advice of Civil servants, but it was not more so in the Admiralty than in other offices. The right hon. Gentleman regretted very much the newspaper campaign against the Home Fleet. He (Mr. Craig) did not regret that the Home Fleet had formed the subject of so much discussion in the public Press, and he was quite sure that Members who had listened to the debate would agree that all was not what it should be with regard to the Home Fleet. He thought the explanations with regard to the nucleus squadrons of the Home Fleet given by the Civil Lord, and the supplementary figures given by the hon. Member for Fareham, would go very far to endorse the opinions which many people and many newspapers had previously made up their minds to on this subject. The explanation with regard to the ships in the dockyards for repairs was entirely unsatisfactory. He questioned whether any hon. Member, unless he was very well versed in naval affairs, knew really what class of ships belonged to these nucleus divisions and what class did not. They had been told that when a ship in one of the other fleets was sent home for repairs it was generally necessary to send out another ship to take its place. He would like to know whether the ship so sent out was ever taken from one of these divisions of the Home Fleet, and if so, did the ship which was sent home take its place in the nucleus squadrons. A ship was not going to be sent home from the Mediterranean or the Atlantic for repairs unless there was a comparatively serious need, and if that was the case the ship could not be in a very efficient condition for the carrying out of evolutions at sea, and therefore she did not form a very important part of a nucleus or any other squadron. The hon. Member for Fareham had shown that the Portsmouth division at any rate was not in an efficient condition, in fact, could hardly be said to be in a condition at all, because there were only two out of six ships fit at the moment to go to sea. If that was the case with the Portsmouth division it was a fair inference that the Plymouth division was not in a very much better condition. The Secretary to the Admiralty had spoken of the Home Fleet as a whole as being a real fleet in being. He was afraid his conception of a real fleet in being was very different from that of the right hon. Gentleman, for with the exception of the Nore division, so far as he had been able to gather, it was not in a ready and efficient condition for war. He saw that the Nore division had gone to Invergordon for gunnery practice. Of the six battleships of the latest type which it included only four had gone, and it was hardly correct to say that the "Majestic" and the "Cæsar" were of the latest class. The "Majestic" was over ten years old. He thought they might claim that instead of being in an efficient condition there was a most lamentable want of homogeneity about the Fleet. It was divided into three parts which very rarely assembled under its Commander-in-Chief. With regard to the new programme, the Civil Lord in a rather impatient and peevish way had said he wished Members would not be continually harping about what other countries were doing. That was a very extraordinary statement. How could they make up their mind what our programme was to be unless they knew what other nations were doing? It was of the very essence of our programme to keep pace with the shipbuilding programme of other countries. The hon. Gentleman probably referred principally to Germany. There had been a great deal of nonsense talked about the danger of mentioning the doings of Germany or any other nation. It might be that the right hon. Gentleman or the Leader of the Opposition had to be guarded in their statements, but he had no misgivings and no fears of creating any unpleasantness in any country by what he might say, and he had no hesitation in saying that to his mind a great part of their calculations as to the size of the Fleet must depend on what other countries were doing, and especially upon what Germany was doing. They were constantly being informed in the Press and in the House that the great increase which had lately been made in the German Fleet was not in any way directed against us. He could not characterise that statement as anything but nonsensical. The Germans, to his mind, had but one central idea in rapidly building up their Fleet. They had determined if possible to construct a Fleet equal to ours, and he saw no reason why they should not frankly admit the fact, and with equal determination set themselves to the task of keeping ahead of them, as he was quite sure the present and each successive Admiralty would do. He hoped the question of whether or not the House and the country were thoroughly determined to maintain the two-Power standard would be disposed of at an early date definitely and once for all. He considered that that was the most important question in naval matters they had to discuss, and although they were content with the statement made by the Ministers responsible for the Navy, they wanted to know to what extent the feeling voiced by the hon. Member for Falkirk existed on the opposite side of the House.

*MR. E. H. LAMB (Rochester) wished to say how very dissatisfied he was in common with some others with the reply of the Civil Lord to certain questions that had been asked with reference to the establishment. For years past the establishment had been held out as an inducement to men coming into the Royal dockyards. Now for some months the establishment had been suspended and a great incentive had been taken from the men, and they were entitled to some fuller explanation than they had had. The Civil Lord had practically replied that the matter was now being considered by the Government. He assumed that that meant the Government were considering the matter in conjunction with the Treasury as distinct from the Admiralty. He wished to emphasise the discontent there was in dockyard towns because of the want of faith in this matter. He pressed for an assurance that the First Lord would use his influence with the Cabinet to see that justice was done. He wanted to refer to another matter which did not brook delay. Provision was made for further dredging operations in the River Medway. They had been told in days gone by that the docks at Chatham were not sufficient to take in the "Dreadnought," but that could not be argued in the case of the cruiser class, and what he pressed for to-day was some assurance that in the allocation of the cruisers included in this year's programme, Chatham would be considered. He pleaded for a Royal dockyard as distinct from a private yard. He hoped one of the cruisers would be allocated to that dockyard. He and his friends were convinced that it would be more economical for the nation to carry on a certain amount of new work in conjunction with repairs. As to the dredging of the Medway, during the past few days he had witnessed one of the dredgers at work. There he found hoppers were in attendance, and on the soil being taken from the bed of the river it was taken right down the Medway over

Sheerness bar, on past the Nore, and right out beyond Barrow Deeps to the Black Deeps, a distance of thirty-five miles, or seventy miles there and back. Some time ago they were told by the Admiralty that one of the difficulties in connection with Chatham dockyard was the silting up of the bed of the Medway. One of the contentions of the Admiralty, though he did not admit it, was that from the great clay holes in some of the creeks of the Medway the soil silted back with the outgoing tide into the bed of the river. Some time ago the Admiralty bought a large marsh called the Hoo Marsh, just off Gillingham Reach, and adjoining it was a creek. He would suggest to the Admiralty that they should make some alteration in the dredging operations. Instead of having hoppers alongside of the dredgers, and the consequent delay in the carrying away of the soil, and especially in view of the fact that there were not a sufficient number of hoppers to keep the dredgers all at work, he suggested that some of the many barges obtainable on the Medway might be employed. These barges could deposit the soil at the back of the Hoo Marsh, which an attempt was being made to reclaim by the deposit of ashes from Chatham Dockyard. Besides saving expense on account of the lesser distance which it would be necessary to carry the soil, employment would be given to much local labour. There were at present a large number of unskilled workmen sadly in need of employment. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would show that the words he had used since the present Government had been in power were justified and that the interests of Chatham would be very really safeguarded.

*THE CHAIRMAN said these were questions which really ought to be raised on Vote 8. They did not arise on the general discussion.

*MR. E. H. LAMB said he would leave these matters. He wished to emphasise the need which was generally felt as to the fortifying of the East Coast. The nerve centre had now been transferred to the east as distinct from the south, and, therefore, he urged that greater attention should be paid to that part of the coast and especially the lower end embracing Chatham. That was an ideal base, and he asked the Secretary to the Admiralty to use his influence to secure its retention as a first-class naval dockyard where new construction and repairs might go on side by side.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) said he desired to raise a question which was of considerable interest to his own constituency, namely, the question of the coastguard. He was not quite satisfied with the statement which the Secretary to the Admiralty made the other day. The duties of the coastguard, he understood, were threefold. They had to look after war vessels on the coast; they had duties in connection with the prevention of smuggling; and last, but by no means least, they had a considerable amount of duty so far as life-saving was concerned. Unfortunately there was a somewhat mixed and muddled jurisdiction with regard to the coastguard. It was somewhat difficult to see where that of the Board of Admiralty ended and that of the Board of Trade began. There was, for instance, a wreck recently near Hartland Point, and a Board of Trade inquiry was at once ordered. At his request the Board of Trade undertook to inquire into the efficiency of the coastguard service. That was to say, the Board of Trade inquired into the efficiency of men paid by the Admiralty; but, to make confusion worse confounded, the gentlemen who sat on the Board of Trade inquiry were naval men, who, therefore, had to judge of the efficiency of the department they formerly served. One question entirely within the jurisdiction of the Admiralty was whether there was to be an increase or a decrease in the service, or whether it was to be abolished. It was on that point that he wished to speak, and he would deal only with their duties in relation to the saving of life, because in his opinion that was the most important duty now confided to the coastguard. The right hon. Gentleman stated the other day that there was an admitted redundancy of men and coastguard stations. He would be able to prove that in respect of his own constituency that remark did not apply. The seaboard of the division he represented was of a peculiarly dangerous description. The cliffs rose almost precipitously from the sea and in times of storm they were nothing more nor less than death traps for mariners. He had received a letter from Lynmouth in which the writer stated that there were only two coastguards and there ought to be three. That station was very much undermanned, and the men could not perform their life saving duties properly. In regard to Morte Hoe he had received a letter from the vicar containing the following—

> "There has been a coastguard here since the year 1870. First one man, and a few years later two were stationed here up to quite recently when they were removed. Now the watching the coast at night is done by members of the rocket brigade by order by telephone from Ilfracombe. These men are labourers who after a hard day's work are called upon in turn to turn out and watch for four hours at a time at 2s. 6d. per call. The head of the brigade is my gardener and he calls upon men as required. They are not bound to go and he may call a man from outside, but after a hard day's work a man is not fit to turn out in the teeth of a gale to watch the coast. The beat is from Rockham Bay to the end of Woolacombe sands which includes Morte Point and the Morte Stone outside, where I can show from the church burial registers, scores of men have lost their lives. There is no day watch. . . . The beat from Rockham to the end of the sands is one of the most dangerous of this dangerous coast, and I speak as one who has known it well for the past fifty years, and if there is one part of our coast which needs the coastguard service it is here."

He did not say that these men did not try to do their duty when called upon, but after a hard day's work they were not fit to go out and watch the coast on a stormy night. He did not think that the lives of men should be left to such a watch as that decribed. He went further down the coast and came to that part in the midst of which Clovelly is situated. Only a week or two ago a ship was wrecked there and lives were lost, but no coast guard saw the wreck or gave any assistance whatever. He could tell the right hon. Gentleman of a tragedy which happened on that part of the coast which might move him. On a very stormy night the schooner "Goonlaze" was wrecked close to Cockingeton Point. There were three men on board. One was drowned at sea; and two were washed on to the beach. One of the two died almost immediately and the other managed to climb up the cliff, but dropped down dead from exhaustion. If there had been a coastguard patrol watching that part of the coast they would have seen that ship in difficulties, because the evidence showed that she burnt flares, and these men might have been saved. Moreover, these men were in the Royal Navy Reserve, and their valuable lives were lost to the Navy by the neglect to watch that part of the coast. He sincerely trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would consider this question favourably. He was glad to see the Civil Lord of the Admiralty present, because the hon. Gentleman knew this coast well and, he was sure, had every sympathy with Devon sailors and fishermen. So far from abolishing the coastguard there was every necessity for the number of men employed in it being increased.

*MR. HUNT (Shropshire, Ludlow) said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had told the Committee that if it was found that Germany had more vessels of the "Dreadnought" type than we had in 1911, the number of our battleships would be increased. The right hon. Gentleman had also said that the Government were very strong in their determination to keep up the two-Power standard; but he would ask how the right hon. Gentleman was going to manage if one of the other Powers—say America—took it into her head to build six or seven ships of the "Dreadnought" type? He asked the Secretary to the Admiralty if it would be possible in that not improbable event for this country to build battleships so as to keep up to the two-Power standard? He noticed that the hon. Member for King's Lynn had made the very definite statement which the Civil Lord of the Admiralty did not deny, that Germany at the present time had more unarmoured fast cruisers than Great Britain, and also—which he himself believed was the case—that Germany had more torpedo craft that could be effectively used in the North Sea than Great Britain had; and further that at the present time our other torpedo craft were too far from their base. If that were so, it must be a fact that our big battleships and big cruisers could not keep at sea in the North Sea at night next week if they were wanted to do so, because they would have no fringe of small ships round them to protect them at night. Surely that was a very dangerous position. From the little he knew of land warfare, it seemed to him to be exactly the same as if there was an army containing artillery in South Africa with an enemy all round it and no outposts stationed at night round the army to protect it from surprise. The Secretary to the Admiralty must know that the British admiral of the Channel Fleet made a trial of what torpedo craft could do against battleships and cruisers, and the result was that the admiral gave four battleships torpedoed. It would be very pleasant if we woke up one morning and heard that four of our biggest battleships had been torpedoed during the night! He had also information from men who were at the show that four other armoured vessels were also torpedoed. Some of the torpedoes were lost, and the Admiralty had therefore issued an Order that no more torpedoes were to be used at night. If that were so it meant that our torpedo flotilla could not practice at night when torpedoes were really dangerous, and when they were of most use. He wanted to call attention to the very insufficient pay which our ordinary seamen received. This was the cause of grave discontent in the Navy at the present time. With ordinary allowances an ordinary seaman got 1s. 7d. a day, and out of that he had to pay £5 a year for the upkeep of his clothes, which were often rendered unfit to wear in getting back torpedoes fired during practice and in other ways. The officers were often obliged to order the men to get new clothes at a cost of 10s. 6d. to the men, although sometimes the officers paid for the new clothes out of their own pockets. This was because the men got so angry about the spoiling of their clothes and having to pay for new ones through no fault of their own, that they were apt to go on shore at the first opportunity and get into trouble. Then the men had to pay £10 or £12 a year for extra food and also travelling expenses when they had a chance of going home. In the Navy men were allowed to marry, and he asked the Civil Lord how he thought these men were to provide for their wives and families and pay rent for their houses out of their small pay. Of course it was impossible to be done; and the officers in the Navy were continually receiving the most heart-rending letters from the starving wives of their men. The Civil Lord laughed.

Mr. LAMBERT: No, only a smile.

*Mr. HUNT: Well, the hon. Gentleman smiled; but in any case he had taken very great care to state what he had been actually told by officers who had charge of these men. They told him that there was very serious discontent in the Navy at the present time on account of the state of things he had described. If that were the case the Government were paying not only sweaters' wages but bad sweaters' wages to the only men who could prevent the invasion of this country and the destruction of the Empire. If the Government were to be good employers they ought to be good employers, above all, to the only defenders of this country who could at present be depended on. Nobody could pretend that the Territorial Army could at the present time save the country in the event of any approach to a serious invasion. Last year he had given figures showing how much less carpenters, shipwrights, blacksmiths and other skilled workmen on board ship were paid compared with the same class of workmen in the dockyards, but hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench had taken no notice of his complaint. These men on shipboard had much more discomfort and worked harder than the men in the dockyards, and instead of being worse they should be better paid. He thought it a most extraordinary thing that the hon. Member for Glasgow, one of the most prominent of the Labour Members, should have told the Committee that he did not disapprove of the workmen who were discharged from Woolwich being obliged to emigrate in order to obtain protected work in protected Canada and Germany which they could not find in free trade Britain.

Colonel SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) said he wished to emphasise what had fallen from the hon. Member for Barnstable as to the great importance of retaining the coastguard if we were to maintain the life-saving service in a state of efficiency. He ventured to point out to his hon. friend the Civil Lord that since he spoke on this question last week, the necessity of increasing the coastguard had been proved in the most dramatic fashion. Many men's lives had been saved by that service, and one man in the lifeboat service had been drowned in rescue work during the late gales. In three cases the lifeboats would not have been launched but for the warning given by the coastguard. If the policy of reduction of the coastguard had been pursued the lives of many men saved from wrecks last week would assuredly have been lost. This was a really urgent matter. For instance, Greenore was one of the cases where the lifeboat was partly manned by the coastguard in consequence of the reduction, and it was extremely difficult to obtain a crew, and the lifeboat in case of necessity would have to put to sea for rescue work short-handed or with a less efficient crew. He also hoped that the coastguard stations would be put in communication with each other in order to be efficient for the purpose of saving life. The case of Sidmouth would appeal to his hon. friend because it was near his constituency. There, there had been a coastguard communication and one coastguard was left, but this was not found satisfactory, and this week that one coastguard had been removed, so that no means of communication now existed upon that dangerous part of the coast. These two instances would prove how important this matter was. He wished for answers to three simple questions so as to enlighten the House as to what was meant by the term "redundancy in the amount of stations," and whether at any time the words meant a considerable reduction of the coastguards, to which he contended the House of Commons had never assented and which it was now called upon to support. The first question was whether his hon. friend could undertake on the part of the Admiralty that, where the coast required watching for the purpose of saving life in case of shipwreck, the coast would continue to be watched as in the past by His Majesty's coastguards. His second question was in places where the coastguards assisted in launching the lifeboats and the maintenance of the rocket apparatus. Would the hon. Gentleman undertake that the coastguard should be maintained in order to assist with life-saving and in the management of the rockets? Thirdly, would the hon. Gentleman undertake, if he found it necessary, to make any reduction at all of the coastguard service, to consult with the officials of the Lifeboat Institution and the Board of Trade, so that those who were responsible for the 290 lifeboats around our coasts might know where they stood with regard to the manning of lifeboats and the watching of the coasts? In conclusion he would point out to the Committee that this was not a matter of expense. The coasts had to be watched and the duties of the coastguard had to be fulfilled, and the question was whether this was to be done by men of the Royal Navy who had done it in the past so admirably or by another set of men. It was a matter of book-keeping between the departments, and it would be a deplorable thing if the service which had done such work in life-saving in the past were displaced, and the best life-saving work in the world jeopardised in any way in order to carry out a matter of book-keeping. He did not move the Amendment he had on the Paper, because he anticipated a favourable reply, but if he did not get it he should move and proceed to a division.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) said he went fully with the hon. and gallant Member in what he had said with regard to the coastguards, but while expressing his approbation of what he had said he could hardly accept one statement in which he apparently contemplated that the expenditure upon the coastguards was to be dealt with as a matter of book-keeping between Government Departments. He did not look upon it in that light at all. Unless there was an increase in the Board of Trade Estimates proportionate to the decrease in the Navy Votes it was obvious that the Service was going, he would not say to be starved, but to be reduced. He assured the Financial Secretary that the coastguard excited a very real interest not merely on the seaboard or seacoast. The hon. and gallant Gentleman who spoke from below the gangway opposite represented a great seaport, and one might assume that he was specially interested in the coastguard service; but he (Lord Balcarres) represented an inland constituency, and he was perfectly certain that that class of district also was often indirectly if not directly affected by this service, and also very much interested in its maintenance. The question he wanted to ask the Civil Lord was about cordite. In the First Lord's Memorandum at page 5, the announcement was made that last year a committee of experts—a very distinguished committee—was appointed to consider a very important question about the danger of cordite when stored. Acting upon the recommendation or at all events subsequent to Lord Reay's Committee, the War Office had determined to spend a large sum of money on cooling apparatus—refrigerating machinery. He wished to know whether he was not correct in saying that in the present financial year a considerable sum had been devoted to that purpose out of savings. The hon. Member said last night that £300,000 had been spent on that service, and another £500,000 was apparently being required. But this committee recommended that all cordite which had been long in a hot climate should be destroyed; again the Government had acted upon that recommendation and accordingly that particular cordite had been so destroyed. Would the Secretary to the Admiralty be so good as to tell the Committee what was the value of the cordite destroyed? Apart from the point, with which he was sure hon. Members would agree, that all dangerous cordite must be got rid of, even if it cost a considerable amount of money to do so, he would be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would tell him what the sacrifice involved had been. Further, and he did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman would think this was an improper question on his part, it would be interesting to know what period was covered by the words "long in a hot climate ; was it a matter of months or years? He would not press the right hon. Gentleman on that point, but it was important from the financial standpoint, because if we could not keep cordite in a hot climate for more than a few weeks or months our cordite bills would increase steadily. He thought this was important in view of the large reductions on the votes for the particular services for ammunition for guns, projectiles, and making of cordite. On the Votes for 1908–1909 enormous reductions were being made amounting to some £400,000. That was in itself rather alarming, and when this reduction come on the top of the scrapping of a large amount of cordite, which had been kept at stations south of the line, it became much more serious. He hoped the Secretary to the Admiralty would deal with that point. There was one more question he wished to put to the Government. Last year they understood that money was likely to be provided in this year's Estimates for a range finder, but he could not find it in the Navy Estimates at all. The Estimates were not comprehensive, and it was not easy to put one's finger on any particular item, and he would be glad if the right hon. Gentleman would tell him in what Vote that item appeared, and how much it amounted to. He would also like some amplification of the First Lord's statement about cordite and the exact value of the stores that had been destroyed owing to the Report of Lord Reay's Committee.

MR. ANNAN BRYCE (Inverness Burghs) wished to associate himself very strongly with what had been said as to the necessity of retaining undiminished the numbers of the coastguard service. Already a great deal of mischief had been done by the reduction of the numbers, and he was sure consequences still more deplorable would follow if the policy which the Admiralty seemed to have been thinking of adopting was carried any further. There was another way other than those indicated in which the maintenance of the coastguard service at its full strength was of value to the maritime districts of the country, and that was in helping to detect invasions of the three mile limit by the foreign trawlers which now infested our coasts. Before the Dudley Commission in Ireland, a gentleman from East Down gave evidence as to the great depredations on the coast of that county since the removal of the coastguard stations. The same kind of evidence would, no doubt, be forthcoming from many parts of the country where trawlers plied their avocations. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not allow the diminution of the coastguard to go any further.

SIR JOHN KENNAWAY (Devonshire, Honiton), as representing a constituency with a considerable seaboard, strongly supported the maintenance of the coastguard there. It was a place beset by smugglers in former times, and a great deal of smuggling was done along that coast. He would not forecast the effect of legislation which was before the House, but it might result in a great scarcity of liquor, and the cliffs and valleys of the coast of the constituency which he represented would be very convenient landing places as in former times. He most earnestly hoped that this most valuable force would be maintained.

*MR. WEDGWOOD (Newcastle-under-Lyme) said the hon. Member for South Antrim was anxious as to the views of the gallant fifty-six who went into the lobby in favour of a reduction of armaments. He, at least, as one of the fifty-six, was very strongly in favour of the two-Power standard being maintained, and he thought the country would admit that others in that body were more anxious to reduce expenditure on the Army than expenditure on the Navy. The Motion was for the reduction of either or both Services, and not particularly the Naval Estimates, and so far as the Naval Estimates of this year were concerned, he had perfect confidence in the Estimates put forward by the Government. But he had risen to say a word or two in support of the proposition put before the House by his hon. friend the senior Member for Portsmouth. He wished to deal with the question of the *status* of the engineer officers of the Navy. It was not perhaps an interesting subject to this House, but he had himself had the advantage of serving at College for three years with the engineer officers of the Navy, and he had had, therefore, a special opportunity of judging both of those officers and of the relative *status* of the naval officer on deck and the engineer officer below deck. Now these engineer officers in the Navy were specially selected men who had come up from Keyham, and from the dockyards, and were usually picked men, gathered from the lower middle classes of this country. They had to undergo a series of stiff examinations, and they had to attend special schools of mechanics, mathematics, and other branches of knowledge. Then as soon as they got into the Navy, these officers had charge of the most important part of the ship. They had not only the propelling machinery in their charge, but, in battleships, they had no less than 110 auxiliary machines in their charge—the air compressing machinery, the hydraulic machinery, the machinery for turning the guns, the machinery for hoisting the shells, and the machinery for getting coal into the bunkers. All this machinery was in charge of the engineer branch of the Navy; these officers had to control over one-third of the whole *personnel* of the Navy, and, in his opinion, their duties were so important that they should have every possible advantage given to them by the Admiralty, in dealing with the problems by which they were confronted in our naval service. Now these engineer officers were treated in such a way as absolutely to impair the fighting value of the Navy. If the House would allow him to speak personally on the matter, he would like to go back to his experience at the Royal Naval College, at Greenwich. There were engineer officers on one side and executive officers on the other, but they were not allowed to mess together, to do their lessons together, nor to live together during the whole three years he was there, and during that time he did not suppose that he exchanged half-a-dozen sentences with members of the executive branch. The system of the separation of the engineer and the executive branches begun at the college in that way, was carried on, though happily not to so great an extent, throughout the naval service, and it was in order to break down that curious social and fictitious barrier between the engineer officers and the executive officers of the Navy that he now ventured to address the Government. The Government had recognised this to be a disadvantage to the discipline of the Navy, for in 1902 they introduced a system of joint training for torpedo work, for gunnery work, and for engineering work or for the work of the Marines. In 1902, under this scheme officers, including engineer officers, were being trained together, and they were going to receive exactly equal treatment and *status* in the Navy. That would make them all right in twenty, twenty-five or thirty years' time, when they were filling posts in the naval service and all the old engineering officers had gone. But, meanwhile, they would be perpetuating this double classification of our naval officers, those who were below deck and those who were upon deck. It was in order to break down that barrier immediately, to make the working of this scheme more practical, and to make the fusion earlier than it would otherwise be effected, that he ventured to urge the Government to deal at once with this question of the engineer officers, and to put right now their position relative to the fighting branches of the Navy. Were we to wait twenty-five or thirty years and leave this sore festering in the middle of the naval service? The Committee fully understood that the engineers' grievance was not connected with pay. They did not ask for any more wages; they did not ask for a rise of salary or better treatment in that respect. What they did want was to be treated as though they were the equal in rank of deck officers. They wanted their *status* to be made quite clear, and to have the rights and powers which the engineer officers were to get under the new Osborne scheme in future. At present one could only say that they received what must be called contemptuous treatment at the hands of the Admiralty. They were treated in a manner which was positively humiliating to the engineer officers of the service, and which derogated from their position in relation to the men under them. All the engine-room hands, the artificers and stokers saw their own officers set on one side and treated in a humiliating manner, not only by the Admiralty, but by the excutive officers of the ship. It not only made their work unpleasant, but it made it positively more difficult than it otherwise would be, to get discipline in the engine-room and in the stoke-holes. The engineer officers wanted their charter, to to speak. There were six points in their charter. Their first point was that they should have control over their own men, instead of indirect control through the hands of the deck officer, who might be a lieutenant, and very often a junior officer. Really, they wanted to be put exactly in the position of the officers of the Royal Engineers of the Army. They asked that the naval engineers should be the exact counterpart of the Royal Engineers of the Army. Could the House imagine a major of the Royal Engineers bringing up one of his men on some trumpery charge before the captain of Artillery? Yet that was exactly what happened in the naval service. The engineer officer had to bring his man before the lieutenant on deck; he had to bring his charge sheet, and refer it to him before he was allowed to do anything in the matter at all. If the conditions under which the engineer officers had to work at the present time were explained to the Committee, they would think that they were back in the time of Charles II. The whole power was taken away from the engineering branch because they were not considered to be fighting officers, just as in the time of Charles II. the master of the ship was not supposed to be a fighting officer. The first point was, then, control over their own men. Their next point was that they rejected absolutely and entirely the idiotic title of "engineer lieutenant" and "engineer commander." What they wanted was that the title should be "Lieutenant E." or "Commander E." just as they had "Lieutenant N." or "Commander T." Engineer officers were classified as non-combatant, but if it came to that, the danger in the engineering branch was infinitely greater than on deck. He had never gone down into the stoke-hole when they were working under forced draught, without an inward prayer that he might get out again alive. If an hon. Member went down into the stoke-hole, on a trial trip, when the engines were at full speed, he would appreciate what were the duties of the engineer staff of the Royal Navy. They worked in a temperature of 110, and they ran the risk, if a shell or a splinter of a shell got into the engine-room, of being par-boiled without the possibility of escape. The hatches were battened down, so that, in action, the position of the engineer was probably the most dangerous part of the service. Engineer officers asked not only to be given control of their men, but that they should be given now, and at once, the title which future engineer officers were to hold. The third point was as to the uniform of the engineer officers. They did not want to have a uniform which was distinct from that of the fighting branch of the service. What they wanted was that all officers of the Navy should have exactly the same uniform, because they did not desire that their men and the country should see that they were distinguished as inferior in rank. If they were put on the same basis as the other officers, the country would get much better service out of the engineer officers. These were three points—control, title, and uniform, and he asked the right hon. Gentleman to give the engineer officers now the privileges and position which they were bound to hold in ten or fifteen years, and give them as quickly as possible in order to make these men satisfied with the service. At present engineer officers were not permitted to sit on courts martial, though men of their own department were perhaps being tried for a technical offence. If they were to be allowed the rank of military officers, then, *ipso facto*, they would be members of the court martial. Then there was the question of a representative on the Board of Admiralty. It was really absurd that one-third of the *personnel* of the Navy had no representative on the Board of Admiralty. There was nobody representing machinery on the Board of Admiralty. We rushed into first one class of boiler and then another, the Belleville, the water tube, and turbine machinery, yet there was not at the Admiralty any skilled officer representing the engineering branch of the service. The sixth and last point of the engineer officers' charter was this. The engineer officer had to draw up a report upon his machinery, but he was not allowed to sign that report; he had to take it to the executive officer who was possibly half his age, and might not have so much education. This executive officer went through the report, altered the grammar and spelling, and tried to make little alterations just to show his authority. It was these pin-pricks which seemed to make a man's life more miserable than anything else. These were the six points—the question of *status*, uniform, title, a seat on the court-martial, a representative on the Board of Admiralty, and the right of the engineer officer to sign his own report and not have it signed by an officer who knew nothing about it. Of course the whole of this difficulty had grown up from the fact that engineers thirty or forty years ago, even civil engineers, used to be looked upon as "engine drivers," and were spoken of as "oilers," and with an adjective in front of that. They were looked down upon as mere mechanics. But the engineer branch had become more and more important, and would become still more important; and until they made the members of that branch satisfied with the service, until they they gave them a position equal to, and face to face with, the other branches of the service, they would not get the *personnel* of the Navy to work smoothly.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): the fourth day of the naval debate, and I suppose I must count it as a personal failure that I have not been able to obtain a single farthing of the money which is required. The noble Lord asked me a question about cordite, but I have not got the information on that matter, which is relative to Vote 9. I suggest that either a Question should be put at Question time, or that the matter should stand over to Vote 9. I can add nothing to the multitudinous statements I have already made on a question of general interest to the Navy. It is a subject of complaint by hon. Members behind me and by some hon. Members opposite, that the time has been occupied during the debates by Members of the two Front Benches. I know I have made a good many speeches, but it has not been my fault, and it has been with great unwillingness that I have prolonged my remarks, and then I did not allow them to go beyond what was absolutely necessary. My hon. friend raised the question of the new scale of pay, and whether it will involve an increased grant. It will, and the amount of the grant will be £10,000. The two most important questions relating to this Vote are those referring to the engineer officers and the coastguard. My hon. friend who spoke at the beginning, and my hon. friend the Member for Newcastle-under-Lyme who followed later, will not expect me, I am sure, to give them the answer of the Admiralty to the question which they have raised, if only for this reason, that I do not think that I had any notice of their intention to raise it, certainly not of the exact scope which it was going to take. I was a little astonished to hear from my hon. friend who spoke last that the engineers had no complaint to make on the score of pay.

MR. WEDGWOOD: They have complaint to make, but they do not urge it; they want the *status*.

*MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: But they have a grievance as regards pay, and on that question the Admiralty's decision has now been reached. The pay of engineer captains is to rise from 35s. to 40s. a day (the existing minimum and maximum rates) by two annual increments of 2s. 6d. instead of five annual increments of a 1s. a day, so that the maximum will be reached in two years instead of five as at present. As to the engineer commanders, who have bitterly complained in the matter of pay, the rate of 24s. a day is to be granted after sixteen years seniority. There are other modifications which are of too technical a character for me to trouble the Committee with. The ages for compulsory and optional retirement are to be reduced. A new scale of retired pay, a new and improved scale, framed on the same lines as that for officers of the military branch, is to be applied in the case of officers accepting the new conditions. Good service pensions will be introduced for the first time for engineer officers. I mention these things as regards pay, but not for the purpose of staving off the much larger but not less material question of *status* which we have been discussing to-day. I do not hesitate to express my sympathy with that point of view in regard to the grievance of the engineer officers, and I admit that the new condition of things that will be brought about by the training of officers in the future necessitates a reconsideration of the relations between the old engineer officers and the new engineer officers, and the executive officers. But my hon. friends will not expect me to give a definite answer at the moment to the suggestions which they have made. But I am bound to make them this concession, that I will faithfully report to the Board of Admiralty the strong arguments that have been used to-day, and the perfectly specific and clear character of the reforms demanded. Beyond that I am sure that my hon. friends will not expect me to go to-day. As to the question of the coastguard, I am not surprised at the interest excited on both sides of the House. The proposals for the abolition of the coastguard have been considered by a Departmental Committee. The Admiralty, however, have undertaken to consider the question for themselves *de novo*. My hon. and gallant friend has asked me whether those parts of the coast requiring to be watched for life-saving purposes will continue to be watched by His Majesty's coastguard. To that I can give an answer in the affirmative. His second question was—Will the coastguard be maintained wherever they assist in any material degree in manning and launching lifeboats, and in working the rocket apparatus? The answer is "Yes." And the third question was—Will the Admiralty confer with the Lifeboat Institution before making further reductions? I do not know that the Admiralty could very well do that, but, if I might offer myself as a substitute for the Admiralty, I would be glad to hold such a conference as my hon. and gallant friend has suggested. I hope the Committee will now allow me to take this Vote.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth) moved to reduce the Wages Vote by £100. He had, he said, listened to the statement made by the Government with regard to the coastguards and the answers given to questions, and they did not appear to him to have gone to the root of the matter. The Government were reducing the coastguards and the amount of the Vote which supported them, and yet they said that the coasts would be patrolled, that the life-saving apparatus would be served, and that the lifeboats would be manned by the coastguards. How could that adequately be done if there were continual decreases in the coastguards? Last year there was a decrease of some 300 men, and an equal decrease in the Vote. This year the amount was to be reduced by £1,495, and the men by 363. This would reduce the total to 3,500. Three or four years ago it was well over 4,000. That was a very considerable reduction, and the coast must either have been over-patrolled in the past, or it would be under-patrolled in the future. Coastguardsmen must be thirty-eight years of age, have served eight years continuously in the Navy, be either trained gunners or seamen, and recommended by their captain. The men in the Navy were picked men, and coastguardsmen were therefore picked men from picked men, and the very best trained men in the country, and the last men whom he would have thought they would wish to reduce. The question affected his constituency particularly. He had had many letters expressing considerable anxiety with regard to the reductions which had taken place. He knew of a small coastguard station where there used to be four men, and where now there were none, and where the cottages of the men had been let for lodgings. He did not know whether that would be the desire of the House. It certainly was not the object with which the cottages were built, and for which the coastguard service was instituted. It did not appear to him that sufficient explanation had been given why so much as the amount proposed should be knocked off the Estimates for coastguards this year, and he was therefore bound to move to reduce the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item B (Coast Guard, Wages and Allowances) be reduced by £100."—(*Mr. Fell.*)

*MR. MALLET (Plymouth) said he had intended to ask some questions in relation to certain Naval Ratings, but as the right hon. Gentleman had given the assurance that there would be other opportunities for raising questions of that kind, he would not prevent the Vote being taken now.

COLONEL SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby) appealed to the hon. Member for Great Yarmouth not to press the Amendment. He had taken a leading part in this matter, and he would say that with respect to the three points he put to the right hon. Gentleman he did not anticipate getting so complete and so favourable a reply. All those interested in the life saving services of the coastguard were deeply grateful to the right hon. Gentleman for the reply he had given.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 46; Noes, 235. (Division List No. 35.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Rt Hn. Sir Alex. F
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Stanley
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C. W
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Clark, George Smith (Belfast, N.
Clive, Percy Archer
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gretton, John
Helmsley, Viscount
Hunt, Rowland
Kennaway, Rt. Hn. Sir John H.
Kimber, Sir Henry
King, Sir Henry Seymour (Hull
Lane-Fox, G. R.
M'Arthur, Charles
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Staveley-Hill, Henry (Staff'sh.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Thornton, Percy M.
Walker, Col. W. H. (Lancashire

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Fell and Sir William Bull.

NOES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Agar-Robartes, Hon. T. C. R.
Ainsworth, John Stirling
Alden, Percy
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Armitage, R.
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt.Hn.Herbert Henry
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Barker, John
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry, Redmond J (Tyrone, N.)
Beauchamp, E.
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, Sir J Williams(Devonp'rt
Benn, W.(T'w'r Hamlets, S.Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Bethell, Sir J.H (Essex, Romf'rd
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boulton, A. C. F.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brunner, J.F.L.(Lancs., Leigh)
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Burt, Rt. Hon. Thomas
Byles, William Pollard
Cameron, Robert
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt.Hn.RichardKnight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Collins, Sir Wm.J.(S.Pancras, W
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.
Corbett, C H(Sussex, E.Grinst'd
Cory, Sir Clifford John
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Cox, Harold
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crossley, William J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, David(Montgomery Co.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Dickinson, W.H. (St.Pancras, N
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Duckworth, James
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Erskine, David C.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace

Findlay, Alexander
Foster, Rt. Hon. Sir Walter
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt.Hn.Herbert John
Glen-Coats, Sir T.(Renfrew, W.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Sir Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Gordon, J.
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)
Gulland, John W.
Hall, Frederick
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W.E.(Derbyshire, N.E.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M.(Aberdeen, W.)
Henry, Charles S.
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor(Mon., S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Holt, Richard Durning
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Idris, T. H. W.
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S.
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William(Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever, A. Levy(Essex, Harwich
Levy, Sir Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lough, Thomas
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macdonald, J. M.(Falkirk B'ghs
Mackarness, Frederic C.
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
Mallet, Charles E.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Middlebrook, William
Mond, A.

Montagu, E. S.
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morse, L. L.
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nicholson, Charles N(Doncast'r
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Parker, James (Halifax)
Philipps, Col.Ivor (S'thampton)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Price, C. E.(Edinb'gh, Central)
Price, Robert John(Norfolk, E.)
Priestley, W.E.B.(Bradford, E.)
Pullar, Sir Robert
Radford, G. H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, Thomas (W.Monmth
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Roberts, John H. (Denbighs.)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E.(Dundee
Robertson, Sir G.Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scott, A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Seddon. J.
Seely, Colonel
Simon, John Allsebrook
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East
Soares, Ernest J.
Spicer, Sir Albert
Stanger, H. Y.
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abindgon)
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, Austin (East Toxteth)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, David Alfred(Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson, J.W.H.(Somerset, E
Thomson, W. Mitchell-(Lanark
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Villiers, Ernest Amherst
Vivian, Henry
Walton, Joseph
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent

Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason, Rt Hn. E. (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Watt, Henry A.
Wedgwood, Josiah C.
Whitbread, Howard
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Wills, Arthur Walters
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. W. (Worcestersh. N.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winfrey, R.
Younger, George
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

The Vote was agreed to.

2. £2,306,700, Works, Buildings, and Repairs at home and abroad.

*MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton) thought it would be for the convenience of the Committee if he made a few introductory remarks in introducing this Vote. He promised in his brief statement to endeavour to cover the most important of the subjects with which the Vote was concerned. This Vote represented an apparent decrease of £451,700, but that apparent decrease was in reality an increase, as last year there were loan works completed out of revenue and borne on Vote 10 of £870,825, whereas this year the loan works on Vote 10 amounted to £307,000, a decrease of £563,825. The total of the Vote did not represent total works expenditure this year, because they were spending a balance of money for which they had borrowing power of £896,925, which, together with the amount of Vote 10, brought the total expenditure on works to £3,203,625. The decision of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to pay for works out of revenue, instead of introducing a new loan Bill, meant that they would have to bear upon Vote 10 £2,246,180. Had this not been borne on Votes, there would have been an increase in the annuity of £117,000 a year for twenty-nine years. This was a very good sample of paying as they went. The annuity this year which represented the borrowings of past years was increased by nearly £50,000, and the amount was £1,264,000. The cost of dredging amounted this year to £107,800, and it was proposed, in addition to the ordinary dredging, to dredge the bar at Sheerness. A certain depth of water in the new channel at Sheerness was required to facilitate the passage of vessels over the bar, and they wished to bring it to a depth of 26 feet below low water at ordinary spring tides, so that large vessels should not be unduly delayed by tidal conditions in getting in and out of the harbour. Then there were large new commitments in the Vote, the first being for the new lock at Portsmouth. There had been some delay in that matter, but it had not been the fault of the Admiralty. They had employed a very eminent outside firm of engineers, who sent in an excellent report, but, to the credit of the Works Department, the scheme of that department was equally good, and it was therefore decided to go on with the scheme of the Works Department. The normal length of the new lock between caissons would be 850 feet, the width at the entrance 110 feet, and the depth over the outer sill at low-water ordinary spring tides 33 feet, in order to enable a ship of the "Dreadnought" size to get in and out without imperilling the other ships in the basin. The scheme included the erection of a pumping-station, which would be capable of pumping the new lock and the old locks and docks. The present state of the work was that the drawings were completed, the quantities were nearly completed, and it was hoped to invite tenders either in April or in May. The time of completion stated in the contract would be four years.

MR. JOHN WARD (Stoke-on-Trent): Are you going to invite tenders publicly, or only from selected firms?

*MR. LAMBERT thought only from selected firms. The Admiralty had very carefully to investigate the financial standing of these firms, in order to see that they were capable of carrying out a work involving a cost of nearly £1,000,000. Another new commitment was that at Rosyth. In 1900 the late Board of Admiralty appointed a committee to inquire into the dock accommodation for the ships then existing, but the policy of scrapping old ships obviated the immediate necessity for new dock accommodation. Still it had been shown that on the East Coast a dock was needed, more especially since the "Dreadnought" era. The "Dreadnought" could be got into Chatham at certain states of the tide, but the locks were not large enough to enable ships of that type to go into the basin for repairs and for other purposes. The great work to be carried out at Rosyth had been very fully described in the newspapers. He would be willing to answer questions with respect to it which hon. Members might ask. The basin would occupy 52½ acres, the entrance lock would be 850 feet long and 110 feet wide, with sufficient depth at low water to allow battleships to get in, even fully loaded. There would be a dry dock 750 feet long and 100 feet wide, which would be sub-divided into two parts should it be required for smaller craft. The works were capable of expansion in the shape of the new basin and other docks. The £3,000,000 included the works he had stated, and also the necessary workshops, oil fuel storage, and cambers for destroyers and submarines. With regard to the progress of the work, the contract drawings were well advanced, and quantities would be shortly taken out. There was only £30,000 placed in the Vote for the work at Rosyth, but any contractor could only earn a small amount of money this year, because he had to get his plant and other necessary materials ready. The hon. Member for Stoke had made some reference to the rumour that in boring they could hardly get to the bottom of the mud. He could assure the hon. Member that a very satisfactory foundation had been found. At a moderate depth they had got to rock or glacial clay which he was told was a very good foundation indeed for works of this character. The design had been very carefully considered by those who had experience in designing and constructing Government dockyards.

MR. JOHN WARD asked if the design was the work of the same gentleman who had been sent by the late Government in 1903 to study dock construction on the Continent?

MR. LAMBERT said that the design of the dock had been very carefully worked out in the Department of the Admiralty by gentlemen qualified to do so. Preliminary steps had been taken in regard to a smaller but still important public work, and these had been brought to a successful issue. He referred to the Loch Long torpedo range. Torpedoes had to be be proved and adjusted, and that could be only done by running them a certain distance. The disadvantage of the present range at Portland was that it had only a length of 3,000 yards, while, owing fo the extraordinary improvements which had taken place in the manufacture of torpedoes in recent years, a range of 7,000 yards was required. Moreover, the torpedoes were at present manufactured at Woolwich, and in the course of transit by rail to Portland their mechanism was often deranged. After searching round the coasts of Great Britain and Ireland the Admiralty officials had selected Loch Long as the range that best fulfilled the requirements for testing torpedoes. It was necessary that the range should be in a sheltered position and as free as possible from tidal influence, and that there should be as little interference as possible with ordinary shipping. The factory would be erected at Greenock. Negotiations had been in progress for some time, and he was glad to say there had been a disposition on the part of the owners of the land, of the corporation of Glasgow, and of all concerned to allay rather than to raise difficulties. The Admiralty hoped that they would be able to protect the rights of the public and yet create an efficient torpedo range on Loch Long and erect a factory at Greenock. The estimated cost of this work was about £113,000, including the purchase of the land. The Admiralty also had in hand the extension of the dock at Haulbowline from 410 feet to 600 feet, in order that it might take battleships of the most modern class. The contract had been let, and good progress has been made.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said that the discussion on this subject of Rosyth had been commenced on two occasions previous to this year, and this year on going into Committee of Supply when he himself spoke, and on the previous day when the matter was taken up by the Leader of the Opposition in much detail. Up to the present time no answer had been given to the contentions put forward on those occasions. The Works Vote had been explained by his hon. friend in Committee fashion. The Committee had been reminded of what had occurred owing to the dropping of the Works Bills, and the gradual discontinuance of the expenditure of loan money. On the whole, the Works Vote this year was much lower than the Admiralty believed it would be last year or the year before. That statement did not rest on ordinary private gossip, but on an official document. In the Appropriation Accounts which had been circulated last week, there would be found official correspondence between the Treasury and the Admiralty which contained the following passage:—

> "24 July, 1906. Apart from the necessity of the work, my Lords are anxious to adopt this course, having specially in view the desirability of relieving as far as possible, the Navy Estimates for 1908–9, which must, as a consequence of the discontinuance of the Naval Works Loan, reach an abnormal figure in that year as a result of works expenditure."

Now, that abnormal figure had not been reached; and he submitted to the Committee, as a matter of public policy, that when looking forward to the certainty of a very large increase in the Navy Estimates, either next year or the year after—and they would be enlarged, at the lowest view, in the face of the pledges given to keep the Navy up to the two-Power standard — it would have been better to have executed in the present year every possible branch of Naval works which was beyond all doubt necessary. He was entirely at one with the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the belief that we had spent out of our loan money large sums which had been wasted. The House and the Government did not hold a tight enough hand on these works, and ought never to have thrown on loan a great many of the least important of them. But there were important works, docks and basins in which big ships could be accommodated, and these by universal admission should be made as rapidly as possible. Big ships were worse than useless if there was no dock or basin accommodation for them. They must accept the authority of experts for details of construction, but the policy of construction of these works was admitted by all. The case which had been made by the critics needed some reply, so that in the next year's Estimates the policy of the Admiralty, as laid down in the official correspondence two years ago, might be carried out, and all the necessary works should be rapidly executed in the coming year. As a matter of economy in the actual building of such works, he believed it was better to build them rapidly than spread their construction over a period of eleven or twelve years. In the case of Rosyth the land was purchased many years ago, but the execution of the works had been constantly put off, although small sums of money had been spent on soundings and the like. All the information as to Rosyth which his hon. friend had just given had been given them in the same speech last session.

MR. JOHN WARD: The same speech was made six years ago.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that they had been constantly informed that the Admiralty were prepared to state to the House that the works at Rosyth must be carried forward. The necessity for a safer base on the East Coast was much more pressing this year than last. That could not be denied after the results of the Hague Conference. The use of mines was contemplated by foreign Powers in a much greater degree than formerly, and the increase of the German mine establishment, by means of which 30,000 mines could be laid from each of two ships, was notorious. There was no doubt about the unsafety in certain possible wars of Portsmouth as a base, and they were all agreed that some base on the East Coast was necessary.

MR. JOHN WARD said he understood that in 1905 a large expenditure was contemplated at Chatham.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that it was admitted by the present Government, as it had been by the last Government, that there must be a new base further north than Chatham. The present Government had put its need very high indeed, and they could only draw the inference from the correspondence that they had accepted the responsibility that immense expenditure should be incurred in the present year, and not put off. His right hon. friend the Secretary to the Admiralty on 2nd March this year announced that the Government had finally decided to proceed with Rosyth for the reasons which were given in the Memorandum, and in that they were told that the necessity for the work was now apparent. From the point of view of good construction and good finance was it wise to put off the expenditure again this year, and then to spread it over ten years of time? The limited establishment of one dock and one basin contemplated was only to be completed in eleven years. He believed that was bad economy from the financial standpoint, and he believed it was also from the engineering point of view as well. The Secretary to the Admiralty had said that surely time must be given to make contracts. He thought the delay of the late Government was not justifiable, and surely the time required to make contracts was not a whole year, and these contracts might have been made a year or a year and a half ago. The need for this expenditure had long been foreseen, and it seemed to him that there was a plain case of avoiding to meet in the coming financial year a far larger proportion of this admittedly necessary expenditure than had been taken in the Estimates now under discussion.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire Fareham) said he found himself in very close agreement with the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, and he did not think it possible to reinforce in any way the very strong argument which he had put before the Committee. He did not wish in following the Civil Lord to go again into the old question as to the merits or demerits of loan expenditure. It was a very much debated subject and he would only say this with regard to it. He quite agreed with the right hon. Baronet that under a system of loan expenditure they did not get the same close supervision of expenditure that they did under the Estimates and that undoubtedly in the past there might have been objections on that score.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said he did not lay down a principle.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE assented, and said that in certain cases the system might have led to extravagance, but under it they did get the works. They got the money necessary for the works at the time it was wanted, whereas under the system instituted by the present Government, which might be a sounder system from an economical point of view, the pressure which had inevitably to be put upon the year's Estimates delayed necessary works and made those works individually more costly on account of the long period over which their construction was spread. The right hon. Baronet had commented very naturally upon the singularly small provision for new works in this year's Votes in view of the facts that two new large items had come upon the Votes and that loan expenditure had very largely been stopped. He thought that that circumstance required a little more explanation. They had really gone back in the expenditure on new works to the old average, as far as he remembered it, that existed in regard to Vote 10 whilst the loan system was in full operation. He thought the Committee would see the results in the case of the two largest items that had been specially referred to, the new lock at Portsmouth and the Rosyth base. He was aware that the Civil Lord had put forward the technical excuse which was quite sound, that if they did not begin the work until a certain period of the year they had to let the new contractor get his plant upon the ground and the expenditure of the remaining part of the year must be small. That was true, but their answer to that was, why did not the Government let their contracts sooner? That was the point, and whilst he was quite ready to admit that the late Government might have furthered this matter a little more than they did when they were in office, at all events they did get it to the point where the scheme of Rosyth had been worked out and submitted to this House in August, 1905, when he held the office of Civil Lord. That scheme was drawn precisely or nearly precisely in the same way as that which the Admiralty had now communicated to the House, and they advanced the matter so far that they put a considerable estimate on Vote 10 for that year which they handed on to their successors and they were prepared to let the main contract in June, 1906. They were apparently at that point just as far advanced as the Admiralty was to-day. Therefore two years had elapsed in which apparently nothing had been done beyond making the very interesting model which had now been placed in the tea-room. He did not think the hon. Gentleman could contend that the delay had been in any way necessary from the technical point of view; it had merely been occasioned by financial considerations. Then there was very much the same story with regard to the Portsmouth lock, which was a very urgent work, because, as he pointed out last year on more than one occasion, the safety of first-class battleships costing a million and a half sterling had been imperilled by the impossibility of getting them into the basin at Portsmouth except through passages not really large enough to admit them with safety. The hon. Gentleman told them he thought two years ago that the Admiralty recognised this matter as being of the greatest urgency, but those two years had elapsed without any progress being made. The excuse was that they wished to consult different experts as to the best plans. He refused to believe, however, that the Works Department of the Admiralty, which contained some of the most experienced engineers in the world in these matters, were unable to design such a comparatively small affair at this Portsmouth lock; but the Admiralty said: "No, we wish to consult outside experts." They did consult outside experts and they admitted that their own plan was the best and they had adopted it. Really the whole of the delay had been quite unnecessary, and this vitally necessary work, of which they ought to have had nearly 50 per cent. complete now according to the hon. Gentleman's estimate of the time it would take, was not commenced. The contract was not going to be let till the middle of this year, and practically for four and a half years to come the only available dock for "Dreadnoughts" at Portsmouth would be practically unapproachable. That was a very serious state of affairs. He did not know that there was anything to choose between the urgency of that work and the work at Rosyth. At any rate he thought they were entitled to ask the Government to explain more fully than they had done why they had not pressed on these works before, and why it was not possible for them, as suggested by the right hon. Baronet, even now to press on at a greater pace than was apparently contemplated by their provision in the Estimates. The right hon. Baronet had said that the Rosyth base would not be ready for eleven years. He hoped that he was pessimistic about that, because he understood the Civil Lord to say the other day that in five or seven years they would have the base in use.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that was merely the official figure of ten years. It was spread over ten years and did not begin for a year.

MR. ARTHUR LEE hoped that it might be possible to accelerate these works; it was really more economical in the long run that expenditure should not be stinted, and he hoped that everything possible would be done to press forward these works at the greatest speed. He was aware that there was a great deal of controversy as to whether Rosyth was or was not the best place for this base, but if there ever was any doubt in his mind—and sometimes a base further north had appealed to him—he thought it must be set at rest by the cutting of the Forth to Clyde Canal. If that Canal became a fact, in addition to the commercial advantages into which it would be improper to enter now, Rosyth would have behind it not only a short cut from the North Sea into the Atlantic, but the almost unlimited shipbuilding and repairing facilities of the Clyde. Then it would not be necessary to spend as much money upon ship building plant, and Rosyth would become a port of the utmost importance, almost the most important naval port in the Empire. Under those circumstances he hoped that the Admiralty would give its benediction to the efforts that were being made in Scotland to have this great venture taken up as a commercial undertaking, and, if necessary, give financial assistance. He was sure that if financial assistance were given by the Government they would be more than repaid by the advantage which would accrue to the Port of Rosyth. Before he left the question of Rosyth he wished to urge upon the Government, now that they were going to let the main contract and undertake the work, to recognise that one dock in that position was an absolutely inadequate provision in view of the growing size of the fleet. He was delighted to see in the model in the tea room that there were two sites laid out for future docks, in addition to the one that had been laid out for construction. It was absolutely certain that these extra docks would be needed, and would be needed before they could be built, because of the large new construction of these ships of the "Dreadnought" class, which would be very far advanced long before the docks were built. There was an absolute dearth of these docks on the East Coast and it would be cheaper, save time, and be more economically efficient to undertake that work now rather than to put it off to some future time. In settling the final dimensions of the docks he hoped the Government would be careful to look far enough ahead. In the past no Board of Admiralty had ever been able to look far enough ahead in the matter of the size of the docks. The result was that years after their construction the increase of size by only a few inches meant an overwhelming expenditure, whereas if the extra space had been allowed and foreseen at first the extra cost would have been very small indeed. Consequently he urged the Admiralty to err on the side of size if need be, even if there was a little additional cost. As regarded Chatham he could not help feeling that in addition to Rosyth docks it would be absolutely necessary to have additional accommodation at Chatham. It had been stated that a "Dreadnought" could not be docked at Chatham. Under the peculiar conditions of that port it was impossible to enlarge or repair the existing lock entrance, because if they did the whole dock would be rendered useless. Therefore it was essential to have at least two more docks at Chatham, capable of accommodating a "Dreadnought." He felt that the general position in regard to the scarcity of "Dreadnoughts'" docks in that region where they would probably be most needed was a very serious one. They had been told that such docks existed already at Hong-Kong and the Cape, and that there were two at Gibraltar, and he believed, four at Devonport, all capable of accommodating a "Dreadnought," but in the North Sea on the East Coast there was not one, and yet within a very measurable distance of time, some three years hence, they would have at least twelve "Dreadnoughts" afloat. If they started to-day they could not build the new docks in time. It was essential that the docks should be built even before the ships, and he urged the Admiralty to take this matter in hand at the earliest possible moment. The borrowing of money for such necessary work as this ought not to be allowed to stand in the way, and whatever system of finance was adopted these docks ought to be constructed as soon as possible.

*MR. HOLT (Northumberland, Hexdam) said that he did not propose to enter into any discussion as to the expediency of undertaking the proposed works at Rosyth. He would like, however, to ask if he was correct in assuming that the plan now on view in the tea room with regard to the docks at Rosyth was that which had been definitely adopted. The Civil Lord of the Admiralty had said that he expected to get that plan complete for £3,250,000, including an engineering shop and requisite machinery. It seemed to him that it would not be a bad bargain at all if he got all that provided for the sum which had been named. He wished to know if for £3,250,000 the Admiralty were going to get the whole of the dredging done outside the basin as shown on the plan.

*MR. LAMBERT: Yes, that is included.

*MR. HOLT said it seemed a very cheap price for what the Admiralty hoped to get and he trusted it would work out at the estimated cost. With regard to the time occupied in construction, he found himself in accord with what had already been stated; his view was that if this work was to be done at all it ought to be done promptly. He assumed that the entrance lock would be the last thing to be finished but he suggested that it might be possible to use the emergency entrance at an earlier date, because in that case they would get the use of the graving dock considerably earlier than otherwise. Was there any reason why they should not be able to get the use of the graving dock before ten years had elapsed? Another suggestion he would make was that they should make the graving dock big enough to take in two "Dreadnoughts" at one time. For such matters as the painting of the bottoms of ships and small repairs there was no reason why they should not have two ships in the dock at once. The only inconvenience they would encounter would be that the repairs to both ships would have to be simultaneous, because they would have to go in and out together. If the Admiralty adopted his suggestion they would not need duplicate gates and machinery. He agreed with the hon. Member for Fareham that there was a tendency not to look far enough ahead and allow a sufficient margin for future development. The "Dreadnoughts" and the "Invincibles" were called very large ships, but there were ships in the mercantile marine much longer, and as he did not think it wise to assume that warships, especially cruisers, might not attain the dimensions of the "Lusitania," he suggested that it would be a wise thing for the Admiralty to reconsider the dimensions of the proposed graving dock at Rosyth. He also wished to know whether it was intended to spend any money in erecting a new shipbuilding establishment at Rosyth. No case had been made out for any additional shipbuilding establishment, and it would be a great relief to many hon. Members if they had from the Government a specific pledge that it was not intended to establish a ship-building yard at Rosyth. He assumed that what the Government were asking for now was a transfer and not a new licence, if he might be allowed to put it in that way. He assumed that something was going to be taken away from some of the other ports in order to compensate the taxpayer for the additional expenditure which must be annually incurred for the upkeep of Rosyth. He knew that a reduction in the expenditure at any of their great naval ports generally meant the loss of a couple of seats to the Government, but he thought in the interest of the taxpayers it was their duty to put it strongly to the Government that they should in entering upon this expenditure do something in the interest of the general body of taxpayers to reduce naval expenditure at other places.

Mr. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N.) said it was with some satisfaction that he heard the hon. Member for Fareham urge upon the Government that they should take into consideration the question of supporting the scheme for the widening of the Forth and Clyde Canal. He remembered ten years ago when the Liberal Party were sitting in Opposition they drew attention to this question of the Forth and Clyde Canal, and they were then met by nothing but a blank refusal. Of course it was better late than never, and he was glad to hear that project now being advocated by an expert like the hon. Member for Fareham. This question could not be pressed with too much urgency, not only from the point of view of its strategic value, but also on account of the great commercial advantages which would accrue not only to Scotland but to the whole of the Empire. He did not hesitate to say that in any other country but ours such a great public work would have been long ago undertaken, not only from a naval point of view, but also from the great commercial advantages which it would confer. He hoped that the Admiralty in view of the close proximity of an unparalleled supply of granite on the coast of Scotland would find out some way of using native stone instead of foreign for the construction of the docks at Rosyth. It would be a thousand pities when a supply of perfectly unequalled stone was available almost on the spot if the owner of those local quarries were not given an opportunity of tendering upon equal terms with the foreigner. This was a question of immense importance to the people living on the east coast of Scotland, and he strongly urged this point upon the attention of the Admiralty.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) said he felt certain the Secretary for the Admiralty must have been greatly impressed by the unanimity of feeling with regard to these very necessary works. Some hon. Members had spoken on this subject in previous years and what struck him most that afternoon was that the position was very much the same, as the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean pointed out, as it was a year ago. He felt sure the Admiralty would have had behind it the whole country and the whole House, if they had decided to spend next year £500,000 upon the docks at Rosyth.

*MR. LAMBERT: That is impossible.

SIR GILBERT PARKER said he felt certain that no hon. Member representing labour would have refused to support the Admiralty had they come to such a decision. Any one who had studied the question could not help but feel great anxiety about the future. One hon. Member had already stated that any other country but this would have pushed forward such works with much greater expedition.

MR. PIRIE: Yes, I had Germany and the Kiel Canal in my mind.

SIR GILBERT PARKER said that Germany was in a far better position than this country with regard to the new ships of the "Dreadnought" type and their possibility of coming home in time of war as wounded ships. On the East Coast we had absolutely nothing. Portsmouth was a possible port in time of peace to house a "Dreadnought," but in time of war it was admitted that all the Channel ports must be counted out as places of absolute refuge and safety. We had, therefore, to look to Rosyth. He thought that it was a very serious thing that in 1911 we would have twelve "Dreadnoughts" and not a single port on the East Coast which could give those ships a home. In time of peace it was supposed to be unnecessary. But they had to talk about a state of war, and the fact that the Army and Navy were fighting machines was sufficient for them to insist that they should be in such a state of preparation and in such a condition as to be ready to fight at any moment. That was the spirit which animated the countries which the hon. Member had quoted as being progressive and decisive in the matter of their great naval and military works. No one could travel in Europe without being struck with the tremendous military work which one found on the borders between France and Germany. Those countries with land boundaries must have gigantic military works and they never allowed them to fall the least behind. Germany was applying exactly the same assiduity, the same constant attention, the same determined system of construction to her sea defences as to her land defences.

AN HON. MEMBER: She is only doing the same as ourselves.

SIR GILBERT PARKER said he would like to think that this country was giving the same devoted attention to necessary naval works that Germany was giving to her naval and military works. He did not think these debates upon Rosyth and Portsmouth gave one absolute confidence that the Admiralty were doing all that could be done. Much had been said about the Loan Acts and building upon loan. He agreed it was a very wicked kind of business, but it had its advantages.

SIR F. BANBURY: Why wicked?

SIR GILBERT PARKER said that "wicked" might not be the proper word, but as a general system building on loan was not satisfactory. He wished to point out, however, that in abandoning the policy of loans and making it a sort of righteous act they might be sacrificing too much. At present, according to the naval programmes, we should possess twelve "Dreadnoughts" within three years, which would have no real home, no place of refuge, and no base on that coast where they would probably be most needed. There might be an emergency arise under which we should have those ships on the water with no base for them to retire on. The Civil

Lord to the Admiralty had said that it would be five or six years before the docks at Rosyth would be so far complete as to allow a "Dreadnought" to take refuge there. He thought they might safely add another two or three years to that estimate, because he had never found a Minister defending this position anything else but optimistic, and if they made allowances for the optimism of the Civil Lord and his colleagues, it might safely be said that we should not have twelve, but eighteen "Dreadnoughts" upon our waters without a base for them in the North Sea upon which they could rely. That was a very serious thing, and what he had foreshadowed was quite possible. Such a problem might be thrust upon them, not by any act of Germany or France, but through the great Powers in the East, which might provoke complications in Europe at any moment which might bring about an international conflagration. In the precipitation of such a conflict we should be faced by a situation for which we were not prepared. He was sure no Member of the House hoped that any such peril would arise within the next eight, ten, or twenty years. They all desired peace, but they all realised at the same time that the safety of this country, the safety of its trade, territory, and everything which Englishmen held dear, depended upon the efficiency of the Navy, and upon the naval works supplied by those responsible for the Government of this country. It was not predominance alone that was required, but crushing capacity—a capacity to crush the strongest opposition that could be brought against us. If the Government had thought it well to devote £500,000 or even £1,000,000 to the establishment of such naval works, he thought they would have had the whole country behind them. It seemed to him that the representatives of the Admiralty had to face in this House a situation which they scarcely expected, for they had not been attacked from the Opposition side of the House. They had found out what he believed was the sentiment of the people of this country, viz., that there should be adequate naval expenditure for all necessary naval works.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN (Worcestershire, E.) wished to ask one question in connection with the docks at Rosyth. There seemed to have been a general opinion that once this work was undertaken the quicker it was completed the better. The question he wished to put was whether the Board of Admiralty, in calling for tenders, would intimate to the contractors that the time taken to finish the work would be a consideration in awarding the contract, and that if necessary, the Admiralty would pay a somewhat higher price in order to secure the use of those works at an earlier date.

*Mr. LAMBERT promised that he would put the suggestions which had been made before his colleagues as strongly as he could.

Mr. CARLILE said that with regard to the production of torpedoes at Greenock, he wished to know whether, if the work was to be transferred from Woolwich, the men now engaged on the work at Woolwich would be transferred to the Greenock Factory.

Mr. LAMBERT said that the men at Woolwich were skilled in these matters, and it would be essential to transfer them. As far as he was concerned he felt sure the Admiralty had no fault to find with the discussion which had taken place. With regard to the money which had not been spent, they had been met with some great engineering difficulties, and therefore it was not the fault of the Admiralty. The delays which had occurred were mostly due to the weather. The Admiralty had hurried on the works but it was a matter for the contractors, and if they had not done the work the Admiralty naturally could not pay for it. The suggestion which had been made by the hon. Member for Hexham would be taken into consideration. The hon. Member had drawn his attention to the fact that the new dock at Rosyth would not accommodate the "Mauretania," and that gave him a little surprise. He had brought the matter to the attention of the Admiralty, and they had told him that they could make the dock so that it could easily be lengthened. The suggestion made by the hon. Member that they should put two ships in one dock was a very excellent one, and he promised that it should be considered. He asked the House now to allow this Vote to pass as they wanted to get on with the works, and they could not make any progress until the Vote was passed. If there should happen to be any matters of detail which he could answer privately a further opportunity would be given.

MR. PIRIE said he would like his Question about Scottish granite answered.

MR. J. M. HENDERSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) said that there were merchants in England and Scotland who brought into this country large quantities of Norwegian granite, and they were trying to sell it under a series of pretences that it stood a greater strain than either English, Scottish, or Welsh granite. Such statements were absolutely untrue, and he asked the Admiralty to guard themselves against them. If they would only test Scottish granite they would find that it would stand the strongest possible test.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON promised that the remonstrances and protests which had been made would be borne in mind, and the Admiralty would examine for themselves the qualities of the various kinds of granite. He would guard against being misled by any of the statements which had been referred to.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.) protested against the action taken by the contractors in regard to what was done at Haulbowline. At the last moment the Irish contractors got Norwegian granite substituted, and this caused a very great loss of employment in the locality. As Scotsmen and Welshmen had protested against this unfair importation of foreign granite he thought at least one Irish Member might be allowed to say a word

SIR JOHN BENN (Devonport) said that when the right hon. Gentleman was considering granite he hoped he would bear in mind that Cornish granite was the best of all.

MR. HUNT asked the right hon. Gentleman also to bear in mind Shropshire granite.

CAPTAIN DONELAN (Cork, E.) said he desired to support the protest which had been made by his hon. friend the Member for North Cork. Undoubtedly a large number of working men in his constituency had complained very bitterly of the action of the Admiralty in regard to this question of foreign granite. Excellent granite could have been obtained in the immediate neighbourhood, just as lasting and useful as the Norwegian granite. Good granite was also to be obtained in the North of Ireland. But to go to Norway when excellent building stone could be obtained in the local quarries almost adjoining was action which deserved very strong condemnation.

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee to sit again To-morrow.

CONTEMPT OF COURT (IRELAND).

MR. N. J. MURPHY (Kilkenny, S.) in rising to call attention to the Law of Contempt of Court in Ireland, and the arrest and imprisonment of Mr. Lawrence Ginnell, a Member of this House; and to move, "That the jurisdiction of Judges in dealing with Contempt of Court is practically arbitrary and unlimited, and, especially in view of recent exercises of that jurisdiction in Ireland, calls for the action of Parliament with a view to its definition and limitation," said that he had got out of a sick bed to come to the House. He did not feel that his strength was equal to making a speech in support of his Motion, and therefore he could not do more than move it formally.

*MR. P. A. MCHUGH (Sligo, N.), in seconding, said the Motion was of a two-fold nature. It particularly referred to an absent colleague and to recent exercises of the jurisdiction of contempt of Court in Ireland, and it was otherwise of a general nature, and in regard to the general portion of it their statement was that the jurisdiction of Judges in dealing with contempt of Court was practically arbitrary and unlimited. It was in the interests of the ordinary citizen and of the Judges themselves that there should be a change in the law. They held that the law should be respected and that Judges should not be humiliated, but Judges had been humiliated by executive Governments, and might continue to be humiliated as long as the law remained as at present. He might refer to one case in which a Judge had sentenced a man named Cradock to twelve months imprisonment for contempt of Court in England in 1875. The conviction was discussed in that House, and the Executive Government released the man a few days after his conviction. In that case the Judge was humiliated, and it was not expedient in a properly governed community that such incidents should arise. They had no intention whatever of casting any reflection upon any Judge in Ireland, but it was only reasonable in bringing forward a Motion of this kind that they should consider it especially from the point of view of the conditions prevailing in Ireland. He admitted that the law was the same in Ireland as in England, but the practice and administration in Ireland were different. There appeared to be a general agreement amongst all parties that the law ought to be amended. A similar Resolution to this was agreed to by all parties on 4th April, 1906, but, on that occasion, the Attorney-General for Ireland said the Government had no time for such a purpose during that session. He hoped the Government would now tell them they intended to introduce legislation. He believed all parties in the House were practically agreed that contempt should be defined, that there should be a clear line of distinction drawn between civil and criminal contempt, that the punishment which might be inflicted by way of fine or imprisonment should be limited, that there should be an appeal in all cases, and that the Royal prerogative should apply. If he was right the Attorney-General had no excuse for postponing dealing with the matter. They all agreed that there should be inherent in Courts of Justice the power to protect themselves from insult, and that Judges very properly exercised the right of committing for contempt of Court in the case, for instance, of absconding debtors and of unsatisfactory answering in Bankruptcy Courts. But when they asked what was contempt of Court no one could answer the question. They might as well ask what was truth, or what was Socialism. There was no definition. Every Judge on the Bench might have a a special code and definition of his own. If they laughed or sneezed in Court it might be contempt of Court. All depended upon the Judge who presided. Irish Members had taken a very deep interest in the matter for some years past, and at their instance Returns had been made from year to year of persons sentenced to unlimited terms of imprisonment for contempt of Court in Ireland. In 1899 one of his constituents, named Daniel O'Donnell was committed for contempt for trespassing on a farm from which he had been evicted, and which was situated on an estate managed by the Land Judge. It was a doctrine universally accepted by English Judges that the jurisdiction for contempt of Court should be used only when there was no other remedy. In the case of his constituent there was no necessity for applying this jurisdiction. The ordinary law should have been appealed to. He found also his own name in one of these lists. There was no definition of the crime of which he was held to be guilty, and there was no record to say whether the contempt was civil or criminal, and he contended that the Judge in sentencing him should have clearly stated whether his contempt was of a civil or criminal nature. The question was only decided when the matter came up in that House, and it was held without evidence and without any authority or information that he was guilty of criminal contempt. He did not propose to review that decision, because it was a matter of the utmost indifference to him what decision of that kind was given in the House of Commons. He was satisfied with his position before his constituents and his countrymen at large. Under the law as it stood at present a Judge had power to commit to prison for life, though he did not know that there was any record of its being exercised. A Judge could also impose any fine that he thought fit. He might impose a fine which would render the offender bankrupt and leave him penniless and homeless, or he might impose a condition for his release which the person imprisoned would not be willing to accept even on pain of long years of imprisonment. These were powers which, in his judgment, should not be left in the hands of any man no matter how distinguished or upright he might be. It could not be claimed for Judges that they were infallible or that they were angels. On 4th April, 1906, those who spoke from the benches above the Gangway, representing Irish constituencies, all stated that the law was the same in Ireland as in England. And they appeared to him to think that the whole case was answered by making that statement. He asked the question: "Have you a Judge's Court in England similar to the Land Judge's Court in Ireland?" They had nothing of the kind, and his reply was that very probably this Motion would never have been made if they had not had such a court in Ireland entirely different from anything to be found in England. He would say that he had been a member of this House with Mr. Justice Ross, and he was not going to take advantage of his position there to say one word which would reflect upon that Judge in his judicial capacity. He maintained that Judge Ross had been badly treated by successive Governments in Ireland. In this House he was regarded as the champion and spokesman of the landlord as against the tenant class. And what did the late Government do? It set him over a Court whose function it was to decide between the conflicting interests of those two classes. He held that that was very unfair to Judge Ross, because it placed him in a very difficult and invidious position. That fact had been recognised by all parties in the House. On 13th April, 1904, the following Resolution was adopted by this House—

> "That the time has arrived for taking immediate steps to wind up the business of the Land Judge's Court in Ireland in the interest of all concerned."

He held that that included the Judge himself. On that occasion the then Chief Secretary for Ireland, the right hon. Member for Dover, supported the Resolution; but he took no steps to give effect to it, and matters remained to-day practically the same as they were when that Motion was brought before the House. Sometimes they were charged with saying harsh things about Judges in Ireland, but the hardest thing ever said about Mr. Justice Ross was said by the present Attorney-General for Ireland, who on 4th April, 1906, said—

> "The Judge of the Land Judge's Court was transformed into a kind of rent-agent."

Nothing worse could be said of a Judge in Ireland, and he would not attempt to improve on it. In looking over the Returns of persons sentenced to imprisonment for contempt of Court in Ireland, he found a very large proportion of them sentenced to long terms of imprisonment for some reason or other arising out of disputes in Judge Ross's Court. He found the following. Michael Daly, Aranmore, County Donegal, kept in prison for 158 days; Patrick Farelly, Enaghan, County Longford, 191 days; Francis D'Arcy, Culeyhen, County Cavan, 142 days; Batt. O. Doherty, Shanara, County Kerry, 163 days; Michael Roche, Castle Ireland, County Kerry, 236 days; Myles Synott, Courtown Harbour, Wexford, one year, fifty-nine days; Thomas Eaton, Towerstown, County Kilkenny, 298 days; Thomas Walsh, Scariff, County Clare, 291 days. A man named Patrick Kavanagh, of Furzditch, County Wicklow, was kept in prison for contempt one year and 237 days by the Vice-Chancellor. Kavanagh was afterwards transferred from the prison to Richmond Lunatic Asylum. Rightly or wrongly there was a feeling in the minds of a very large section of the people of Ireland that the power of committal for contempt of Court was used in the Land Judge's Court in the interests of the owner as against the interests of the occupier. He contended that that was a most regrettable fact. He had stated that there appeared to be general agreement in regard to the principle laid down by English Judges that the power of committal for contempt of court should be availed of only where there was no alternative. He would refer to the case of Daniel O'Donnell, who was committed to prison for a trespass he was said to have committed, and for which, had it been committed in this country, he would have been tried under the ordinary law, that was to say if they admitted that the principles laid down by Justices Coleridge, Matthew, and Jessell were correct. He maintained that Daniel O'Donnell was wrongfully committed to prison, because there was an alternative means of punishing him for the offence he had committed. The offence was committed on an estate in the Land Judge's Court, but had O'Donnell's trespass been on an estate in the hands of its owner, he would have been tried under the ordinary law. In that same year a branch of the United Irish League was formed at Drumkeeran, and at a meeting of the branch a resolution was adopted condemning land-grabbing. Land-grabbing had been made the subject of discussion throughout Ireland, and would continue to be so until the practice was abolished. There was no power in the hands of any Government which could prevent the people of Ireland from expressing their opinion in regard to that matter. It was quite possible that the Drumkeeran branch in passing that resolution and making special reference to a particular land-grabber, broke the law. He did not question that, but if a man broke the law, whether in England or Ireland, he should be tried according to the law. But what was done in the Drumkeeran case? The grabbed land was part of an estate in the Land Judge's Court. The receiver, a Mr. Hewson, made an affidavit, and he got the land-grabber, whose name was Hetherington, to make another affidavit, and on the charges made in these affidavits four of his constituents were sentenced to indefinite terms of imprisonment on a charge of contempt of Court. He took particular interest in the case, and went down to Drumkeeran, and made inquiry as to the statements contained in the affidavits submitted by Hewson and Hetherington; and he found that in the main these statements were absolutely false and unfounded. He was present at the Court when the men were tried. The accusers did not put in an appearance, and answering affidavits were put in by the four men, but the Judge absolutely refused to listen to them, and used very violent language in committing them for contempt of Court. Three of the men evaded capture for some time, but one of them, Mr. Joseph Gallagher, secretary of the branch, who was in delicate health was arrested at once, and lodged in Sligo Gaol. He visited Gallagher, and found him in a cold dark cell, where he could not read except for about two hours a day. He was kept in solitary confinement for twenty-two out of the twenty-four hours. There was no way he could see of getting Gallagher out of prison. The Judge insisted as a condition of release that Gallagher had to swear what he believed to be false, viz., that he was sorry he had been a party to passing a resolution condemning land-grabbing. That, in his judgment, was intolerable, because it had been laid down by more than one Judge that no such conditions should be imposed in such cases, and that the terms of imprisonment should be defined and limited. This poor man Gallagher, who had to be carried out of his cell every day by the warders to get the air, was dying by inches, and his friends came to him and said: "Why don't you give in?" Of course, in the end the poor fellow had to give in. He maintained that the law of contempt of Court was used as an instrument for the repression of agrarian agitation, and there was nothing worse than this abuse of the power of committing to prison for contempt of Court. Every device had been used to stop agrarian agitation in Ireland. Coercion Acts had been passed, without avail, and, of course, no justice could be had from two paid magistrates who came down to the Courts with the sentences to be passed on the accused in their pockets. Another means of repression was packed juries; but none of these things were half so bad as this power of committing for contempt of Court when a man has no right to be confronted with his accusers and to cross-examine them. But this was not the worst of it. This jurisdiction might be invoked by outsiders as it had been in the Drumkeeran case, where, to his personal knowledge, the statements made against his constituents were unfounded. He met Hewson at a public meeting, and explained the whole situation to him, and called him names which he would not repeat in the House. Hewson however, had taken no action against him, and his constituents were tried and imprisoned on false and perjured testimony. He said that to use the power of committal in such a case was to turn it into an instrument of torture and of terror, and was calculated to bring the Court into odium. No man was safe in the country. If he went down to his own constituency to address a meeting, he would have to make inquiries as to whether an estate was in the Courts or not, and if it was in the Courts he could say nothing about it. He tried to bring public opinion to bear upon the treatment of his constituents in this matter, and he called a public meeting, but it was suppressed by proclamation. In England they did not hear many complaints about the abuse of this power, because it was not abused here as it was in Ireland. Even if it was abused in this country there was always the safeguard of public opinion. This country was governed in accordance with public opinion, but that was not the case in Ireland, and it would be more true to say that Ireland was usually governed in defiance of Irish public opinion. In England, moreover, no carrion crow winged his way to the judicial bench, and a different system prevailed altogether. He would refer to a case in which he was concerned, but he would not have done so had not his colleagues asked him to bring the facts before the House. He was sitting in the smoking-room downstairs on 22nd February, 1902, when a colleague drew his attention to a report which appeared in the London *Times* of that date, and which went to show that on the previous day a matter cropped up in the Land Judge's Court about a Conference held in Highwood, County Sligo, and reported in the *Sligo Champion* of 11th January, 1902. The resolution passed was one condemning the eleven months system of letting land, and special reference was made to a grazing farm on an estate called the Weir Estate, which was then in the Land Judge's Court. He would read an extract from the report that appeared in the London *Times* on 22nd February, 1902. The Judge said—

> "There was no doubt that the tenants had been interfered with. If it could be proved that any two men had proposed and seconded the resolution that had been cited, he would deal with them for contempt of Court. The receiver must take steps if he could to prove the origin of the resolution. The persons who moved and supported these resolutions would be punished if they were brought before him. The newspapers, in publishing the resolutions, were the principal agencies in the conspiracy. If the editors were brought before him he would teach them that to publish such a resolution was a gross contempt of Court, and they would be punished severely."

He had never denied responsibility for what appeared in the paper on 11th January, which contained a report of the Conference, including the resolution condemning the eleven months system, references being made to a particular farm. He admitted that in all probability he committed an offence before the law, but if he had committed such an offence let him be tried by the law. He might have been charged with intimidation or conspiracy, and he would have stood his trial and paid the penalty, but he did not get a trial, and what he complained of then, and what he complained of now, was that his liberty was taken away without a fair trial. He was never confronted with his accusers, and they were never put in the witness-box for cross-examination. It was said that all men were equal before the law, and he supposed that that was universally admitted. He said that all estates were equal before the law. They were equal before the law in England, but not equal before the law in Ireland, and that was the kernel of their complaint against these proceedings. Were they to be told that what was intimidation on one side of the ditch was contempt of Court on the other? He refused to subscribe to so preposterous a doctrine. Were they to be told that cattle-driving was an offence against the Common Law on one side of the ditch, and would be tried under the Common Law, but was contempt of Court on the other side? That was the case of their colleague. If he had done certain acts of which he was accused on an estate which was not in Court, he would be tried according to the ordinary law, but on an estate which was before the Court it was contempt of Court. He said that if that was the law, then surely the law was an ass. The hint thrown out by Mr. Justice Ross that proceedings should be taken against him was acted upon very promptly by the receiver of the estate. He was served with a notice to appear before Judge Ross, and the case was tried on 19th April, 1902, in Dublin. On that occasion he was represented by an eminent counsel, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, now the Recorder of Dublin, and Mr. Kehoe, who was made a County Court Judge. An affidavit having been read by the prosecuting counsel, his answering affidavit was read. In it he said—

"I have read the affidavits made in this case. It is a fact that reports of such meetings of the United Irish League appeared in my paper. It is a fact that I am proprietor of the *Sligo Champion*, and as such I acknowledge my responsibility for the publication of the reports. I say that with regard to the publication of the said reports I am not guilty of contempt of this honourable Court, as I did not know of the existence of this estate until I saw reference to it and to myself and to the remarks of Mr. Justice Ross in the London *Times* some time last month. I did not know until then that the estate of Weir was in the Courts, or that there was any dispute about the management of the said estate. I never read any of the said reports before or after publication, until after I was served with a summons. On my attention being drawn to *The Times* report, I wrote to my manager directing him to insert no more reports without first submitting them to me, and my instructions in this respect have been carried out."

And counsel for the prosecution proceeded—

"There is the whole of the affidavit. He is responsible for everything that appears in his paper, and it is his duty to know whether, in these publications, he is interfering with the management of an estate in this Court. In no place in that affidavit does he express regret, and one would have expected that a gentleman, such as Mr. McHugh, if he did not intend to interfere with the management of an estate in this Court, would have made in his affidavit an expression of regret for what he had done. Not one word of regret is here, and one would have thought that he would have given an undertaking that such would not occur again. There is no undertaking given that he would not repeat the conduct he has been guilty of. All he says is that he directed his manager not to insert any such reports without first submitting them to him. There is no guarantee given that the same thing would not occur again."

Certainly not. Why should he give a guarantee? He held then and he held now that the management of all estates whether in Court or not was a legitimate subject of public discussion. He gave no undertaking, and, when he was asked to give one, he was required to give up the right, if there was to be a free Press, to print the reports of meetings. He did not comment upon the matter and knew nothing about it, but he was charged with having inserted a report of a conference of a National League Branch at which the resolution to which he had referred was passed. He did not see how he could be held guilty of contempt, and Mr. O'Shaughnessy, who appeared for him, said—

"Is it not perfectly plain that he neither committed a contempt nor intended to commit a contempt? I quite admit that your Lordship is entitled and bound to exercise your jurisdiction where it is necessary; but I say this is a case where it is not necessary."

Mr. Kehoe, also on his behalf, said—

"These are merely reports of meetings which were not proclaimed. His Lordship would believe Mr. McHugh when he stated in his affidavit that he had no knowledge that the estate was in Court; and no case could be found on the books of contempt where knowledge was not brought home in some form. It was the duty of some officer of his Lordship's Court to inform Mr. McHugh that he was committing a contempt, as there was no duty devolving on Mr. McHugh to make inquiry about it."

He said that in all the authorities he had read it was laid down that there could be no contempt without intent and surely there could be no intent where there was no knowledge. Counsel having been heard on his behalf, judgment was delivered by the Land Judge who said—

"Accordingly, I adjudge and declare Patrick Aloysius McHugh, Member of Parliament, guilty of contempt of Court. I order him to be attached until further order. I order him to pay all the costs of this motion, and a fine of £50 to the Crown. To prevent any further attempt to deal with this estate in this matter, I order an injunction to issue to restrain Mr. McHugh, his agents, assistants, employees, or servants from interfering with the Receiver, by publishing matters calculated to prevent the letting of grazing in this estate; and I direct service of this notice to be substituted by sending it to the office, directed to Mr. McHugh. I have only one further thing to remark. I can see reference to other estates in this paper; and I now warn all Receivers that when they notice matters of this kind calculated to interfere with the performance of their duty and with the rights of the people, if they do not promptly bring such before this Court, I will have their names removed from the list of Receivers."

M. Leech (prosecuting counsel) asked for the costs of the Receiver and the answer of Judge Ross was—

"I am not satisfied that the Receiver should not have sent notice to the paper long before he brought the matter before this Court. If he had done so I would have dealt with the matter in a very different way."

Therefore it appeared that the Judge held that his crime was somewhat mitigated by the fact that he had no notice from the Receiver. If he had had a notice he wondered what the sentence would have been. He thought the sentence was hard enough because as his release would be subject to a condition he could not possibly accept it was tantamount to a sentence of imprisonment for life. For reasons with which he need not trouble the House that order of Judge Ross remained in abeyance till June, 1903. In the meantime peace had fallen upon the land. Before going into prison he thought he would give the Judge an opportunity of reviewing his sentence, and accordingly he had a Motion made asking him to rescind the Order. He refused to listen to his counsel and said—

> "We are very patient in this Court. But he (the hon. Member) must go in first, and then make his application."

He was therefore to go into gaol where the learned Judge would have the thumbscrew on him and where he hoped, by twisting it to a certain extent, to extract from him an acknowledgment of regret and a promise not offend again. That in his judgment, would have humiliated him, and he was determined he would not be humiliated by Judge Ross. The Judge added :

> "He (the hon. Member) was the proprietor of the paper, and he must express regret for the publication, otherwise, I cannot hear him. There is no expression of regret in the affidavit at all. He must clearly understand that the contempt must be purged and got rid of. I must have an expression of regret for the publication in the paper before I consider it at all. Let there be no mistake about that."

Rightly or wrongly, he believed that Mr. Justice Ross desired to humiliate him as his constituents had been humiliated, and, after that judgment, he went down to Sligo and got arrested immediately. He made no application for release, and yet within fifteen days he was released. The thumbscrew was ready, and he was behind the bars. Judge Ross, he supposed, expected he would approach him and ask to be let free, and that he would say that, if he promised not to do it again, he would let him out. Why, however, should he apologise for a contempt of which he was innocent? He made up his mind he would do nothing of the kind, and neither he nor any of his friends approached the Executive Government. Why was he released? Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would tell the House. Did the Executive Government humiliate Judge Ross? He had prepared humble pie for him, but it was not he who ate it. It was Judge Ross. He did not know up to this moment why he was released. He expressed no regret; and he did not ask to be released. Probably, when the case of the hon. Member for West Meath came up, the right hon. Gentleman would say they had no power to release him except by order of the Judge. By what power was he (the hon. Member speaking) released? The power which was considered enough to force Mr. Justice Ross to release him still remained and should be exercised by the Chief Secretary, and, on behalf of his Party, and in the name of decency and of fair play, he demanded the immediate and unconditional release of his imprisoned colleague. It was no use to say they could not release him. There was the case of Craddock and his own case. Let them do in the case of his imprisoned colleague what was done in his own. The Chief Secretary's administration up to the present had been clean. Let him not shelter himself behind this rusty tool of contempt of Court, which ought to be left in the lumber room of dead tyrannies with the thumbscrew and the rack.

Motion made, and Question proposed "That the jurisdiction of judges in dealing with contempt of Court is practically arbitrary and unlimited, and especially in view of recent exercises of that jurisdiction in Ireland, calls for the action of Parliament with a view to its definition and limitation."—(*Mr. Nicholas Murphy.*)

*THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool Exchange) said that it was certainly not the first time this subject of contempt of Court had been before Parliament; and he found that as far back as 1882, twenty-six years ago, the late Mr. Gladstone stated in this House that the matter was a pressing one and that he proposed to introduce almost immediately legislation on the subject. In 1883 a Bill was actually introduced in the House of Lords by the late Lord Selborne, and it provided in a very substantial way for the limitation of the power of Judges as regarded committals for contempt. It limited the penalty of imprisonment to a period of two months and the fine which might be imposed to £500. And what was more important, it gave the right of appeal in every case of committal by a single Judge. That Bill failed to became law. He believed it passed through all its stages in the House of Lords, but in this House, owing to pressure of business, it was dropped. Although that was so very long ago, nothing had been done by way of legislation since. They were now exactly in the same position as they were then. Again, he found in 1892 a Bill was introduced—it was backed by his right hon. friend the present Chief Secretary—with the object of giving the right of appeal not only to the Court of Appeal but also to the House of Lords in the case of committal for contempt. It shared the fate of so many other Bills introduced by private Members, and failed to become law. In 1906 the subject was brought forward, and a Resolution, almost identical in terms with the Resolution now before the House, was unanimously accepted. He therefore apprehended that there would be no difficulty to-night in accepting the resolution, but he thought it was unnecessary for him to mention how unfavourable would be the prospect of passing any measure on the subject this session with the legislative programme before the House.

A NATIONALIST MEMBER: It could be made a one-clause Bill.

*MR. CHERRY said the hon. Member suggested that it could be done in a one-clause Bill, but could a one-clause Bill be passed in one minute? It was not a question of the number of the clauses, but of the time to be given to a matter of this kind. He was not in a position to control the time of the House, and he could not undertake on behalf of the Government at the present moment to introduce legislation on this subject. There was legislation in contemplation, not only for England and Scotland, but also for Ireland, which they all knew there was a great deal of difficulty in passing in the present session owing to the limited amount of time at their disposal, and he did not think hon. Gentlemen opposite could really press them too much to take up this matter in the present session in addition to other matters they had to deal with.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.) said that a Bill was passed in all its stages in 1883 by Lord Selborne and the Law Lords, in the House of Lords, and it was only stopped because there was not time in the Commons. They had the Lords in their favour and an overwhelming majority in this House in their favour. Surely it could be done without the smallest difficulty and without the loss of four hours of time!

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.): May I just say there was not time in this House to pass a little Bill for Belfast the other night?

*MR. CHERRY thought the last interruption showed the hopelessness of passing the Bill as a non-contentious measure in a few minutes. If there was a chance of passing it, he would suggest that the hon. and learned Member should present his Bill. He was glad to hear the hon. Member for Sligo, in the course of his moderate speech, disclaim any intention of making any attack upon any Judge in Ireland. There was no necessity for him to disclaim any attack or any attempt to attack the Judges in Ireland; but he agreed that the power of a single Judge arbitrarily to commit for contempt was a power which ought not to be conferred. In a matter such as contempt, which affected the Judge personally, he should not be allowed to be the judge in his own cause. In a great many cases where questions of contempt arose, the question was a personal one between the Judge and the person brought before him. He thought everybody would agree that in such matters it was desirable that there should be the right of appeal from the order of the Judge. The whole

House, he thought, would agree that the power of committing for contempt ought to be strictly confined to what was really contempt, and that it ought not to be used as an instrument for the repression of land agitation. He did not say it had been so used or that Mr. Justice Ross, in the exercise of his jurisdiction, had had in his mind any idea of a political nature. He had protected the land within his jurisdiction and from time to time imposed sentences upon persons who, he thought, interfered with the management of the property in such a way as to prevent him doing his duty towards the owners. But the House would, he thought, agree with him that the power of committal for contempt was not intended to be used as an instrument for the repression of land agitation or for any political purpose whatever. With regard to definition and limitation of the jurisdiction, it was a very difficult matter to deal with, and he did not know how they could attempt in any Bill to limit or define what was contempt of Court. He was not aware that it had ever been attempted, and if any attempt had been made he would be very glad to see how it had been expressed. There must be always, if the law was to be administered, this power of committal for contempt, otherwise it would be impossible that the administration of estates in Chancery or the conduct of judicial business could be carried on. But what they were entitled to insist on was that the power and the duty of committal for contempt should be strictly confined to cases where it was necessary and where it was merely for the purpose of allowing the business of the Courts to be fairly and justly conducted so as to do no injustice to any individual. He agreed that in Ireland, although the law was the same as in England, the circumstances were very different and greater strictness was required. There was no Court in England in the same position as the Land Judge's Court in Ireland. There was no Court which had the management of a very large portion of the area of the country and where the Judge was really in the double position of being both Judge and landlord, because substantially in the case of every estate in Ireland under the jurisdiction of the Land Judge and for sale in his Court, the Judge exercised the rights of a landlord, and the law of landlord and tenant as between the Judge and persons who held under the Court was administered by means of this law of contempt. A tenant who refused to give up possession at the end of the term for which he had contracted to hold the land, if he held under an ordinary landlord, was proceeded against in the ordinary way. If he held under the Land Judge and refused to give up when his tenancy expired he was guilty of contempt of Court and might be treated as so guilty. During the last forty or fifty years the law of contempt of Court had been put into force again and again by the Land Judges, and not only was it used as between the owner, represented by the Land Court, and the tenants in occupation, but it was also used with reference to outsiders who had no dealing with the Court at all. In their case the matter was more grave, because their contempt was treated as criminal and not merely civil contempt. The Resolution in so far as it suggested that an amendment of the law was required to limit the term of imprisonment and the amount of the fines that might be imposed and to confer the right of appeal upon persons who were sentenced by a single Judge, was a moderate Resolution, and might be reasonably accepted by the House, and he would ask the House to accept it. The hon. Member had dealt with a particular case. He did not think this was the time to deal with any individual case. If there was any question of exercising the prerogative of pardon it was open to hon. Members to take measures to bring the matter before the Executive Government. So far as he was aware, in no instance in the last fifty years had the prerogative of the Court ever been exercised in reference to committal for contempt and it was a doubtful point whether such jurisdiction existed. The hon. Member for Leitrim had been committed and released, but he was released by the Judge who committed him. Of course it was open to Mr. Justice Ross to deal with a case as he thought right. In regard to the Resolution the Government accepted it and were willing that it should be passed, but the House would not expect that he should make any promise or pledge on the part of the Government in regard to legislation during the present session.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said he wished to refer to what the Attorney-General had stated with regard to having the Resolution detached altogether from the case of the gentleman whose name was mentioned in the preamble. He could not take that view. He conceived that there was a matter affecting the House which ought to be very carefully inquired into, and was a proper topic for debate at the present moment. When Mr. De Cobain, who was a very eminent member of the Conservative Party in Ireland, and for whose misfortune he, for one, felt extremely sorry, had been guilty of some offence that he would not now mention, the House proposed on the Motion of the present Leader of the Opposition or of the late Mr. Smith, without any notice to Mr. de Cobain, to try to expel him. He (Mr. Healy), had objected, and pointed out that he had neither been convicted nor had he any notice or advertisement of the censure of the House being about to be passed upon him. So precise and scrupulous was the House in regard to a Conservative Member, although he was quite sure the Leader of the Opposition would have been equally scrupulous if his attention had been called to it in regard to a political opponent, that the House sent a special messenger across to some Continental port and advised Mr. de Cobain of the proposed censure of the House and invited him to go and attend. It was only after he had been advised of the censure that the House proceeded to expel him from its membership. What was the case with regard to the hon. Member for North Westmeath? It might or might not be right to exercise the power of committal for contempt of Court, but the House should be most scrupulously careful in considering the circumstances in which any of its Members might suffer arrest and imprisonment. He was one of the Committee that inquired into a similar case in 1883, and he could not think that their procedure or their respect for the dignity of the position of a Member of Parliament had improved. It was upon the recommendation of that Committee that Mr. Gladstone proposed to introduce into the House of Lords a Bill to limit the duration of imprisonment to two months. Nor did the Prime Minister of that day think it derogatory to his great office to preside over that Committee which was representative of all sections of the House. There they were now, however, after a quarter of a century, without having made an inch of progress, and the House had, in fact, refused to appoint a Committee on privilege. He was as strongly opposed to cattle-driving and all its incidents as any Conservative Member or Ministerialist, and therefore, he was not speaking out of any sympathy with the movement in connection with which the hon. Member for North Westmeath was committed to prison, but he did say that the hon. Member had the rights, not only of a citizen, but of a Member of that House, and they should be jealous to see that no wrong had been committed. He conceived that it was a gross hardship on the hon. Member for North Westmeath, who no doubt thought he was bearing a proper and creditable part in the movement. How was the hon. Member or anybody else to find out that a particular area of grazing land was, or was not, under the jurisdiction of Mr. Justice Ross's Court? He remembered reading in connection with the American War how some of the northern soldiers described the one case in which the United States inflicted the punishment of death after the Civil War, and the great grievance was that there was an imaginary line drawn which they refused to mark, chalk, or delimit in any way when the poor hungry prisoners used to come out picking up snails and worms off the ground. But the moment any of them crossed that line bang went the rifle of a soldier, and the northern soldier was a corpse. Where was that line drawn in Ireland? He might make a speech in favour of cattle-driving in one field, and he would be absolutely free from the jurisdiction of Mr. Justice Ross; but if he crossed the ditch into the next field and made the same speech he might get six months imprisonment. Whichever side of the ditch he spoke on, his speech and the sentiments would be the same, and probably the effect upon the neighbourhood would be the same. The hon. Member for North Westmeath had no notice that he was speaking on ground under the jurisdiction of Mr. Justice Ross, and, therefore, he did not commit contempt of Court in making a speech which was not intended to be a contempt of Court. Moreover, he had stated, and his word had not been controverted, that he never received any summons from Mr. Justice Ross, or from his Court. He thought it would be within the province of that House to inquire as to what were the facts upon which one of its Members had been sentenced to six months imprisonment. A Member of that House had been laid by the heels, and yet until now not a single voice had been raised to question the prudence, legality, or even the technical justice of his imprisonment. If the hon. Member for North Westmeath had been a Macedonian, or a Chinaman, or even a Congolese, the matter would have been different. If he were Dinuzulu, his imprisonment might be made a matter of considerable sympathy; but as he was only an Irish Member engaged in making speeches with which few had sympathy his liberty seemed to be a matter not merely of no interest, but of no importance. He strongly hoped that on the occasion of some strike or labour movement in England some distinguished member of the Labour Party would be committed for contempt of Court. But English Judges were so wise; they never came into real conflict with that House or even with its humblest Member. Going back for forty or fifty years, in spite of the very great friction which existed in the labour movement in regard to such matters as the law of conspiracy, he could not understand why no English Member had ever succeeded in getting committed for contempt of Court. Whether the English Judges were in the habit of passing over their strong speeches or not he did not know, but undoubtedly they had a state of affairs under which English Members could treat Irish affairs in this extraordinary manner. He agreed with what the Attorney-General had said in regard to the advisability of making no attacks upon the Judges, although he did not believe the Judges minded these attacks. If he abstained from challenging the judgment of the learned Judge in this case, it was not because he knew that the Judge would disregard it, but because he would like to make an appeal even there for some consideration for the position which the hon. Member for North Westmeath occupied. The Attorney-General had said that in no case had the prerogative of mercy been exercised in a case of contempt of Court. But he would remind the Attorney-General that many years ago there was a case in county Limerick when Mr. Justice Boyd himself released Tom Moroney from prison, and made no bones about it. The heat of the cattle-driving movement had passed away, and the Government might now take action, or Mr. Justice Ross himself, who was far from being a harsh or ill-natured man, might take some action which would enable the hon. Member for North Westmeath to be discharged from prison. The Member for Trinity College knew the circumstances under which the hon. Member was committed, and he enjoyed the extraordinary advantage of being the only man in this House who did know, because he held the brief upon which the hon. Member was committed. He would, therefore, appeal to the right hon. Gentleman to say whether he thought the very severe sentence which the hon. Member had undergone was not sufficient, and to throw out a hint that a sufficient period of incarceration had passed. If he did that, he could assure him that nothing but good would come from the discharge of the hon. Member from what must be an irksome and onerous punishment. The law on this question was not in a state which anybody could regard with satisfaction either for England or Ireland. Whatever might be their desire to marry their deceased wife's sister, or to escape from vaccination, or to shut up public-houses, or any other of the great works upon which the Liberal Party had been engaged for the last two years, he respectfully submitted that the liberty of the subject in Ireland was a still greater right. Nevertheless, this right had remained year after year clouded, although so conservative a body as the House of Lords had condemned the existing state of the law, and what made matters worse was that in Ireland there was no right of appeal. There were a large number of matters upon which they had a right of appeal in this country which was denied to Ireland. An amendment of the law was required, and he thought this was one of the occasions when the Government's profession that it was on the side of liberty should be put into actual practice.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL (Dublin University) said he quite agreed with what had fallen from the Attorney-General as to the importance of limiting and defining the jurisdiction of the Courts in this matter. He was quite sure the Judges themselves would gladly accept from Parliament some relief so that there should be a statutory limitation as to the sentence and imprisonment and as to the amount of the fines. It would also be in the interests of personal liberty if a right of appeal was conferred from the decision of a single Judge in these matters. The great difficulty was that in Ireland there was no right of appeal to the Court of Appeal in criminal matters, and Members on that side of the House above the gangway who represented Irish constituencies, had been anxious to have the law in that respect altered so as to confer such rights of appeal in all criminal matters, but hon. Members below the gangway had never received that suggestion with any friendliness or with any promise of co-operation. When it had been proposed to take advantage of an English Bill before the House to insert a clause giving this right of appeal to Ireland, they had always been told that they might count on the opposition of the bulk of the hon. Members from Ireland below the gangway.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said he remembered the instance to which the hon. and learned Gentleman referred. It was the Prisoners Evidence Bill, and the Irish Members said they would oppose it because they felt that prosecutions would not be conducted in the same manner in Ireland as in England, and that innocent men might be convicted.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL said the hon. Member was referring to a wholly different matter. There being in his view a strong case for legislation which would limit and define the jurisdiction of a single Judge in this matter, he would have been quite prepared to let the Motion pass without any discussion, had it not been for the suggestion that the acceptance of the Motion involved a decision by the House that the use of this power of contempt of Court was condemned in all cases in which it of necessity became an element in the repression of agrarian agitation. He could not find anything of that kind in the Motion. The right hon. Gentleman had said that it necessarily involved that, and if it did he would be inclined to oppose the Motion and divide the House on it.

MR. CHERRY: I do not think I said that; I did not intend to say it. All I said was that I agreed with the statement of the hon. Member for Sligo, and I myself condemned the use of this process for the purpose of repressing agrarian agitation.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL said the Attorney-General had left Members on that side under the distinct impression that he evolved that out of the Motion. With regard to the exercise of this jurisdiction in the Court of the Land Judge, he was glad to hear the hon. Member for Sligo, who might be pardoned for indulging in strong language by reason of his reminiscences, say that he had not the slightest intention of making any attack on Mr. Justice Ross. He afterwards, when he got warm, forgot that observation and rather suggested that in some particular case the learned Judge had practically denied justice to the accused person, because he would not allow the witnesses against him to be cross-examined and would not listen to the affidavits filed on his behalf. He was certain that the hon. Member must be under some misapprehension, because that was the ordinary right of every person against whom such an application was made. He had never known Mr. Justice Ross in any single case depart from the recognised practice and law. It had been admitted with candour by the hon. Member for Sligo that for all intents and purposes the law in Ireland was precisely the same on this point as in England. If any one attempted to interfere with the Court of Chancery in this country the Court at once came down on that person, exercising its inherent jurisdiction of contempt of Court to protect the property under its own control. That was exactly what Mr. Justice Ross claimed to have done; he had invoked the protection of that jurisdiction with which Parliament entrusted his Court. The hon. Member's complaint was that because they had in Ireland a particular Court which Parliament itself had set up and which of necessity had to deal with Irish land, they ought to take away from that Court, the Court which above all required it, the power inherent in every other Court in England and Ireland that had to deal with property. The Court of Chancery in England had inherent jurisdiction to protect the property which it controlled. That was exactly what Mr. Justice Ross claimed to do, nothing more and nothing less, and he had never strained his jurisdiction. Some suggestion was made by the hon. Member for North Louth with reference to some alleged defect in the notice that was given in the case of the hon. Member for North Westmeath. He was not going to discuss the merits of that case, but he would remind the House that the affirmative evidence satisfied the Judge that notice of this process had been brought to the knowledge of the hon. Member for North Westmeath. It was only a *prima facie* case, but it was not attempted to be displaced by the hon. Member for North Westmeath. He did not appear before the Judge, nor put in any affidavit to contradict proof of service which had been put in. Therefore, the Judge was bound to act on the proof of service which was not challenged. With regard to the position of the hon. Member for North Westmeath, hon. Members below the gangway knew that he took no pleasure at all in coming into direct conflict with any of them, nor did he take the slightest pleasure in seeing them come into conflict with the law. But he must say this. It was the settled practice in England and Ireland in any case of contempt of Court that it was impossible for the Court to listen to the person undergoing sentence until he had what was technically called purged his contempt. So long as he remained in contempt he could not get his sentence reduced or remitted. One other point. It was said, and not unnaturally said, by one Member, that a man in speaking in one field might come under this particular jurisdiction, whereas by going into the next field he was free from that jurisdiction. So long as the Member for North Westmeath confined himself to properties that were not under the jurisdiction of the Land Judge, though he might make himself amenable to the general law of the land, that law overlooked him for nine months and allowed him to go on with impunity committing these offences. There was no peculiarity whatever about the administration of the law in Ireland. It was the same as in England. If anyone in England interfered with property that was being administered by the Court of Chancery they were liable to be had up for contempt of Court. But if they went to the next farm they were made amenable to the ordinary law. The only difference between Ireland and England was that Parliament had set up a tribunal in Ireland to take charge of these estates. Another reason why those cases were more numerous in Ireland than in England was—and he did not think hon. Members below the Gangway would take offence at the statement—that there was not in Ireland, speaking universally, that great respect for law and order which was to be found in many parts of this country, more particularly if the property attacked was the subject of political agitation. And thus those parties suffered more in Ireland than in this country. But, taking this Motion simply as calling the attention of the House to the necessity for putting some restriction upon the extent of imprisonment which might be inflicted, and the amount of the fine, and also providing for the right of appeal, he saw no objection to it, and was prepared to support it

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): said that there was common agreement between the right hon. Gentleman and himself in what the former had stated in the beginning and conclusion of his speech, although in the middle portion of it the right hon. and learned Member had touched upon more controversial matters. It so happened that this question of contempt of Court was one which had long engaged his attention, although he must confess that in former days his knowledge was entirely confined to England. He saw that his name was on the back of a Bill introduced in this House in 1892. His right hon. friend had referred to him, but far more distinguished people than he had shared that honour with him. There were the names of Mr. Warmington, Mr. Finlay, the late Attorney-General for England, Mr. Cozens-Hardy, now Master of the Rolls, Mr. Coleridge, now a Judge of the High Court, and Mr. Gainsford-Bruce, also a Judge of the High Court, now retired on his pension. In fact he was the only one of this celebrated galaxy who was still unrewarded! The object of the Bill of 1892 following on a Bill which actually passed the House of Lords under the guidance of that distinguished Chancellor, the late Lord Selborne, was to secure a right of appeal in cases of contempt of court. Confining himself for a moment to England, a country with which he then had better acquaintance than with Ireland, he might say that the whole notion of the theory of contempt of court was based on the fiction that the King is present in all his Courts, and that therefore any disturbance in the court or any disrespect shown to the Judge was an insult to His Majesty himself, and therefore, something which required to be dealt with summarily by the Judge in order to secure order and proper decency in the Court. Consequently, they saw the law exercised when a person reading a newspaper was directed by the usher to leave off doing so, since his attention to the news was a disrespect to the gravity of the proceedings, or if anyone laughed, or talked too loudly, or laughed at any joke other than a judicial joke, he might be reminded by the usher that that was not seemly. Everybody would agree that that kind of contempt was one which must be preserved. Based upon that, in English Courts there arose the undoubted practice that if any person disobeyed an actual order of the Court, he also was guilty of contempt. If the Court of Chancery had directed that a wall should be pulled down in order to preserve ancient lights, the man who refused to pull it down was liable to be proceeded against for contempt of Court, because he had actually disobeyed the order of the Court. Then there was the case to which his right hon. and learned friend referred as occurring so frequently in Ireland—the case of a person interfering with an estate in Chancery. From long experience he was certain that it had always been the practice in England that Judges were most anxious never to punish anyone for contempt of Court unless he had refused to obey an order of the Court with which he had been served, to do or abstain from doing some particular act. For instance, if anyone ran away with a ward of the Court he was proceeded against for contempt. Then they came to the case with which Lord Selborne dealt in 1892. They were then dealing with English cases, not contemplating that people were sent to prison for disobedience of an actual order of the Court, although even in those cases the House of Lords conceived that there ought to be some restrictions placed upon the term of imprisonment of, or the amount of fine imposed on, such persons, and that there should be a right of appeal in every case. Therefore, in England there prevailed a very different law from that under which the hon. Member for North Westmeath was now suffering imprisonment in Ireland. He did not quarrel with the suggestion of the right hon. and learned Member for

Dublin University, that if an estate was under the control of the Court it might be a technical contempt of Court for a person to do anything which would prejudice that estate. But it was contrary to the English practice, and contrary to the general idea of the law, to punish a man for contempt of Court when he might be perfectly ignorant that he was doing anything in the nature of contempt of Court. He agreed with the statement that there could not be, or ought not to be, contempt without intent. Therefore, the hon. Gentleman was quite right in putting the case that it seemed unreasonable to send to prison for six months a man who did not know that he was committing a contempt of Court. That was good sound common sense and a criticism which an Englishman would pass on the law, Disobedience to the law they could all understand to be punishable and contempt also by fine or imprisonment within limitations as to the amount of the time of imprisonment and the maximum of the fine. But he went beyond that and said that justice required that a person should not be punished for contempt unless he knew that he was guilty of this particular kind of contempt. Therefore, in his opinion, the present state of the law required definition and limitation. It had been suggested by the right hon. Gentleman that the hon. Member for North Westmeath got six months' imprisonment from Mr. Justice Ross because he as Chief Secretary had neglected his duty. He had the pleasure of the acquaintance of Mr. Justice Ross, and believed he was a man who strove to do his duty as a Judge and a lawyer. Therefore the idea that it was quite possible Mr. Justice Ross thought it his duty to vindicate law and order because he had failed in the discharge of his duty as Chief Secretary never crossed his mind until it was raised by the speech of the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. JAMES CAMPBELL said he had never hinted, even in the most remote way, anything of the kind. What he did say was this: that the hon. Member for Sligo had said that if the hon. Member for North Westmeath had done this on the other side of the fence, he would be subject to the ordinary law of the land, and he pointed out that for nine months he had done this on the other side of the fence, and had escaped the law of the land.

MR. BIRRELL said that that was the sentence in the right hon. Gentleman's speech which had made him a little bit uneasy, and made him feel that it was eminently undesirable that the law of contempt which was a very special law, which weak Judges were very fond of, but which strong Judges confident in their powers, their knowledge, and their strength, were slow to put into operation, should be used in that way. It was because he thought it would be a very lamentable thing if it were suggested that the law of contempt of Court was to be made a sort of balance to enable Judges to equalise things in the maintenance and observance of the ordinary law, and that only made it more desirable that this most arbitrary and most opposed to liberty kind of thing should be confined and defined as strictly as possible. However, they were all agreed that the terms of this Motion were of a character that the House of Commons was bound to accept. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman was quite right in dragging in the supposed opposition of some Gentlemen below the gangway to an Act only just passed, giving an appeal in criminal cases. He did not know whether Gentlemen below the gangway were opposed to that measure or not, but that measure was only passed last year. It was passed in spite of a great deal of opposition on the part of English lawyers, and he believed almost the whole of the British bench were opposed to it. Everybody had agreed that this matter of contempt of Court had nothing whatever to do with the general right of appeal in criminal cases. He was a strong advocate of the Bill that passed recently, giving an appeal in criminal cases under certain conditions. He would listen with curiosity to know why Nationalist Members objected to it, but it had nothing to do with dealing with this particular excrescence, this particular and most limited subject. Therefore he thought it was a pity that the right hon. Gentleman should have introduced that into his speech. He understood he would not oppose a short Bill having for its object the limiting of the sentence, the fixing of the fine, and giving the right of appeal. All lawyers were in favour of a right of appeal. He could not help thinking that the whole House would agree to such a measure. He would make it his business to see whether that agreement existed in all parts of the House, and he did not deny himself the hope that among the useful legislation of the session this measure might pass *nemine contradicente*.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford) said that this was certainly a most remarkable discussion. It was not often that a Resolution moved from those benches received the practically unanimous assent of the House, and he had only risen to say just one or two practical words. He had no intention of introducing the slightest controversial element, but had risen to express his joy at the concluding words of the right hon. Gentleman. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken about this being something of a scandal, and it seemed to him that in a case where all parties were agreed and where the House of Lords had actually passed a similar measure, if time could not be found to pass an uncontroversial measure of this kind demanded on all sides it was not only a great scandal but would reduce not only the House of Commons but the whole of Parliament to a farce. The right hon. Gentleman had said that he hoped this matter might be set right this session; he would ask him to get the Attorney-General at once to draft a short Bill on the subject, and, giving the right hon. Gentleman on the front Opposition bench full credit for meaning what he said, and that it was not merely a benevolent expression of good will, he trusted he would support such a measure.

Mr. JAMES CAMPBELL: Certainly, if it applies to the whole country.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND assented. The Motion they had moved did not apply to Ireland only; it dealt with the law of contempt throughout the so-called United Kingdom. The Bill would be a Bill amending the general law of contempt on three points—the limitation of the sentence of imprisonment, the limitation of the fine, and the right of appeal. The precise limitation could be arranged between the different sides of the House, but no one would be inclined to go behind the limitation agreed upon in 1883 by the House of Lords. That, however, was a detail, and he thought they could congratulate themselves, if the right hon. Gentleman would promise them to have a Bill drafted and immediately introduced, in the hope that it would meet with universal assent and be passed. They would then at least have the consolation of knowing that one Irish debate, at any rate, had led to a practical result.

MR. GORDON (Londonderry, S.) said he would like to call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to one matter on which he thought he was under a misapprehension. The same law applied in England as in Ireland with reference to property in the Court of Chancery. Where there was any interference, such as interference with an auction, the Court exercised its functions, and he thought the House ought not to be under any misapprehension in reference to what took place before Mr. Justice Ross. The hon. Member for North Westmeath referred in his speech to two properties which were under the control of the Court of Chancery. He lived in the neighbourhood and knew all about it. The burden of his speech was that no persons should renew their agreements for taking this land. The rent was something like twelve or thirteen hundred pounds per annum, and there were about a score of tenants. It was to protect the people who were taking this land and also the estate that action was necessary. The owner of the property might have lost the rent if these speeches had been allowed to go on. Surely some steps were to be taken to put an end to interference with the letting of the land. Where speeches were made in other places, no attempt was made to interfere with the hon. Member, but that would have been no justification for Mr. Justice Ross' allowing them to pass over cases in which there was interference with the property under his control. He thought that upon examination and inquiry, it would be found that in every single case Mr. Justice Ross exercised the greatest care and discretion in applying the law and only applied it where absolutely necessary to protect the property under his care.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG said he objected to the Resolution as it stood. If it was for the general welfare, quite apart from the question of the imprisonment of the hon. Member for North Westmeath that this Motion was brought forward, he could not conceive that the hon. Member who introduced it would have any objection to leaving out the words "especially in view of recent exercises of that jurisdiction in Ireland." If he did object to it, he was afraid he would not be able to vote for the Motion. The inclusion of these words contained a distinct and direct rebuke to Mr. Justice Ross. He thought it was the duty of every person who desired to see law and order maintained in Ireland to do everything in his power to back up the Judges in the discharge of their duties. They had had it stated from all sides of the House that hon. Members had no complaint to make against Mr. Justice Ross for the manner in which he had acted in this case. He proposed as an Amendment the omission of the words he had quoted.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.) seconded.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the words 'especially in view of recent exercises of that jurisdiction in Ireland.'"—(*Mr. Charles Craig.*)

Question put, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question."

The House divided:—Ayes, 184; Noes, 59. (Division List No. 36.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ambrose, Robert
Armitage, R.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Barry, Redmond J (Tyrone, N.)
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, Sir J Williams (Devonp'rt
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brodie, H. C.
Brunner, J.F.L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. Annan
Burke, E. Haviland-
Byles, William Pollard
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Clancy, John Joseph
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crosfield, A. H.
Cullinan, J.
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fullerton, Hugh
Gill, A. H.
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Sir Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gulland, John W.
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Halpin, J.
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth, R.L. (Caithn'ss-sh
Harrington, Timothy
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W.E. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J.M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Higham, John Sharp
Hogan, Michael
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hudson, Walter
Illingworth, Percy H.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kavanagh, Walter M.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kettle, Thomas Michael
Kilbride, Denis
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Lehmann, R. C.
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.
M‘Callum, John M.
M‘Crae, George
M‘Hugh, Patrick A.
M‘Kean, John
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Francis E. (Leitrim, N.
Micklem, Nathaniel
Middlebrook, William
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Murphy, John (Kerry, East)
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nugent, Sir Walter Richard
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearson, W.H.M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Reddy, M.
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rowlands, J.
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scott, A.H. (Ashton under Lyne
Seddon, J.
Seely, Colonel
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Sheehy, David
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim, S
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr
Thompson, J.W.H. (Somerset, E
Tomkinson, James
Verney, F. W.
Wadsworth, J.
Walters, John Tudor
Waring, Walter
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williamson, A.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Baldwin, Stanley
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Beach, Hn. Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bull, Sir William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.

Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hon. Victor C.W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Clark, George Smith (Belfast, N.
Clive, Percy Archer
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Captain James (Down, E.)
Dalrymple, Viscount
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Fell, Arthur
Fletcher, J. S.
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J.
Gretton, John
Guinness, Walter Edward
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Lockwood, Rt. Hn. Lt.-Col. A.R.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S.
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Percy, Earl
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sheffield, Sir Berkeley George D.
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith, F. E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Charles Craig and Mr. Lonsdale.

Main Question again proposed.

Mr. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): Before the Motion is put finally I wish to make it perfectly clear that, while we accept the general decision at which the House has arrived, as argued by both the Ministers who have spoken, we do express regret that the Government have not seen fit to accept the Amendment to omit these words, inasmuch as neither of the Ministers, not even the Attorney-General, who is not slow as a rule to argue cases which find favour with gentlemen below the gangway, has attempted to justify these words, namely, that the necessity for this reform lies in any administration of the law in Ireland. The justification for my intervention would be found in this comment which I heard below the gangway immediately after the numbers were announced: "Not a friend is to be found above the gangway for Mr. Justice Ross." If that is the comment made in this House, what is likely to be the kind of comment or criticism passed on our action in Ireland, where some will consider that this involves the condemnation of the action of an Irish Judge? I only intervene in order to remind the House that the representative of the law in Ireland in this House, the head of the Irish bar, and the chief Minister for Ireland, have both disavowed in the most explicit terms any association with any charge against Mr. Justice Ross in the administration of the law in any case, and particularly in the one which we have debated, and therefore it is surprising that the Government were not prepared to accept the Amendment which was the logical conclusion of their own speeches, and which would have expressed the views that they had themselves given utterance to, namely, that an amendment of the law is necessary. Further, when it was suggested by my right hon. and learned friend beside me in the form of an interruption, that his assent to the reform must be conditional upon applying to the whole of the United Kingdom, the Government immediately assented, and yet they are going to put on the Paper a Resolution which contends that this reform is necessary in consequence of what has taken place in Ireland. It is a most illogical conclusion to arrive at. I do not desire to carry on the debate. Everything that I would desire in regard to the general question has been said by my right hon. friend, and I am of course not competent to discuss the legal aspect. There seems to be a general desire that there should be an amendment in the law, and so far as I have ascertained all lawyers in the House agree. With all the respect which I honestly profess for the law and the bar, I am a little suspicious when I find lawyers of all parties, lawyers past and lawyers present, all deciding that some change in the law is necessary. It does not augur well for the litigants and for those who may come within the limits of the law. As I understand there is nobody prepared to resist this change in the law, I certainly should not offer any resistance to it. But in assenting to the Resolution, I must not be supposed to assent to that part which appears to censure the administration of the law by certain Judges in Ireland.

Main Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 181; Noes, 66. (Division List No. 37.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Allen, A. Acland (Christchurch)
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Ambrose, Robert
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barnard, E. B.
Barnes, G. N.
Barry, E. (Cork, S.)
Barry, Redmond J. (Tyrone, N.
Bellairs, Carlyon
Belloc, Hilaire Joseph Peter R.
Bennett, E. N.
Berridge, T. H. D.
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Black, Arthur W.
Boland, John
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brodie, H. C.
Brunner, J.F.L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. Annan
Burke, E. Haviland-
Byles, William Pollard
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Clancy, John Joseph
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E. Grinst'd
Cotton, Sir H. J. S.
Crean, Eugene
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Crosfield, A. H.
Cullinan, J.
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Edwards, Clement (Denbigh)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Esmonde, Sir Thomas
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Farrell, James Patrick
Fenwick, Charles
Ffrench, Peter
Fiennes, Hon. Eustace
Flavin, Michael Joseph
Flynn, James Christopher
Fullerton, Hugh
Gill, A. H.
Glendinning, R. G.
Glover, Thomas
Goddard, Sir Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Greenwood, Hamar (York)
Gulland, John W.
Gwynn, Stephen Lucius
Halpin, J.
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harmsworth, R.L. (Caithn'ss-sh
Harrington, Timothy
Harvey, A. G. C. (Rochdale)
Harvey, W. E. (Derbyshire, N.E.
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazleton, Richard
Healy, Timothy Michael
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Higham, John Sharp
Hogan, Michael
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hudson, Walter
Illingworth, Percy H.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire
Jowett, F. W.
Kavanagh, Walter M.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kettle, Thomas Michael
Kilbride, Denis
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamont, Norman
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Lehmann, R. C.
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
MacVeagh, Jeremiah (Down, S.)
MacVeigh, Charles (Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kean, John
Meagher, Michael
Meehan, Francis E. (Leitrim, N.
Micklem, Nathaniel
Middlebrook, William
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morton, Alpheus Cleophas
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Nicholls, George
Nolan, Joseph
Nugent, Sir Walter Richard
O'Brien, Kendal (Tipperary Mid.
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Connor, John (Kildare, N.)
O'Connor, T. P. (Liverpool)
O'Doherty, Philip
O'Donnell, John (Mayo, S.)
O'Donnell, T. (Kerry, W.)
O'Dowd, John
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly, Conor (Mayo, N.)
O'Kelly, James (Roscommon, N.
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Pearson, W. H. M. (Suffolk, Eye)
Phillips, John (Longford, S.)
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Radford, G. H.

Raphael, Herbert H.
Reddy, M.
Redmond, JohnE. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards,Thomas (W.Monm'th
Ridsdale, E. A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson,Sir G.Scott(Bradf'rd
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rowlands, J.
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Samuel, S. M. (Whitechapel)
Scott,A.H.(Ashton under Lyne
Seddon, J.
Seely, Colonel
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Smyth, Thomas F. (Leitrim,S.)
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C.(Radcliffe)
Thomas,David Alfred(Merthyr
Thompson,J.W.H.(Somerset, E
Tomkinson, James
Verney, F. W.
Wadsworth, J.
Waring, Walter
White, Sir George (Norfolk)
White, Luke (York, E. R.)
Whitley,John Henry (Halifax)
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williamson, A.
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Captain Donelan and Mr. Patrick O'Brien.

NOES.

Baldwin, Stanley
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Beach,Hn.Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bignold, Sir Arthur
Bowles, G. Stewart
Boyle, Sir Edward
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Bull, Sir William James
Butcher, Samuel Henry
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Carlile, E. Hildred
Cave, George
Cavendish,Rt.Hn. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey-
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.)
Clark,George Smith(Belfast,N.)
Clive, Percy Archer
Corbett, A. Cameron (Glasgow)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig,Charles Curtis(Antrim,S.)
Dalrymple, Viscount
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Du Cros, Arthur Philip
Fell, Arthur
Fletcher, J. S.
Forster, Henry William
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Gordon, J.
Gretton, John
Guinness, Walter Edward
Hamilton, Marquess of
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Kennaway,Rt.Hn. Sir John H.
Keswick, William
Kimber, Sir Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Lane-Fox, G. R.
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Lockwood,Rt.Hn. Lt.-Col.A.R.
Long,Rt.Hn. Walter(Dublin,S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt Hon. Alfred
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Morpeth, Viscount
Nield, Herbert
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Parker,Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Pease,Herbert Pike(Darlington
Percy, Earl
Rawlinson,John Frederick Peel
Remnant, James Farquharson
Salter, Arthur Clavell
Sheffield,Sir BerkeleyGeorge D.
Smith,Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Smith,F.E. (Liverpool,Walton)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (Strand)
Staveley-Hill, Henry (Staff'sh.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson,W. Mitchell-(Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Moore and Captain Craig.

Resolved, That the jurisdiction of Judges in dealing with Contempt of Court is practically arbitrary and unlimited, and, especially in view of recent exercises of that jurisdiction in Ireland, calls for the action of Parliament with a view to its definition and limitation.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES (ADMISSION OF THE PRESS) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

MR. ARTHUR HENDERSON (Durham, Barnard Castle) in moving the Second Reading of this Bill said there was general agreement in all sections of the House that in the interest of the public it was desirable that by statutory right the Press should be admitted to the public meetings of local authorities. There might be a little difference of opinion as to the advisability of admitting the Press to some of the committees referred to in the Bill, but the promoters of the measure would be prepared to give serious consideration to any objections that might be urged during the Committee stage. It had been the custom for a good many years for the Press to be admitted to the ordinary meetings of public authorities, but the decision in a recent case had altered the position of the Press in the eyes of the law. The promoters of the Bill felt that in the interest of all that was good in connection with public affairs, the question ought to be settled by statute. He drew attention to the proviso in the Bill which gave power to the local authoirity by a two-thirds majority to exclude representatives of the Press. He thought this should be sufficient to satisfy the opponents of the measure. He begged to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Sir F. BANBURY (City of London) admitted that there was a great deal to be said for the Bill, and if it had been what it appeared to be on the face of it, he did not know that he would have made any objection to it. It was now five minutes to eleven and from the few moments study he had been able to give to the Bill he was convinced that the question was one which ought to be very carefully considered before the House committed itself to the Second Reading. He expressed disapproval of the proposal that a local authority should have power to exclude the Press by a two-thirds majority. It seemed to him that the Press ought to be admitted or they ought not. There were other matters which deserved the serious consideration of the House, because the Bill went very much further than was apparent on the face of it. He called attention to Subsection 2 of Clause 1 placing on the clerk of the local authority, or other responsible officer, the duty of sending notice to a newspaper of meetings on receiving a written request from the editor. He should have thought that that was outside of the power implied by the title of the Bill.

Mr. ARTHUR HENDERSON: May I say that we are prepared to consider that in Committee?

Sir F. BANBURY said his point was that the Bill ought never to have been brought in in this state. The very first essential in a Bill was that all its provisions should conform to the title, and it was a dangerous precedent to allow a Bill to pass the Second Reading which contained provisions which did not conform to the title. If the hon. Member who moved the Second Reading did not attach any importance to Sub-section 2 of Clause 1, why was it put in the Bill? If the hon. Member would withdraw this Bill and bring in another providing for the admission of the Press to meetings of local authorities, he would have his support.

And, it being Eleven of the Clock, the debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed To-morrow.

INCEST BILL.

Read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

Adjourned at four minutes afte
Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, 11th March, 1908.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Cambrian Railways. Petition of the Cambrian Railways Company under their Common Seal, praying for leave to bring in a Bill for enabling the Cambrian Railways Company to raise further money by the creation and issue of debenture stock, together with a copy of the proposed Bill annexed thereto; read, and referred to the examiners.

Fishguard and Rosslare Railways and Harbours Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The Orders made on the 19th and 26th of February last discharged, and Bill committed.

Tramways Order Confirmation (No. 1.) Bill [H.L.]. A Bill to confirm a Provisional Order made by the Board of Trade under the Tramways Act, 1870, relating to Manchester Corporation Tramways—Was presented by the Lord Granard (*E. Granard*); read 1ª; to be printed, and referred to Examiners. (No. 26.)

Rhymney Railway Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The Orders made on the 19th and 26th of February last discharged, and Bill committed.

Great Western Railway (Superannuation Scheme) Bill [H.L.]. Reported, without amendment.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY.

Revised forms of attestation for men enlisting into the Territorial Force. Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

SMALL LANDHOLDERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Order of the Day for resuming the adjourned debate on the Amendment of the Earl Graham (Duke of Montrose), to the motion that the Bill be now read 2ª, viz., to leave out all the words after "that" for the purpose of inserting the following Resolution, viz., "This House, while desirous of facilitating on sound economic principles the extension of small agricultural holdings in Scotland, and of considering such amendments of the Crofters Acts as are shown to be required, declines to pass a measure (1) which unnecessarily extends the provisions of the Crofters Acts throughout Scotland; (2) which establishes a Land Court for the whole of Scotland; and (3) which does not enjoy the general approval of the agricultural interests proposed to be affected."

LORD HERSCHELL: My Lords, I feel sure that you will believe me when I say that it is with the utmost diffidence that I approach this thorny question of Scottish land reform, more especially as I am not myself a Scotsman; and, if anything were needed to bring home to one the enormous difficulties which beset one's path, it would be the extreme conviction with which diametrically opposite views have been expressed by noble Lords in this House. One thing, however, has struck me in the course of these debates, and that is the general and earnest desire which has been manifested for some settlement of this question. I cannot but feel that this fact must enhance the regret which would be occasioned if all the time and trouble which have been given to the measure should be thrown away and the Bill not be given a Second Reading.

There is a further aspect which I think no one can have failed to notice who followed the debate last year in your Lordships' House. One point which was then brought forward and considerably emphasised has up to the present not been alluded to in this debate. I refer to the alternative of purchase for hiring. Indeed, matters have changed to such an extent that a Bill which has as its principle compulsory hiring has even been brought in by a Member of the Opposition, and been given a Second Reading in this House. I was also struck, in listening to yesterday's debate, with the unpreparedness of noble Lords opposite for the attitude adopted by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack. The noble Duke who moved the Amendment at present under discussion had obvious difficulty in adapting his speech to the altered circumstances of the case, and he proceeded to make an oration which one cannot but feel would have been more suitable for the debates last year or the subsequent debates in another place. There was, however, one indication that his words had been revised more recently—I refer to the allusion to the autumn campaign of the Government in Scotland, which he described as a complete failure. With that characterisation I confess I feel bound to disagree.

The noble Duke cited various authorities in support of his opinion, among others the Chamber of Agriculture of Scotland. Now the Chamber of Agriculture never supported the introduction of the English Bill into Scotland, nor did it support the introduction of county councils into the present Bill. Another authority which was cited in the debate was the Report of the Commission sent to Denmark to inquire into the existing conditions of agriculture in that country. This authority, again, appears somewhat faulty, for the Report, being based on the theory of purchase, disagreed just as much with the English Act as it did with the Scottish Bill. The noble Duke also quoted as an authority the East Lothian Farmers' Club, but I find that on 18th April last year this very club carried a resolution in favour of the Government's policy, the one dissentient voice being that of the factor of Mr. Balfour. A prominent instance of the urgent desire which certainly does exist for the passing of the Government's measure was furnished by Caithness and Sutherland in particular where, at the triennial county council elections, which, opportunely, took place last December, occasion was taken to unseat the entire number of the representatives because those gentlemen had, somewhat rashly, and on their own initiative, passed a resolution condemning the Government's policy, and they were in every instance replaced by gentlemen whose avowed opinions were in favour of this Bill.

This incident in the campaign has given me, at any rate, food for consideration, and I cannot help feeling that it might perhaps be well for noble Lords opposite to also pause. What a vista of disastrous possibilities opens before us if, as certain noble Lords desire, the entire administrative machinery of the Bill is placed in the hands of the local authorities! We have but to go one step further in imagination to picture to ourselves the time when the most important plank in the platform of candidates for county council honours would be the alluring prospect of the establishment of small holdings on the wooded slopes of Buchanan, on the lawns of Beauly, and in the parishes of Camperdown; and I can show your Lordships that, if local authorities were to be made the administrators of this Bill, the electorate would not be slow in discovering that they could not place that implicit faith in the administration of the measure provided that county councils were constituted in the future as they have been very largely in the past.

May I cite one instance? Last summer the Board of Agriculture sent round circulars to the various county councils asking them to form committees with a view to ascertaining the extent of the demand for small holdings. The County Council of Argyllshire formed a committee as requested, and, almost simultaneously, an association was formed in the same county with the object of combating the Government's Small Holdings Bill. I am given to understand that subsequently, when the names transpired, it was found that the list of gentlemen who formed the committee for inquiring into the demand for small holdings, and the list of the gentlemen who formed the association for combating the creation of small holdings, were identical. We on this side of the House certainly do not desire to place the administrative machinery of this Bill in the hands of the local authorities. We do not think that such a course would be either popular or practicable, for, if the county councils were to have the control, it follows necessarily that the financial burden must also be placed on the rates; and will any noble Lord opposite suggest that the ratepayers of Scotland are anxious to assume this new financial liability?

Yesterday we had an extremely interesting and powerful indictment of the Bill from the noble and learned Lord of Appeal, Lord Robertson. There was one point in his speech which struck me as containing, if I may be allowed to say so, somewhat of an inaccuracy. He stated that the Act of 1886 did not distinguish between Highland and Lowland, but between crofting and non-crofting parishes. It is perfectly true that the Act of 1886 did distinguish between crofting and non-crofting parishes, but surely it is difficult to say that it did not distinguish between Highland and Lowland when we remember the fact that at the time of the passing of the Act there were crofting parishes which did not come within the scope of the Act. The noble and learned Lord was at that time the Parliamentary representative of the County of Bute, and it is a matter of common knowledge that the Island of Arran contains an agricultural population almost exclusively crofting in its character, its habits, and its traditions. Indeed, it was the knowledge of the existence of crofting parishes outside the seven crofting counties which induced the Ministry of the noble Earl, Lord Rosebery, to introduce in 1895 a Bill for extending the Act of 1886 to the eight additional counties in Scotland which were known to contain crofting parishes.

When crofterisation is spoken of, one of two things is meant — either that crofting tenure shall be applied to the Lowlands, or that persons who in point of fact are not crofters shall be included in legislation as if they were. As regards the first interpretation, no complaint has been made of the conditions of tenure in this Bill—conditions which, in substance, are the same as those in the English Act, or, at any rate, very closely analogous thereto. A tenure of this kind, when once the principle of compulsory hiring is conceded, must be of a certain type, and that type is common to the English Act and the Scottish Bill. With regard to the bringing in of persons who are not crofters, it is true that this is a distinction, and, as such, contrasts with the English Act. It is admittedly an extremely difficult question, and one which in itself would be sufficient to provide material for an entire debate. But it is still true, as the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack said yesterday, that up to the present no suggestion, no shadow of a hint, of Amendment on this point has been made, and consequently it is impossible to say more than was said by the noble and learned Lord yesterday — namely, that the Government are ready and even anxious to meet in a reasonable and conciliatory spirit any reasonable and fair Amendment that may be proposed.

If your Lordships give this Bill a Second Reading your power of throwing it out at a later stage would be in no wise impaired; and I cannot but express the hope that even now you may see your way to give the House an opportunity of considering and discussing Amendments. Even if the worst must happen, and if the heated opposition of noble Lords opposite can in no way be appeased, we can, at any rate, comfort ourselves to a certain extent by the reflection that the time and labour which have been expended on this measure have not been altogether lost, since we have succeeded in so far arousing public interest and educating public opinion as to have induced noble Lords opposite to produce an alternative land policy, after a silence on their part extending over no less a period than twenty years.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: My Lords, before I address a few words to your Lordships on this Bill, I am sure you will all join with me in welcoming the noble Lord who has just sat down, and who, with the exception of seconding the Address, has not, I believe, previously spoken in your Lordships' House. We all remember his father, and we trust that the noble Lord will worthily follow in his father's footsteps; and if we owe the noble Lord nothing else for the speech he has just made, we owe thanks to him for having addressed himself to the Bill from the Ministerial side. We have more than once complained that there is a great paucity of speakers on the other side of the House to defend the provisions of this Bill.

As your Lordships know, I addressed you only a short time ago on this subject, and I thought it would not be necessary for me to say anything on this occasion; but my name was so frequently mentioned yesterday, and in so many connections, that I cannot refrain from saying a few words to your Lordships with reference to the debate upon this Bill. When I introduced my Bill a few weeks ago the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council deprecated my action, and said that if private Members were to continue to behave in this way and to introduce Bills on public subjects when Government Bills were shortly expected to reach this House he did not know what was to happen. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack rose to support his colleague, and he did so by differing from him entirely. He said he did not regret the introduction of my Bill, and, although he joined Lord Crewe in saying that that was not the time to debate the subject, he promised that when the Government Bill was before the House there should be a full and thorough debate upon the whole question.

It will be in your Lordships' recollection that an appeal was made to the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack, I think by my noble friend Lord Balfour of Burleigh, to give us, when he moved the Second Reading of this Bill, some reasons for its introduction, and to inform us on what inquiry and on what demand it was founded. I listened yesterday with great attention, as all your Lordships did, to the long and eloquent speech which the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack delivered, but not one reason, so far as I could hear, did he give. He spoke, as he had spoken before, of the evils of depopulation, but he guarded himself by saying at the same time that this was one of many means by which those evils might be averted. But, further than that, he gave us not one tittle of proof that there was any demand for this Bill. We are therefore driven back to this. The only person that I know of who has given a reason for the introduction of this Bill is the Secretary for Scotland. He said that he founded the Bill on the success of the Crofters Acts. Is it certain that the Crofters Acts have been a success? I think it is a matter which is open to doubt, and it is quite possible that on some future occasion I may have to trouble your Lordships on that subject.

In the meantime we have the recent Report of an independent Commission on this subject. Lord Herschell was mistaken in supposing that it was the Danish Report that was alluded to. He was, no doubt, misled by the fact that several of the members who were on this Commission had been members of the Danish Commission, but this was a Report made by them after inquiring independently into the condition of the crofting districts. I will not trouble your Lordships by going at any length into their Report, because it is public property and you can read it for yourselves; and I trust your Lordships will read it before you accept the statement that the Crofters Acts have been an unmitigated success. The Commission in their Report, say—

> "Our general conclusion as to the working of the Crofters Acts in the districts where they apply is that they have made possible a considerable improvement in crofters' houses, given independence to the people, and in some cases stimulated improvement in farming; but they have not, in point of fact, in the course of twenty-one years created a successful or prosperous agriculture. It may very well be the case that economic and other circumstances make it impossible for any agrarian change to bring about this result in the crofting districts, but the fact remains that the crofting system as it exists at present furnishes no possible indication of its capacity to bring about agricultural prosperity. We found no evidence that the Crofters Acts had served to arrest rural depopulation."

The Commission went on to say—

> "In considering even the limited degree of success which has attended the working of these Acts, it ought not to be forgotten that their influence has been augmented by the Congested Districts Board. The crofting system has, in fact, received a degree of external support much greater than has been given to agriculture in other parts of the country."

If your Lordships will read that Report you will see that it speaks most unfavourably of the results of the Crofters Acts. I was very much surprised that the Secretary for Scotland should have read a casual sentence out of the Report in support of his statement that they approved of the Crofters Acts. Any one who will read the whole of the Report will see that that is not a fair construction to place upon it.

Further, there are the Commissioners of the Congested Districts. What do they say in their last Report? On the subject of repayment of loans they make this statement—

> "Serious attention has been given to the generally backward state of the payments made by purchasers of holdings from us

The Earl of Camperdown.

towards the annuities by means of which the loans are repaid, principal and interest, in fifty years."

Your Lordships will remember that the instalment of purchase is 25 per cent. lower than would be a fair rent, and, therefore, it is not in any way the fault of purchase that these persons do not meet their payments. It is because they are not prepared to pay anything. The Commissioners print details of the accounts for each holding in the two oldest schemes, including Barra, carried out by them, and they conclude by saying—

> "We have thought it our duty to intimate that, unless there is an immediate improvement in this respect, steps will have to be taken to enforce payment or to foreclose."

I shall look with some curiosity to the next Report; but unless the experience in Barra is very different from that which Lady Cathcart has had in that island, it is most improbable that any improvement has taken place in regard to that matter.

Although the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack did not give us any reason for the introduction of this Bill he did make a comparison between the Government Bill and my Bill—or rather the English Act, as it would be better described; and it seemed to me that he pushed that comparison so far as almost to prove too much. He said that compulsory hiring and dual ownership were to be found in both Bills, the compensation to the landlord was almost the same, and the conditions of tenure were rather more favourable to the landlord in Mr. Sinclair's Bill than in the English Act; and, with regard to the Board of Agriculture and the valuer, he said that, after all, they were not very different from the Land Court. The noble and learned Lord proved, to his own satisfaction, at all events, that there is very little difference between the two measures. Why, then, is he so rootedly opposed to the adoption of the principles of the English Act? As they are nearly the same, should any accident happen to this Bill we shall expect the noble and learned Lord, if he is consistent, and I am sure he always will be consistent, to support the adoption of the English Act as very nearly as good for Scotland as the present Bill.

Why introduce a new system for Scotland, a system entirely different from that which we heard praised last night and which has produced thousands of eligible applicants who are ready to occupy, and are going to occupy, thousands of acres of land. What more can a supporter of small holdings want? My noble friend the President of the Board of Agriculture, with that rhetorical elegance and dexterity which is so well appreciated in this House, cut away half the ground from under the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack. According to the noble and learned Lord, what are the differences between the English and the Scottish Bills? He said the first great difference is that the county council, which is to administer the English Act, is not to be the authority under this Bill. The noble and learned Lord said the Scottish county councils have never complained. I do not know whether my noble and learned friend has any experience of county councils, but I can tell him exactly why they have not complained. It is because in every case county councils abstain from treating Bills which have anything political in them; and they have carried that to this extent, that even in the case of such a Bill as the Land Values Bill, which is essentially a matter in which county councils are vitally interested, the County Councils Association declined to petition against it, although I believe every member opposed it, and confined themselves to making suggestions for alteration in Committee. The county councils of Scotland have a great deal more ability and common sense than is attributed to them by some noble Lords in this House. They attend to their business and do it, and I think it would be a very excellent thing for the country if some other people did the same.

The noble and learned Lord complained that I had laid no stress on this point when moving my own Bill the other day; but the county councils were inserted in that Bill. I was not arguing against the Government Bill, but explaining my own. I had no desire to be out of order, as I should have been if I had discussed the Government Bill at that time. I gave the reasons in favour of my Bill, and I asked the noble Earl the Lord President of the Council and the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack to give me their reasons against it. Now is the time to attack the Government

Bill, and I say that it is a very great omission and a very great insult to the Scottish county councils not to give them duties which you give to county councils in England.

The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack said there was one more capital point of difference, and that was the Land Court. I shall have a word to say about that in a moment. But I wish to point out to him that that does not exhaust the differences between the two Bills. The noble and learned Lord skated very lightly over the most important difference of all, and that is the crofterisation of Scotland. What are you going to do? By a stroke of the pen the whole of the crofter legislation is to be extended to the whole of Scotland. For the benefit of noble Lords who may not be familiar with Scotland, let me point out what that does. It forms a separate and a favoured class. It creates a difference between all small holders in Scotland and all large holders. If a farm is 200 acres in extent it is at the present moment rated upon its value as a holding and as a whole. Cut it into four small holdings, and under this Bill it is going to be rated on the land and the land alone. Is not that creating a favoured class. The crofters are a favoured class; but what reason has been given for saying that all small holders in Scotland are to be a favoured class for the future?

Then with regard to tenure. This Bill gives fixity of tenure. Very little notice was taken of that point. What is the reason for giving fixity of tenure? You have not given it in England. If fixity of tenure is necessary for small tenants in Scotland, why is it not necessary in England; and, if it is not necessary in England, why should it be necessary in Scotland? The reason given by the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack struck me with some surprise. He said—

> "We believe the tenant will find the means for effecting improvements himself, and will do them more economically and better; the rent will be more safe, and the conditions better for all."

I would like to know on what experience that statement is founded. If the noble and learned Lord has had experience of small tenants and that is his experience of them, of course I accept it; but I appeal to noble Lords as to what has been their experience when improvements have been left to small tenants. It must be remembered that they are tenants. The magic of property is kept away from them by this Bill. They are tenants; but owing to the fact that they are to have fixity of tenure it is believed by His Majesty's Government that they are going to do these improvements more effectually and economically. My own experience is that when small tenants have improvements to do they are not done at all. They are not, of course, going to lay out any money. The noble and learned Lord may believe otherwise, but all I can say is that people are very credulous sometimes when there are things they wish to believe.

The Earl of Camperdown.

We are asked to make these revolutionary changes in the law affecting Scottish agriculture without any reason whatever being given. Mr. Sinclair has but an exiguous acquaintance with Scottish agriculture, but he has a much larger acquaintance with Scottish votes, and it appears to me that this Bill is merely a vote-getting Bill. It is an appeal to the ploughman. He is told that he will get small holdings and will derive good out of them. The noble Duke, in moving his Amendment, quoted some "heckling" of the Scottish Secretary in Forfarshire, and I should like also to quote what Mr. Sinclair said at a meeting near Dundee on 16th December. A Mr. Bell asked to be informed whether the money required for the erection of buildings and equipment would be granted free to the small holder. Mr. Sinclair replied—

> "Yes, in a sense all the money required for equipping the land, fencing, and making access; that is the money we propose to spend on the holding. It does not necessarily go to the landlord or the tenant, but is spent in preparing the ground. When it comes to houses and buildings we are to lend the small holder money at the lowest possible rate."

Does that appear in the Bill? No. If it is the intention of the Government that that money is to be given to the small holder I contend it ought to have appeared distinctly in the Bill.

The Bill says that assistance may be provided for the purpose of dividing, fencing, or otherwise preparing or adapting the land, making occupation roads or executing other works, such as works for the provision of drainage or water supply, or erecting or adapting a dwelling-house or dwelling-houses or other buildings, or for any similar purpose, and that the Agricultural Commissioners may provide such assistance by way of loan, or, except as regards dwelling-houses or other buildings, by way of gift. I understand perfectly what will happen. These Agricultural Commissioners, most respectable men with still more respectable salaries, are to be appointed. I can assure noble Lords that there are a great many expectant Radicals. Lord Rosebery said he knew the sort of men who would be appointed. I think I know them too. And what will be the result? The wink will be tipped from the Scottish Office that this money is intended to be given, and, naturally, they will exercise their option in that way. What I want to know is this. Are small holdings in Scotland to be conducted on economic principles as in England? In England it is laid down that they are so to be conducted, but there is nothing of the kind laid down in Scotland. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack insisted upon the judicial functions of the Land Court; but why, unless decrees are to be delivered in that almost unknown tongue, is one member of the Court to be required to speak Gaelic?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: That he may be able to understand witnesses speaking in their own language.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: Where are they to come from? From the Highlands to Edinburgh?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: In Wales there have been difficulties from a Court not understanding Welsh witnesses, and the reason for a member of the Court knowing Gaelic is simple. Of course the Land Court will deal with the Highlands as well as the Lowlands, and it is, therefore, desirable that one member should be able to speak to a witness in his own language. There is nothing beyond that; it is a reasonable proposal.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: Are the Judges to go on circuit? My conception of the position is that it is the Agricultural Commissioners who are to go on circuit. Who are to go to the various districts and collect the facts upon which the Court will decide?

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: Of course they will have to go, and so will the members of the Land Court go into the country, because they will have to do the work of valuation and rent fixing.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: I am very much obliged to the noble and learned Lord for that explanation, because we are getting to understand the position of the Land Court. The Land Court is not going to be exclusively judicial, but is to exercise functions which it is impossible to distinguish from administrative functions. That is the position. Just let us see what they are to do. They are to settle what land one or more holders may respectively be allowed. How are they to do that without seeing the land, and, if they inspect the land, how can they act other than as a valuer does in England? Then they are to settle what is the fair rent for each new holding. How can you settle that point without going into all the circumstances? They are to discharge functions that on a private estate are performed by owner or agent, and it is impossible to say that those functions are judicial. In England the Board of Agriculture and the valuers are between them sharing the very duties which are to be discharged by the Land Court, and my noble friend and his valuers are at this moment settling questions in Scotland with perfect satisfaction to all concerned, under the Act of 1900. Why do you depart from the principle of the Act of 1900? No reason of any kind has been vouchsafed to us.

The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack said he did not know whether it was really the view of many that a valuer was preferable to a Land Court. If that question were put to me, I would say that anything in the world would be better than a Land Court, and that in dealing with land anything in the world would be better than lawyers. A litigious landlord is a bad landlord, and a litigious tenant should be got rid of as soon as possible; neither landlord nor tenant ever made anything by going to law. This Land Court is, we are told, to administer £100,000. What is going to be the cost of it? There is a salary of £2,000 a year for the Chairman, and £1,200 for four other members; then there are to be assessors, surveyors, law agents, and valuers as approved by the Treasury. You can put them down at anything you like. Then we come to the Agricultural Commissioners. Their salaries are not yet fixed, but I have no doubt they will be eminently respectable. There is £6,800 for the Land Court, as much as you like for the assessors, and what sum shall we say for the Agricultural Commissioners? Do you think the whole thing will be done for £15,000 a year? And £15,000 to administer £100,000 a year! I hope the taxpayers will like this. I might mention that this proportion of cost by no means exceeds that of the Crofters Commission and the Congested Districts Board. The amount of rent which the Commissioners revised was about £3,000 and they did it in six years at a cost of £22,000! If that is the kind of Court you are going to set up, the taxpayers will suffer as well as the agriculturists of Scotland.

The noble and learned Lord said that the English Bill was accepted by your Lordships last year, and accepted with some reluctance. I quite agree. I think that Bill went further than many of us desired, but your Lordships wished to go as far as you possibly could, and it was for that reason, and that reason alone, that the Bill was passed. But this is a very different Bill. Was there any fixity of tenure in the English Bill? Was there any Land Court? And, with regard to the other provisions in the Bill, it is all very well for the noble and learned Lord to tell us that they are very much like the English Act. After all, he is a Scotsman and so am I, and he knows quite well they are very different.

*LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: My Lords, I am sure the House will allow me to join with the noble Earl who has just spoken in offering my congratulations to the noble Lord who resumed the debate this evening upon his participation in our discussions. No one who had the privilege of friendship with his father will do otherwise than rejoice to see the son taking a part in the debates of that House in which his father held so honoured a part. But, my Lords, I think the noble Lord has a grievance against those who instructed him in this matter. He candidly admitted that he did not speak from first-hand knowledge, and I am quite sure that if he had had the opportunity of thoroughly mastering the details of the position he would not have put forward the counties of Caithness and Sutherland as in any way representative of what is best in Scottish agriculture. They are excellent places and have views of their own, and it is true that in those counties there was a spirited contest at the last county council elections turning largely on the matter of small holdings, and that in those counties those who supported the Government Bill obtained majorities. But, my Lords, there were contests turning upon the same point in other counties. In Fife, for instance, the opponents of the Bill were returned, as also in Ayr and other counties.

Then the noble Lord trotted out our old friend the East Lothian meeting in April last. We know all about that meeting, and in case your Lordships have forgotten what was told you last summer I will repeat the facts. It was a meeting of the Farmers' Club, at which ten people were present. No notice had been sent that a discussion upon this Bill was to be taken. It was sprung upon the meeting and a catch vote taken, and it is true, I believe, that the only gentleman present who protested against that procedure was the factor on the Whittingehame Estate. But after this House had refused to pass the Bill last year a larger meeting of the East Lothian farmers was convened, with due notice, and my information goes to show that on that occasion the Government proposal was condemned with almost alsolute unanimity.

Before going into the main points of the discussion I want to say a word or two about the proposed separation of Scotland from the Board of Agriculture. I deprecate that separation very much, and it is not to be disposed of by a few cheap sneers on the part of the President of the Board of Agriculture as to whether or not Scotsmen are able to govern themselves. We have our own opinions upon that point. We are not usually thought not to be sufficiently patriotic, but if there is one characteristic of Scottish patriotism more dominant than another it is that it knows how to subordinate its own merely national interests when there are Imperial interests on the other side. The distinction between what should be administered in London and what should be administered in Scotland is a plain one. I speak with some knowledge and some experience, and, speaking generally, the test should be this. When the laws are the same the administration should be in the same hands and should be Imperial; when the laws are different it is reasonable that the administration should be Scottish.

Take such questions as local government or education. We have distinct systems and we have distinct offices; but in matters like those coming under the Board of Trade we rejoice in Imperial administration. The Post Office is managed from London, and could not be better managed from anywhere else. When you take such Departments as the Home Office you find the same principle carried out. All the functions of the Home Office which are purely Scottish have been transferred to the Scottish Office, even to the length of the important and most difficult duty of judging what course should be pursued in capital sentences, and that because we have a different legal system and a different set of Judges. But when you come to such questions as affect mines and factories they are all under the Home Office, as they ought to be, because you could not have a different administration of mines and factories in the two countries. It is the same with the Board of Agriculture. We have our system of fisheries, and there is a separate Fishery Board responsible in Scotland; but in the administration of the Board of Agriculture as regard agriculture itself questions arise concerning, for example, the admission of foreign cattle, which must be decided by one central authority. I do not know whether either country desires to change the present system, but I say fearlessly that, if the present system is changed, both countries must go together. Otherwise there would have to be a system of espionage in connection with every drove that passed the Border.

I pass from that point and come to the main parts of the Bill before us. I am anxious to go as far as I can with the noble Lord on the Woolsack, the conciliatory tone of whose speech everyone will recognise. I agree with him as to the importance of small holdings in any agricultural system, and as to the need of care being taken that they shall not be extinguished. I value them in themselves, but even more for the means which they afford to those in the humbler ranks of agricultural life to ascend the social ladder. Anything which will tend to strengthen that or would make it more easy will have my most cordial support. I agree with the noble and learned Lord in lamenting the depopulation of the rural districts, but I wish noble Lords opposite would look facts in the face. Some of their baser agents are going about the country constantly saying that it is the landlords who are depopulating Scotland. That is a calumny of the worst description. If and in so far as there is any decrease of small holdings—and I will deal with that in a moment—the causes which have brought it about, or are bringing it about to-day, are mainly economic causes. They are partly educational, and partly they spring from the growing distaste of the people concerned for the hard life involved in their pursuits. People will not undergo the drudgery now which they would a few years ago.

It may be that small holdings are fewer in Scotland than they were before, but neither as regards rural depopulation nor the size of holdings is Scotland different from other countries. If one had time to develop it one could show from statistics that the same causes, economic, educational and so on, are operating in other European countries, and the mere fact of the passage of this Bill, or any Bill like it, will not alter the facts. It is very easy to exaggerate the diminution that is going on. It is habitually exaggerated at the present time for partisan purposes. It is easy to allege a connection between rural depopulation and the diminution of small holdings which, in fact, does not really exist. A Government Return was published last year which I have had carefully analysed. It gave the number of small holdings in 1890 and 1906 respectively—by small holdings I mean holdings of from five to fifty acres. When discussing that Return you must first make allowance for the alteration of boundaries; but, in the main, I think that may not be taken very much into account.

Over all Scotland small holdings have increased 3·9 per cent. while, as the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack said last night, the population has decreased by a little over 4·0 per cent. In the crofting counties small holdings have increased 19·7 per cent., but the population in those counties has decreased 6·4 per cent. In thirteen counties there has been both a decrease of small holdings and a decrease of population; in two counties there has been an increase in rural population and an increase in small holdings; in four counties there has been a decrease in small holdings and an increase in population; and in fourteen counties there has been an increase in small holdings and a decrease in population. I quote these figures to show that there is no necessary connection between the number of small holdings and the increase or the decrease of the population. What is bringing about such changes as are taking place is mainly the economic causes. It depends on the price of the commodities these people produce, on their facility or difficulty of making a living, and to some extent also on the pressure of the rates which are put on agricultural land.

Will this Bill cure these evils? The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack was perfectly fair in what he said. He admitted that it would not be a panacea, but he hoped and believed its tendency would be in that direction. I, on the other hand, believe that, if you were to pass the Bill exactly as it stands, its effect would be but as a drop in a bucket of water. I do not think that it would really have the effect which its most enthusiastic supporters allege. It is constantly said that in the crofting districts the population has been maintained upon the soil. It is not so. I have shown you that over the crofting districts there has been a decrease of 6 per cent. in the population. If you could only get at the facts of school attendance you would, I believe, find that so far as children of school age are concerned there has been a very considerable decrease in those very counties; and it arises from this cause, that in the main those who are in the prime of life are moving from those counties to the centres of population. It is, however, very difficult to ascertain the exact facts, because there have been so many changes, school age has been varied, boundaries have been changed, and the general conditions have been altered.

I find between the noble Lord and myself another point of agreement. We all agree that some Amendment of the Crofters Act is necessary. But, my Lords, what is to be the real principle upon which that amendment ought to go? I submit that the real principle, the only fair principle, of such an amendment is that originally laid down by the Crofters Commission—that the tenant who has made the permanent improvements is entitled to the proceeds of those improvements; but if the landlord has made them, then I say you must not wrongfully by legislation take from one man to give to another that to which he has no right. Someone has mentioned the Act of 1895, for which the noble Earl on the Cross Benches was responsible, and it is said that because in that Act it was proposed to extend the crofting area to other counties, therefore those who were responsible for that measure are now inconsistent in opposing this Bill. But, my Lords, the circumstances are wholly different. That measure did not extend the Act to the whole of the counties mentioned in it but only to those parishes in the counties which might be held to be crofting parishes, and only to those places in such parishes where it could be proved that for a certain number of years crofting conditions had prevailed. The old fallacy of the undistributed middle is involved in reference to crofters in the Hebrides and in the eastern counties of Scotland as if the word had the same signification in both districts. But there is no similarity. The word "crofter" applied to the West of Scotland has a wholly different significance from that when applied to such districts as Aberdeenshire and Banffshire.

We have heard a great deal about the neglect of the county councils. The noble Earl who has just spoken has fully dealt with that matter, and, as I am not anxious to repeat what has been said by others, I shall pass that by with only this remark, that I think the county councils of Scotland are just as able and willing to administer such a Bill as this as the county councils in England; and as to the counties in which the increase of small holdings is most required—in the Lothians, in Fife, in Forfar, and such places—no one can say a word against the fitness of the county councils for the purpose. The dislike of endowing county councils with compulsory powers is newborn on the part of the Government. I remember that in 1889, when we were passing the Local Government Bill through Parliament, there were Amendments proposed by Mr. Munro Ferguson to give county councils compulsory powers, and a certain Mr. Reid, the then representative of the Dumfries Burghs, proposed to extend them to town councils as well. If county councils twenty years ago, when they had not so much experience, were supposed to be fit to administer compulsory powers, surely it is the height of absurdity now to say that they are not to be entrusted with them.

I pass to another matter. The Lord Chancellor made an elaborate, and, if he will allow me to say so, ingenious comparison between the powers given under this Bill and those conferred by the English Act. He was very eloquent upon the 16th Clause of this Bill, and the benefits it was going to confer on the landlord. I agree with my noble friend Lord Camperdown that the noble and learned Lord seemed to go rather too far. If the English Act and the powers contained in this Bill are so much alike, if there is the same principle of dual ownership in the two measures, surely we may ask, with some pertinence, why, if you think the two measures so much alike, you will not give us our way and let us apply the English Act to the Scottish conditions? I am not, however, going to dwell on a mere debating point of that kind; but if we see, as we think, differences of vital importance, surely if noble Lords opposite really want to get a settlement of this matter and they see no difference, it will be easy for them to allow us to have our way in regard to it.

The fact remains—and it is the great central fact which governs the whole of this part of the discussion—that under the English Act the landlord has been given a substantial and responsible tenant for a long period of years—the periods quoted yesterday by the Lord Chancellor, fourteen years and thirty-five years. The landlord knows where he is, and at the end of the term he has a responsible body to deal with, a body who can be sued, if need be, in a Court of law, and justice can be done to him and the other interests involved. But under this Bill there is no such certainty. As the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack himself said, the tenant can go at any time. That is exactly what we complain of. The process is this. He may be put down upon the land against the landlord's will; he may, in the landlord's opinion, be wholly unfit; and if he goes away at any time—and should he fail he will go—the loss will fall upon the landlord.

The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack says that the Government intend to be fair to Scottish landlords. But all their fairness, all the provisions of Clauses 7 and 16 of this Bill, are entirely subject to the unfettered discretion of the Commission, and with all respect to the noble and learned Lord, I cannot regard that body as being a judicial body. It is more largely administrative, with certain judicial functions. It will be a judge in its own cause, it will have to judge of its own policy, and it is useless, therefore, to blame us for refusing to accept what noble Lords opposite describe as an impartial court. We have grave doubts about the impartiality, and if you look at Clause 7 you will see that there is not one single act on which it is possible to call the Land Court to account. It is all *sic volo sic jubeo.* There is no appeal, no control, no independent valuation of any kind provided. It is useless in these circumstances to ask us to trust the value of our property and the interests of agriculture to the unfettered discretion of an unknown and irresponsible tribunal.

After all, there are two main and important points in this Bill. They were freely set out last night by the noble and learned Lord, Lord Robertson, but let me repeat them, so that there may be no doubt on the subject. The first is the extension of the Crofters Act to all Scotland, and the second the establishment of the Land Court. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has expressed a willingness to consider fair and reasonable Amendments; but the extension of the Crofters Act throughout Scotland, and the establishment of a Land Court on the Irish model, are proposals too serious to be left in doubt or conjecture. Are His Majesty's Government prepared, or not, to give up these two provisions?

What really is the case for this Bill? Over and over again we have tried to find out who asked for it. Has it been asked for by the smallholders themselves? Who was it who first thought of it? It certainly has not been produced as the result of any inquiry, or, as far as I know, of any demand. Indeed, I go further than that and say that it has been produced in almost ostentatious disregard of the evidence which was given before the Committee presided over by the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees in this House. My Lords, who really is in favour of it? The agricultural community of Scotland are solid against it, and the existing smallholders, so far as I know, are against it. There was a petition presented last year from the three north-eastern counties, in which it was stated that an overwhelming majority of the agricultural communities in those counties were against the Bill. It is no use, I suppose, quoting the opinion of landlords and factors, or even large farmers, because they are supposed to have only their own selfish interests at heart. But who are in favour of this Bill? We know that even the Government themselves are not unanimous about it. The noble Lord the First Lord of the Admiralty, like us, prefers the English Act.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I only prefer the use of the county councils.

*LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I will take it so, but that disposes of the Land Court. Is this House to be abolished, is the authority of the Secretary for Scotland so overwhelming that this House is to be abolished, because it happens to agree with the First Lord of the Admiralty rather than with the Minister charged with Scottish affairs? The noble Lord the President of the Board of Agriculture has never been enthusiastic about the Bill. He gave us a most delightful and amusing speech last night, but of solid argument on the main points of the Bill I think I may say his speech was nearly entirely destitute. On the first point, as to the extension of the Crofters Act to the rest of Scotland, he said it was a Scottish question with which he was not competent to deal, being a mere Englishman. I have always had grave doubts whether, when he went to Scotland in the autumn of 1906, he had ever really read the Bill. At any rate, his speeches to the Chamber of Agriculture at that time were not enthusiastic in support of it.

We have Scottish Members in the Cabinet. Mr. Asquith and Mr. Haldane have made speeches to their constituents in the recess, and here and there, now and then, they have made a cursory allusion to the Bill, but there has been no reasoned defence of it, no attempt to justify it in all its provisions. I understand that my personal friend, if he will allow me to call him so, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, is to speak this evening. The noble Earl has been silent up to this time, and therefore I do not think he can have any exuberant enthusiasm for the measure; but the House will, I believe, have an opportunity of judging for itself in a short time. One of my noble friends last night said he believed that if a ballot could have been taken of the Scottish Members the majority would have been against the Bill. He was challenged by the noble Earl the President of the Board of Agriculture, who asked, How do you know that? Well, my Lords, I can give the answer. I know a great many of the Scottish Liberal Members, and am proud to have had to deal with many of them while Secretary for Scotland. I meet them socially and hear what they say on the subject, and if they would only say publicly what many of them say in private, then the doubts of the President of the Board of Agriculture would be resolved once for all. The noble Earl said he had heard something of this kind even within the sacred precincts of Brooks's Club—a place I have always believed was more given to the support of His Majesty's Government than those similar tabernacles which I personally frequent.

Is the test not really this—Who has done the improvements? If you are going to extend the Crofters Acts, with all their conditions, to the rest of Scotland, you are depriving men of property which they have invested in the land. After I made my speech in this House last autumn, a Radical Member, a friend of mine, wrote expressing surprise. He said—

"Surely you would like to encourage a saving Scotsman to put his savings into one of your farms?"

I replied—

"No. That is exactly what I do not want to encourage, I want to encourage him to put his savings into the stock and the implements upon his holding, into the improving of the land in such a way as he is protected under the Agricultural Holdings Act. But the one thing which I will do my best to prevent him doing is to acquire any interest in the buildings or the permanent equipment of the farm."

We, as Scottish landlords, speaking generally, have equipped our holding just in the same way as the man who lets his furnished house has equipped it for a resident. Surely under those circumstances we are entitled to the market value as tested in the open market of what our investment will bring. The moment you depart from that test you are simply putting a premium upon sloth, because you will do away with the power of the landlord to see that the tenant is keeping the land in good heart and condition, and it will be the good landlord and the good tenant who will suffer and the bad tenant who will gain. We are told we speak only for landlords. Really in this matter it is the interest of agriculture that is at stake. No Land Court, however impartial, could do the same justice between man and man as to give them the right to make their bargains for themselves.

The Secretary for Scotland said that a landlord cannot understand the position and views of a tenant or a labourer on his estate because he has never been a tenant or a labourer himself. I think I can understand them perfectly, and what is more to the point, I believe they understand me; but how far are you going to carry this strange doctrine? Is a Judge of the Divorce Court to be required to qualify as a co-respondent? This is a bad Bill, but, even if it were less bad, I would hesitate to assent to the Second Reading under the circumstances in which we stand, because if we make a precedent of this kind, it will then perhaps be claimed that your Lordships have given way to the suggestion that, when the other House of Parliament passes a Bill by a large majority, and passes it twice within six months or a year, this House is therefore bound to accept it. Let the House be very careful before it assents to that doctrine. We are threatened that, if we fail to pass it, it will be worse for us and better for the Government and the prospects of their campaign. I ask the House to cast considerations of that kind entirely behind them. If I were to agree to pass this Bill as it stands I should be ashamed to go back to Scotland. If the House accepts the Bill under the present circumstances the only result will be that your Lordships will merit and will receive the laughter of your opponents and the contempt of your friends.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (The Earl of ELGIN): My Lords, I have heard suggestions of a conspiracy of silence on this Bench; reference has especially been made to myself; I can only say I know nothing of it. If in the course I took last year I was guilty of any want of respect to noble Lords opposite, I tender my respectful apology. I voted for the Bill last year, and on this occasion I am prepared to state my reasons for supporting it. I take some exception to the doctrine propounded by my noble friend who has just sat down—that we are not sincere in our action in supporting the Bill. I think it is inconvenient that noble Lords should go behind recorded facts and opinions in order to suggest that people are not acting honestly in the course they have taken. When a Bill has been introduced by the Government on its responsibility, and has been supported in the other House of Parliament by an overwhelming majority, I respectfully protest against the suggestion that it has not been brought forward honestly and fairly.

The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has, as has been admitted all round, put before the House the general principles underlying the Bill in so complete a form and in so conciliatory a manner, that I am sure no statement of mine on those general grounds could add to its chances. Therefore, I should prefer to state to your Lordships as shortly as I can certain reasons that have emerged in my own experience of agriculture in Scotland, which have led me to the conclusion that there is a want for a Bill of some such character as this. I am encouraged to take this course because I think it was followed last year by my noble friend who has just sat down. He told your Lordships that for more than forty years he had been in possession of land in Scotland and connected with its management. I am sure my noble friend would admit that my experience in such matters is exactly parallel to his own. I will not yield to him in my high opinion of the excellence of Scottish methods and the excellence of the agriculture which has resulted from it, and especially the excellence of the nineteen years lease system, which has been at the foundation of much of our agricultural prosperity in Scotland. The outstanding feature of the nineteen years lease was that for an adequate period and under suitable conditions it gave to the tenant fixity, or, if you like, security of tenure. The nineteen years lease has also in later times had this additional advantage—that by the adoption of more elastic conditions, which have been framed by noble Lords opposite, as well as by noble Lords on this side, there has been secured to the tenant something like freedom of cropping.

Therefore I would be prepared to say that wherever the nineteen years lease could be adopted in its integrity it still has great advantages. But is its position the same? Forty years ago did anyone hear of a break in the nineteen years lease? That, I am afraid, is not altogether uncommon now, and to my mind it is absolutely contrary and fatal to the principle of the nineteen years lease itself. I think breaks, and also shorter leases, are sometimes now considered preferable. What the cause of that change has been would take a considerable time to set forth, but, generally speaking, I suppose the change has occurred from the changes in supply and demand, the sources of supply, the means of communication, and the conditions of the labour market. With regard to the latter point, I will mention one case as an illustration which was suggested to me by a practical farmer. Your Lordships will know that the term of engagement of farm servants in Scotland has been yearly. The wage was paid partly in money and partly in the produce of the farm. As regards the payment of the former, six months, I think, was not an unusual interval. But my informant tells me that now all this is changed. The general rule is that the agricultural labourer demands his wage in cash and that it should be paid at intervals of, perhaps, a fortnight. The result is this, that the farmer, instead of having a hold upon the man, the wage lying in his hands, has no hold upon him at all. The young man may desert the farm at any time. All these things tend to alter the conditions of the nineteen years lease.

Another change which is more important in connection with the particular subject now before the House relates to the terms of payment. At the time I was speaking of the ordinary term of payment of his first rent by the incoming tenant was deferred as a rule for something like fourteen months. That was a great advantage to the tenant, and especially to the smaller tenant who had little capital; but in 1867 an Act was passed which took away that advantage. The additional capital requirements caused by the earlier payment of rent certainly stand in the way of foremen or ploughmen who have saved a little money and wish to start for themselves—a class whom I am sure noble Lords would wish to foster. Anything that can be done to increase the number of men who have worked upon the land in the ranks of those who own, occupy, and cultivate the land is desirable. I hope for some such result from this Bill.

Under the first sub-section of Section 7—the section which deals exhaustively with the provision of these new holdings—the method suggested is voluntary agreement. Sub-section 6 of the same clause entitles the occupant of a holding so constituted to all the advantages conferring by the Bill. I may observe in passing that it seems to me that those advantages would to a considerable extent do away with the disadvantages that arise out of the Act of 1867. I do not think the opponents of this Bill do justice to the amount of voluntary agreement which is to be found in it. Section 7 contains the machinery by which the new holdings are to be established. It is permeated with the idea of agreement, negotiation, compensation, and the rights and interests of all parties. One would suppose, from the common description of the functions of the Agricultural Commissioner, that he was simply sent out on a roving expedition to pick out the eyes of fertile farms, as the expression is. I assert emphatically that that is not the case.

If we turn to the Bill, what do we find? In the first place, the Commissioner is to consider whether the demand for small holdings does or does not exist. The fact of that demand has to be proved.

Then he has to ask the landlord what land is available, what people would be displaced by the creation of small holdings, and generally the interests affected. When all the preliminaries have been settled, he can proceed to recognise the demand. What does he do then? Again he has to apply to the landlord, and he has to urge him to carry out a scheme by agreement. Therefore, my Lords, I venture to say that agreement is the goal throughout this clause. To agreement schemes all the boons of the Bill are offered and it goes so far as this, that in the selection of the smallholders attention is in the Bill itself specially directed to be paid not only to the objections but to the preferences of the landlord. If no agreement is possible, then, and then only, can compulsion be exercised. No compulsion can be actually exercised until the case has been brought before the Court and the Court is satisfied. All parties, moreover, are to be heard.

There are differences of opinion as to the extent of the demand for small holdings, but there is none as to this—that if there is a demand there ought to be means of meeting it. Nobody put that point more distinctly than the noble and learned Lord opposite who speaks with so much eloquence and directness. I submit, therefore, that if the creation of small holdings is a desirable thing, as we are agreed it is, and if there is a demand under the Bill, we ought to be able to rely to a very large extent upon the agreement clauses. If, on the other hand, there is no demand, well, then, no harm is done. We cannot make smallholdings without smallholders, any more than we can make bricks without straw.

I come to the machinery of the Bill. I confess to a small personal difficulty. I have not yet got over the surprise with which I heard the opinion expressed by my noble friend on the Cross Benches about Edinburgh Boards. I have always been accustomed, as a brother burgess, to look to the noble Earl as the most eloquent exponent of the rights and the privileges of the capital of Scotland. Among those rights and privileges it is not unnatural to include that it is the most convenient place for the local habitation of a Board which has to deal with matters affecting the whole of Scotland. I have some diffidence in expressing an opinion, because I am at this moment, not for the first time, part of an Edinburgh Board, but I do believe that these Boards have in the past done excellent and impartial work; and I should like to bear my testimony to the invaluable services which have been rendered by members of the Scottish Bench and by other members of the Scottish legal profession in connection with those duties.

I thought that the Lord Chancellor had made it quite clear that the Land Court was a purely judicial body, and, in spite of what has been said, I still think that it is so. It has no share whatever in administration. The Agricultural Commissioners are in no sense subordinate to the Court. They are officers of the ordinary administration of the country, and therefore, in the ordinary way, they are responsible to Parliament. But it is also to be borne in mind that the duties that are proposed for the Agricultural Commissioners are multifarious, and are not confined to the administration part of the Bill. I do not quite agree with the objections expressed by my noble friend opposite to the separation of Scotland from the Board of Agriculture, and I do not see why there should be more difficulty in co-operation on the question of diseases of animals than on the question of the diseases of men, and as to the question of importation, surely that would be a question which, in any case, would have to be dealt with on the authority of the Government as a whole, and there could be no question of there being one rule for importation in England and another in Scotland.

If any system similar to that proposed in this Bill is established, it is, in my opinion, imperative that there should be a body to determine authoritatively any differences that may arise. There is no question, I think, of any interference in the management of agricultural affairs outside the provisions of the Bill; but within the Bill there is a necessity for an authority to decide matters of difference. This is no new thing, but is implied in the arbitration clauses to be found in most leases. The same principle was involved in the enactments of the Agricultural Holdings Act of 1883. It is quite true that the arbitration under that Act did not fix the rent, but it did deal with points which materially affected the pecuniary interests of landlord and tenant and all the relations arising thereout. It is worth bearing in mind that in the case of the Act of 1883 the Civil Court was introduced, because, if any difficulty arose with regard to the appointment of referees or oversmen, it rested with the sheriff to give a decision; and, more significant still, in all cases of over £100 in value there was an appeal to the sheriff, whose decision was final. I think, therefore, there should be a Court, but, speaking simply for myself, and having a liking for historical sequence in these matters, I confess I should very much like to preserve something of the spirit, and perhaps the name, of the Court Arbitral.

So far I have been speaking chiefly of new holders. I want now to say something about existing tenants, and I would point out here, also, there is an opportunity for agreement. The noble Duke opposite said that the Land Court did for the landlord what he could do for himself. It is quite competent under the Crofters Act to come to an agreement whereby that right is reserved. Under the fifth Section of the Crofters Act of 1886 agreements are recognised which take the holding out of the provisions of the Crofters Acts. Therefore, it seems to me that, assuming there is a desire to co-operate on the part of both landlord and tenant, and, for my part, I believe it would be found that there would be a great desire on the part of the tenant to co-operate with his landlord in these matters, it will be quite possible for all existing tenants to agree to remain outside the provisions of the Bill. It is possible that tenants who have made improvements may wish to have the advantages of this Bill and the Crofters Act; but I do not think there are many of them. Where, however, a landlord has made improvements, there, I hope, agreements may be come to, and I do not see any reason for wishing to discourage them. So far as the Government are concerned we are aware that there are objections strongly held to the Bill as it affects existing tenants, and we are prepared to keep an open mind and endeavour to meet, if we can, the Opposition on this point, provided, of course, an opportunity is given to us by the Bill going into Committee.

The noble Duke opposite asked the House to reject the measure, because it had not the general approval of the agricultural interests affected. After all, agricultural societies cannot pretend that they are representative of the smallholders. We all know how such societies come together, and in few of them will you find a large or adequate representation of the small holders. I have spoken all through of tenants and not of owners, and I have done so purposely, because I have a strong opinion of the view really taken by my countrymen in this matter. I venture to think that the Scottish farmer is no fool, and if he has too little capital for cultivation, the last thing he will do is to tie up part of it in acquiring the fee simple of the land. So far as my experience of him goes, if he makes money he takes a larger farm, or it is possible he may take a second farm, but I believe the cases in which he buys a farm are few and far between. He is content with his tenancy if he has sufficient fixity of tenure, and, in my humble opinion, the nineteen years lease in the case of large farms does give him the security he requires. But, for the small holder, I think something more is required, and it is the object and intention of this Bill to supply that.

It is partly because of the opinion I entertain with regard to the preference in Scotland for leasehold tenure that I doubt the expediency of the introduction of the county councils. I should be the last man to say anything in disparagement of the county councils, for I have received much kindness, both in my own county and in the County Councils Association; but I think that in undertaking the management of small leaseholdings they would be undertaking, for them, a very difficult, very onerous, and almost impracticable task.

In supporting this Bill I emphatically disclaim any intention of depreciating or damaging the system of agriculture in Scotland. It is rather my wish to do something that may strengthen its defences and outworks where time has shown a weakness. Especially I wish to give to *bona fide* agriculturists fresh opportunities. I deprecate exaggeration as to the results of this legislation on the one side or the other. Nor should we exaggerate the risks that may be thought to be involved, but which may, I believe, be minimised by prudent administration. I support the Second Reading of the Bill because I cannot but be of opinion that if fairly and sympathetically considered by the House it might pass in a form which would do injury to no one part of the agricultural interest and would be an advantage to the community as a whole.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANSDOWNE: My Lords, once again this House finds itself face to face with what I cannot describe otherwise than this luckless measure. We have to ask ourselves has anything happened, has anything been said, since it was before us last autumn, to remove the unfavourable impression which it then created? Before I attempt to answer that most momentous question let me say one word of acknowledgment as to the tone and temper of the speeches which have been delivered in support of the Bill by noble Lords opposite. Nothing could have been more moderate or considerate than their advocacy of the Bill, but I must be permitted to contrast that moderation with the very immoderate language used outside by the Government and their supporters in regard to the treatment of the Bill by the House of Lords in August last. I am almost tempted to say that His Majesty's Government, like some great painters, have two manners, a manner reserved for Parliamentary purposes, and a manner reserved for external occasions. We have, at any rate, not to-night and yesterday, been lectured because we were not prepared to pass the Bill into law last autumn, when, as the noble Earl on the Woolsack has good-humouredly admitted, it came to us "rather late in the session."

Well, His Majesty's Government have had six months for reflection, and that reflection has apparently led them to believe that the Bill as introduced last year was absolutely perfect and incapable of improvement, for it comes to us again with hardly a dot or comma altered. But since this discussion began there have been various hints that Amendments might be accepted by His Majesty's Government. A very noteworthy announcement of that kind was made by the noble Lord opposite, to whom we listened with great pleasure while he delivered a speech which reminded us of his distinguished father. He gave us to understand that any Amendment conceived in a reasonable spirit would be dealt with in a not less reasonable spirit by His Majesty's Government. I compare that announcement, evidently made with a considerable feeling of responsibility, with the announcement from the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack last night. He made a similar announcement, but he added this qualification, that any Amendment to be taken into consideration must be an amendment not destructive of the scheme of the Bill.

That, of course, raises the question what are and what are not essential principles in the Bill. Upon that point we have been left in no doubt; it has been announced by no less an authority than the Prime Minister himself, that the cardinal principle of the Bill is the establishment of a Land Court in Scotland. That and what is conveniently referred to as the crofterisation of Scotland are the bases upon which this legislation is to proceed, and it seems to me impossible, so long as those two principles are to be found in the Bill, that we can entertain overtures, no matter in how friendly a spirit they may be conceived for accepting the Second Reading of this measure. We, too, have had time for reflection, and that reflection has strengthened our belief that such a Bill will be fraught with misfortune to all whom it will affect. The persuasive speech of the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack has not diminished that conviction. That speech, if I may say so, was remarkable, not only for what it contained, but for that which it did not contain—I mean that the speech, able and ingenious as it was, made no attempt to deal with the three or four cardinal arguments upon which, throughout these discussions, we have relied in our objections to the Bill.

May I in the briefest possible language remind the House what those propositions are? In the first place, we conceive that there is an essential distinction between crofters and farmers who are not crofters. The noble and learned Lord who spoke with so much effect last night dwelt upon this point so fully that I need not further labour it. He showed to your

Lordships that what was essential in a crofter was that he should have a hereditary and prescriptive tenure, and that he, and not his landlord, should have been in the habit of making the improvements on the holding. The crofter is the man who *de facto* has already established a proprietory right upon the farm, and when you pass out of the areas in which those conditions are to be found, you meet with men who may indeed be smallholders, but who are not crofters, because they do not differ essentially, except perhaps in the amount of their rent or in the acreage of their farms, from the other tenant farmers living alongside them and holding under the agreements which are usual and customary in Scotland.

Our second proposition is this. We have denied from the first that our crofter legislation has been on the whole of a successful nature, even in those areas where it has been applied. On this point, to my mind, nothing is more conclusive than the Report of a little Commission known as the Douglas Commission, a Report which has been in the hands of most of your Lordships, and has the merit of being very concise, and, to my mind, very conclusive. What do we find from the Report of the Douglas Commission? Let us not forget that this Commission was not composed of landlords or their representatives. It was presided over by an ex-Liberal Member of Parliament, and was, I believe, mainly composed of farmers with the addition of one gentleman connected with the *Dundee Advertiser*, a very ably conducted paper, but not usually associated with landlord interests. What is the language of that Report? The Commissioners tell us that the dwelling houses in crofter areas are such as would not usually pass rural sanitary inspection. It is not, it seems, only in the slums of Glasgow that insanitary dwellings are to be found; the farm buildings are described as most primitive; in regard to cultivation we are told that there is very little reclamation; that mis-cropping is usual; that there is less improvement on crofts than on adjoining farms; and that very few of the crofts are self-sustaining. Thirty-five thousand pounds of public money have been poured annually into a district of which the rental is about £65,000 a year, and even with that liberal addition, and even with the assistance derived from the prosecution of the fishing industry, the crofter can only with difficulty eke out a living.

Then the Douglas Commission also tell us that the new crofts created by the Congested Districts Board are not prosperous. They tell us that all expenditure by landlords in the districts has not unnaturally dried up; and, finally, they dwell upon the arrangement under which the buildings erected on these crofts enjoy a special immunity from rates. They describe an instance where the rates paid by crofters only amount to an eighteenth of the whole, and they say—not without force—that the result of these exemptions is highly adverse to the success of local administration. Now with this evidence before us, I ask—Would any sane person desire to introduce for the first time a system which has results such as I have described, unless there were local circumstances of a special nature that rendered its introduction inevitable in certain very restricted parts of Scotland?

Then I wish to point out that in the speeches to which we have listened no serious attempt was made to show why it is necessary that the crofter system, even assuming it to be a much better system than we believe it to be, should be extended to other parts of Scotland. The Secretary for the Colonies indulged in very hopeful anticipations of the way the Bill might work if it became law, but I did not gather from him a single remark that went to show that there was any necessity for extending the system to parts of Scotland outside the crofter areas. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack put in the forefront of his argument, as he did last year, the necessity of doing something to meet the evils of overcrowding. That reference to overcrowding, if I may so describe it, forms a picturesque touch in the foreground of the picture drawn for us by advocates of legislation of this kind; but I hope the noble and learned Lord will forgive me when I say that I never heard anything more half-hearted than his attempt to connect the absence of security for smallholders in Scotland with the admitted evils of overcrowding in Glasgow. The noble and learned Lord is far too honest a man to wish this House to believe that if you were to pass this Bill, or any amount of Bills of this kind, you would thereby sensibly affect the evils of overcrowding. The colleagues of the noble and learned Lord are less cautious in their statements. I noticed that the Lord Advocate, in one of his speeches, said there were in round figures half a million occupants of one-roomed tenements in Scotland. How many of those occupants of one-roomed tenements would gain one jot or one tittle by the passing of a Bill of this kind?

I dismiss that argument as not really *ad rem*, and I venture to suggest that there are two propositions, both of which ought to be established to the satisfaction of the House before we are asked to pass this Bill into law. The first of these propositions is this. It ought to be shown to us that there really is some substantial difference between the farmers of England and the farmers of Scotland outside the crofting areas. In none of the speeches to which I have listened during this debate has any attempt been made to establish that proposition. Let me once again remind noble Lords opposite that when they had to legislate for agricultural tenure two years ago, they dealt with the question north and south of the border by one and the same measure.

The second proposition that ought to be made good before asking the House to pass this Bill is this. It ought to be shown that the small tenant farmers in Scotland stand in some special need of protection from their landlords. Not one word has been said in the course of this debate to show that these smallholders are really exposed to harsh or inconsiderate treatment at the hands of their landlords. But, again, I point out the difference between the language used in this House and the language used outside. This is not a moment when I am going to make an attack upon the Prime Minister; but I am bound to remind your Lordships of the statement made by him last autumn in reference to this Bill, when he told his hearers that—

> "The Liberals are striving for a more wholesome and honest and manly system, under which men may keep their independence without forfeiting their homes and their livelihood."

And he went on to speak of families actually dispossessed from their homes, of clearances and evictions, of—

> "risks that an independent man has been subject to, and is still subject to, when he crosses his landlord's wishes, it may be in regard to the management of his farm, it may be in regard to the disposal of his vote."

That was the cue given by the Prime Minister; and that cue was taken by every speaker upon Radical platforms during the so-called campaign of last autumn.

If these things are to be said either in or outside this House, have we not a right to ask what evidence there is that the tenants of Scotland are treated in this manner, that they stand in need of a more honest, manly, and wholesome system of land tenure? Surely, it would be true to say that if things of this kind are happening in Scotland the result would be that the farmers of Scotland would have risen like one man to ask for the passing of this Bill. Have they done so? We have heard of one or two meetings in obscure places, but until I am convinced to the contrary I shall remain under the impression that the agricultural community of Scotland regard this measure, if not with hostility, at any rate with absolute indifference.

But the noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack was far, indeed, from bringing any complaints of that kind against landlords for their treatment of their tenants. He put his case in a much more ingenious manner. What he told us was that it was necessary to protect the small tenant because he was being squeezed out by economic causes. He explained that what he meant by that was that the expense attending the equipment of small holdings was relatively so great that landlords were tempted to consolidate them as opportunity arose. I have considerable doubt if that is the fact, for although there was once a tendency towards consolidation of holdings, I am under the impression that in these days landlords are rather averse to having too many large farms, and are glad to see what we describe as graduated holdings, some small and some large, and some of medium dimensions. But when the noble and learned Lord observes that he wishes to prevent the absorption of those small holdings because they are being absorbed owing to the operation of economic laws, does it not come to this, that at the very moment when in Ireland we are making tremendous efforts to get rid of uneconomic holdings we are being asked here to legislate for the perpetuation of uneconomic holdings in Scotland by means of the Bill now before the House?

What I think many of us feel is that if you are indeed to try these uneconomic experiments, it is rather hard that they should be tried at the expense of the landlords. Because when we get to close quarters with the question that is what we find is to happen. The truth came out when the noble and learned Lord was discussing the question of purchase. He told us that purchase had been an unredeemed failure in Scotland; and he said there were two reasons. The county councils shrank from embarking the money of the ratepayers in unknown and hazardous enterprises. I think that was the substance of the statement. That was one reason. On the other hand, those tenants who had a little money saved shrank from investing their savings in the purchase of a small holding. So it comes to this. Because tenants have got their heads screwed on the right way, and because the county councils are jealous guardians of the interests of the ratepayers, these speculative enterprises are to be conducted at the expense either of the landlord or of the taxpayer, who is apparently to come to the rescue if things go hopelessly wrong. My noble friend the Duke of Montrose, who moved the Amendment with so much ability last night, brought out triumphantly the manner in which the financial part of this arrangement is likely to operate, and I have only to say, that both as a landlord and as a taxpayer, I object very strongly indeed to the using of funds towards which I contribute in this haphazard and speculative fashion.

Another proposition which we have affirmed remains absolutely unshaken. We hold that the particular kind of land tenure which you desire to establish in Scotland combines almost every fault which a single system of land tenure can possess. I noticed a very extraordinary statement made the other day by the Scottish Secretary. It was to the effect that some analogous system for giving security to the tenant, was to be found in most foreign countries. I hope we shall be told in what country a system at all corresponding to this can be found except in Ireland. My belief is that if you will inquire into the systems of land tenure which prevail abroad, you will find that they are based upon either complete ownership or upon hiring under the ordinary conditions of hiring. I do not know whether the President of the Board of Agriculture has made investigations into this question. He may perhaps be able to enlighten us on the subject; but, so far as I have been able to make any researches into it, I am left under the impression that in Germany, in France, and in Belgium you will find that the system where land is hired by one person to another, is that of very short leases, shorter than the leases with which we are familiar in Scotland; and that the tenant enjoys a much less degree of protection than that which every tenant in the United Kingdom already enjoys under the law of the land.

The Scottish Secretary referred to Denmark, and apparently believed that the prosperity of Denmark was largely due to a system such as he was recommending. I have referred to an interesting Report made by a travelling Committee which visited Denmark and Ireland and which affords some very useful and important information. I find that their statement is that the conditions under which land is leased in Denmark would appear to be "more stringent and binding on the tenant" than are to be found in Scotland. Until I am contradicted I shall maintain that this system which you are seeking to import into the whole of Scotland is a system unlike any other known in civilised countries and possessing almost every defect which a system of land tenure can possess.

May I say one word before I leave this part of the subject to explain why it is that we so greatly dislike such a system of land tenure? I may be told that it is not the Irish system, that you are only going to give us two instead of the three F's. I see that assent is given to that. But I ask the noble Lord to look up the debates on Mr. Gladstone's Irish Land Act. There he will find that Mr. Gladstone demonstrated to his own satisfaction, and I think to the satisfaction of most of those who listened to him, the absolute impossibility to have fixity of tenure and fair rent without those two principles carrying with them eventually free sale. Of that I have no doubt whatever.

Why is it that we are afraid of this system of fair rents? A great deal of prejudice is sometimes created by the suggestion that if we dislike fair rents it necessarily means that we want to exact unfair rents. What do we mean when we talk about fair rent? There is no such thing as rent which can be demonstrated mathematically or scientifically as the fair rent for any holding. What we mean by fair rent is not the rent arrived at by the chaffer of the market between the person who lets the land and the person who takes it, but a rent imposed on the parties by someone outside who may or may not really know very much about the true capacity and value of the land. I object altogether to the intervention of the State for the purpose of making contracts of this kind unless you are able to show me that the parties are unable to make a fair and reasonable contract themselves; and I have yet to learn that the tenant farmers of Scotland, even if their rent happens to be £45 and not £50, are unable to drive a perfectly satisfactory bargain with their landlords. In these days I do not think it is untrue to say that the tenant occupies a very much stronger position as a bargainer than the landlord, and that the idea of a landlord allowing a solvent and suitable tenant to leave his farm because he will not meet him fairly on the question of rent is absolutely inconsistent with the facts as we know them.

The noble and learned Lord was at great pains to reassure us with regard to the manner in which this question was likely to be dealt with by the Land Court which he proposes to set up. He explained that the Court was to be an irremovable body, that it was to be a judicial body so composed as to command public confidence, and that it would hear the parties in the most reasonable manner. All this would have made a great deal more impression on my mind if I did not remember that there was a time when we were told exactly the same thing with regard to the Land Court we have set up in Ireland. The three original Land Commissioners in that case were men of conspicuous position, their names were given in the Bill, and we were invariably met by the argument that with such a triumvirate nothing but justice could be expected. But what happened when these matters were inquired into, as they were afterwards by Committees and Commissions? The fact was revealed that these Land Commissioners had never heard one single original case themselves. They had not even issued instructions for the guidance of the Sub-Commissioners working under them; and the result has been to bring about a system which I am not going to take upon myself to describe again to-night, but which was described in the Report of Sir Edward Fry's Commission in words which should be attentively read by all who are in favour of reproducing in Scotland what we have already produced in Ireland. The noble and learned Lord on the Woolsack told us last night that the Land Court was, in the eyes of many of us, a *bellua ferox*. I rather accept his suggestion, and I would venture to add that, as we have the *bellua ferox* in Ireland, we had better take care to keep the Irish Channel between us and it.

Then the noble and learned Lord used a very insidious argument with the object of reconciling us to the procedure involved in this Bill. He said to us in effect:—"You landlords are already under the harrow; you have got the English harrow; it is true that the spikes of our Scottish harrow are a little longer and a little more pointed; but after all it does not make much difference to you; the one system gives you a Land Court, the other gives you valuers, arbitrators, and a Board of Agriculture; it will come to much the same in the end." Will the noble and learned Lord pardon us if we think that, upon this question concerning practical dealings with land, we who have been familiar all our lives with such matters have an opinion which is entitled to as much weight as the noble and learned Lord's opinion would be entitled to if he were enlightening us upon a question of law?

Let me, then, venture to point out what I conceive to be the fundamental difference between the position which the landlord will occupy under this Bill and that which he occupies under the English Small Holdings Act. Under the English Act, if the Board of Agriculture and the county councils desire that small holdings shall be created, the land is taken and the county council proceeds to dispose of it as it thinks fit to tenants. There may be a question as to the rent and as to other terms, but the position of the landlord in that case is not altogether an undesirable one, because he in fact obtains for his tenant a local body perfectly familar with the local circumstances of the district, perfectly solvent, and a body which is obliged to return the land to the landlord at the expiration of the term in as good a condition as that in which they received it.

But what would happen under this Bill? The landlord having upon his estate a certain number of holdings below £50 a year, or below 150 acres in extent, but in other respects not distinguishable from the rest, would suddenly find one morning that these particular tenants had had conferred upon them, by a mere stroke of the pen, a great part of the attributes of actual ownership. The landlord has no intermediary between him and the tenants, as in the case of the English landlord; he is left in direct relationship with them. The men may have been recent arrivals, perhaps birds of passage who had hired the land for a term of years, on the clear understanding that at the end of that term the parties were free to reconsider their arrangements. But the landlord is saddled for all time with such men, and although there may be many excellent reasons why he should desire to make a change in the tenancy of his holding, he cannot get rid of them except by litigation, odious, expensive, and always to be avoided if you can possibly do so.

I cannot help describing an enforced change of such a kind as one flagrantly unjust to the owners of land in Scotland. Surely we ought not to lose sight of the fact that a great part of the letting value, often by far the greater part of the letting value of these farms, which have been for generation after generation improved by the owners, is due, not to the inherent qualities of the soil, but to the outlay of the landlord and his predecessors. There is no doubt about it. I wish your Lordships would look at a memoir of the late Mr. Albert Pell, just published. You will find towards the end of it a most interesting essay on what he calls the making of the land in England. It goes to show that the value of farm land, as we know it now, far from being due to natural causes, or to what we sometimes call the unearned increment, is really due to the exertions generation after generation of those who have owned the land. The point I wish to press upon your Lordships is this. If you are to regard the landlord and the tenant as partners, the contribution of the tenant is infinitesimally small as compared with the contribution of the landlord. It is a cruel injustice, therefore, for no particular reason, to transfer the attributes of ownership from the party who has contributed most to the party who has contributed least to the enterprise.

I will quote one line from a paper written many years ago by a distinguished member of this House—the late Duke of Argyle. This is what he said—

> "It is good to increase owners, but not to destroy ownership."

It is because this Bill destroys ownership that I for one cordially dislike it. But I am afraid I must add that a great deal more is involved in this Bill than mere injustice to the landowner of Scotland. This Bill is a deadly blow to the system of agriculture which has for generations past prevailed in that part of the United Kingdom—a system of agriculture which has produced excellent results, and which is the admiration of all who study agricultural affairs. The noble Earl the Secretary of State for the Colonies went out of his way to disclaim any desire to break down the present system of Scottish agriculture. Does he believe it is possible to introduce a system of this kind into Scotland and then confine it within certain limited areas? Here, again, we recur naturally to the Irish precedent. When land legislation of this sort was first attempted in Ireland it was to be restricted to the smaller tenants. The leaseholders were to be excluded from its operation; there were innumerable other safeguards; but they are all gone now, and you have in Ireland one dead level of the disastrous system which this Bill is to introduce into Scotland. I believe this to be a Bill which will do no good to the tenants, certainly no good to the landlords, no good, certainly, to the taxpayers of this country, and I shall therefore give my support to the noble Duke behind me.

I make only this reservation. If His Majesty's Government are really prepared to alter the Bill at the points to which our fundamental objections apply—I mean, so far as it introduces the crofter system throughout Scotland, so far as it creates a Land Court in that country—if that be the intention of the Government, no doubt a new situation would arise. But nothing which we have heard has suggested to my mind that upon these vital points His Majesty's Government have any intention of giving way, and, that being so, we shall vote against the Second Reading, and we shall lay before the agricultural community of Scotland the Bill of my noble friend Lord Lovat and the Bill of my noble friend Lord Camperdown as embodying what seem to us proper and reasonable provisions for dealing with the small holdings question in Scotland. In my belief His Majesty's Government ought to be extremely grateful, and I cannot help thinking that many of them will be grateful to us, if by arresting the progress of this Bill to-night we extricate them from their entanglement with this most ill-conceived and pernicious measure.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (Lord LOREBURN): My Lords, the noble Marquess is mistaken in his anticipation that he will receive any gratitude from the Members of His Majesty's Government for the speech he has made and the action he has recommended. The noble Marquess has dashed the hope which had been entertained that some measure on this subject of such great importance might be passed by discussion and fair dealing between both sides of the House. I feel that after what he has said, after he has extinguished the light, it is hardly much use protracting this superfluous entertainment. I regret very greatly the decision at which the noble Marquess and his friends have arrived. I believe that with good will and examination of the Bill we might have arrived at a satisfactory conclusion. I am certain of this, as, indeed, all your Lordships will be certain, that this Bill or other proposals of an analogous character will again and again be brought before the attention of Parliament, and will some time or other—indeed, soon—have to be settled, because the subject is urgent, and it is common ground that it is urgent. I believe there was an opportunity of coming to a settlement this evening, and I deeply regret that that opportunity has been lost.

My Lords, the position of the Government is that we cannot be parties to the destruction of our own measure, and the substitution of some other measure in its place. We have stated in perfectly unequivocal language that we were prepared fairly to meet Amendments and suggestions. What we have been asked to do is practically to capitulate to the noble Marquess and his friends. I would ask whether any one of your Lordships in our place would contemplate doing anything of the kind. We, after all, represent the Government of this country. We are supported on this Bill by an overwhelming majority of Members of the other House of Parliament. We have a still more overwhelming majority of the representatives of Scotland upon our side, and for my part I have not yet learned to look for the sense of the country elsewhere than in Parliament—in the House of Commons which represents the country. Under these circumstances the proposal that has been made to us, which is really a proposal for capitulation, is one that no noble Lord sitting upon the Front Opposition Bench would have entertained, and you would not respect us or think us worthy of our position if we entertained it.

There are other reasons also why I feel that the resolution of the noble Marquess is unfortunate. I am not at all clear about the position of His Majesty's Opposition in regard to this Bill. Why have we not an opportunity of learning by interchange of views in this House what their position is? The step that is to be taken is impossible for us; it is unnecessary for you. If the Government had not been prepared to meet, when they were propounded, Amendments which should be reasonable and which should commend themselves to moderate and sensible men, you were in no way prejudiced by the fact that a Second Reading was granted. The Bill was still under the control of the majority of this House.

I have been asked repeatedly—Why is the Bill needed at all? My Lords, I thought that necessity was sufficiently indicated by the fact that measures have been brought in by supporters of the noble Marquess for the express purpose of dealing with this difficulty. If there is nothing requiring treatment, why were these Bills introduced? For my part, I have never dwelt on the overcrowding in Glasgow and the other great cities of Scotland as being a thing which would be largely remedied by this measure; but I say it will diminish and check depopulation, and it is depopulation which tends to increase the overcrowding. I cannot help thinking that although many of your Lordships have admitted the argument from necessity—and I do not question the sincerity of the admission—it has not been a deliberate and thought-out admission. For throughout this debate there has been apparent a dislike to every system of this kind, and panegyrics have been pronounced on free contract which are absolutely incompatible either with this Bill or the English Act. We have been told that no justification has been given for the crofterisation of Scotland. Now let us see what is meant by the crofterisation of Scotland. I suppose it means, in the first instance, setting up a particular tenure. I have endeavoured to show a comparison between the tenure set up by the English Act and the tenure set up by this Bill. Substantially and broadly they are the same, or, at least, analogous and similar. It has been said that this Bill applies to existing tenants. We were perfectly prepared to consider Amendments on that subject.

Complaint has also been made of the Land Court. Now let me see what the Land Court is. It is strictly a judical body. I believe in this Bill it is a complete mistake to say that any administrative functions are committed to the Land Court at all. They are committed to the Agricultural Commissioners. That at least is the intention of the Government, and I believe it is embodied in the Bill. You must under any system of compulsory hiring have the functions which are committed to the Land Court discharged by someone. We think it is better in Scotland, accustomed as it is to the Land Court in connection with the Crofters Acts, that it should be committed to a tribunal of men carefully selected and honourably selected, who shall be independent and who shall not be allowed to interfere in any way or have any initiative in respect to administration. I do not know whether that meets with the views of noble Lords. I am sure, if they think of it, they cannot wish that any judicial questions should be settled by persons who are under the thumb of any Department. Our view is that the Land Court will discharge those duties more independently and more efficiently than any other tribunal that can be suggested.

The last point I will refer to is that relating to the separation of the Board of Agriculture in England and in Scotland. Scotland already manages its own fisheries, its education, and other branches of administration. It would be impossible that the Agricultural Board should interfere in the actual work of setting up small holdings in Scotland from London, while the Secretary for Scotland is discharging all the other administrative duties in connection with that country. I think there is one point on which it is desirable to be perfectly explicit. A fear has been expressed lest the administration of the Diseases of Animals Act and the unity of action which is most desirable in that respect should be impaired by the passing of this Bill. It is quite obvious that it is necessary to preserve unity of administration, and we should be most anxious to introduce the necessary clauses for that purpose.

Having regard to the limits of time and to the foregone conclusions we have to face, I have gone as far as need be into these various points. I most heartily regret the decision of this House, and I think it will be the prelude of much deserved dissatisfaction in Scotland. I hope that, notwithstanding what has taken place to-night, it may before long be possible by fair dealing and good will to settle a subject the settlement of which is earnestly desired in Scotland and is, I believe, necessary to the welfare of that country.

On Question, whether the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Question,

Their Lordships divided:—Contents, 33; Not-Contents, 153.

CONTENTS.

Loreburn, L. (*L. Chancellor.*)

Beauchamp, E. (*L. Steward.*)
Carrington, E.

Chestefield, E.
Portsmouth, E

Lord Loreburn.

Athorp, V. (*L. Chamberlain.*)

Allendale, L.
Armitstead, L.
Blyth, L.
Boston, L.
Castletown, L.
Coleridge, L.
Courtney of Penwith, L.
Denman, L. [*Teller.*]
Elgin, L. (*E. Elgin and Kincardine.*)
Eversley, L.
Farrer, L.
Fitzmaurice, L.
Glantawe, L.
Granard, L. (*E. Granard.*) [*Teller.*]
Haversham, L.
Headley, L.
Herschell, L.
Lucas, L.
Nunburnholme, L.
O'Hagan, L.
Pirrie, L.
Saye and Sele, L.
Swaythling, L.
Tenterden, L.
Tweedmouth, L.
Weardale, L.
Welby, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Bedford, D.
Brandon, D. (*D. Hamilton.*)
Richmond and Gordon, D.
Rutland, D.
Somerset, D.

Ailesbury, M.
Ailsa, M.
Bath, M.
Bristol, M.
Lansdowne, M.

Camperdown, E
Carlisle, E
Carnwath, E.
Cawdor, E.
Clarendon, E.
Cranbrook, E.
Cromer, E.
Dartrey, E.
Denbigh, E.
Derby, E.
Devon, E.
Eldon, E.
Feversham, E.
Fitzwilliam, E.
Graham, E. (*D. Montrose.*)
Halsbury, E.
Hardwicke, E.
Harewood, E.
Harrowby, E.
Ilchester, E.
Lauderdale, E.
Lichfield, E.
Lovelace, E.
Lucan, E.
Lytton, E.
Malmesbury, E.
Mansfield, E.
Mar and Kellie, E.
Morton, E.
Munster, E.
Northbrook, E.
Northesk, E.
Onslow, E.
Plymouth, E.
Stradbroke, E.
Strange, E. (*D. Atholl.*)
Vane, E. (*M. Londonderry.*)
Verulam, E.
Waldegrave, E. [*Teller.*]
Westmeath, E.
Westmoreland, E.
Wharncliffe, E.
Churchill, V. [*Teller.*]
Cross, V.
Falkland, V.
Goschen, V.
Gough, V.
Halifax, V.
Hill, V.
Hood, V.
Iveagh, V.
Knutsford, V.
Llandaff, V.
St. Aldwyn, V.

Abinger, L.
Addington, L.
Alverstone, L.
Ampthill, L.
Ashbourne, L.
Ashcombe, L.
Atkinson, L.
Avebury, L.
Balfour, L.
Balinhard, L. (*E. Southesk.*)
Basing, L.
Belhaven and Stenton, L.
Belper, L.
Borthwick, L.
Brodrick, L. (*V. Midleton.*)
Burton, L.
Carew, L.
Clifford of Chudleigh, L.
Clinton, L.
Colchester, L.
Collins, L.
Cottesloe, L.
Curzon of Kedleston, L.
Dawnay, L. (*V. Downe.*)
De Mauley, L.
Deramore, L.
Dormer, L.
Ellenborough, L.
Estcourt, L.
Faber, L.
Fermanagh, L. (*E. Erne.*)
Forester, L.
Gage, L. (*V. Gage.*)
Glenesk, L.
Harlech, L.
Harris, L.
Hay, L. (*E. Kinnoul.*)
Hindlip, L.
Hothfield, L.
Inverclyde, L.
Kenyon, L.
Kilmarnock, L. (*E. Erroll.*)
Kintore, L. (*E. Kintore.*)
Lamington, L.
Lawrence, L.
Leigh, L.
Lilford, L.
Lovat, L.
Lurgan, L.
Macnaghten, L.
Meldrum, L. (*M. Huntly.*)
Middleton, L.
Moncrieff, L.
Monk Bretton, L.
Monson, L.
Mount Stephen, L.
Muncaster, L.
Newton, L.
Oranmore and Browne, L.
Penrhyn, L.
Poltimore, L.
Ponsonby, L. (*E. Bessborough.*)
Ramsay, L. (*E. Dalhousie.*)
Rathmore, L.
Rayleigh, L.
Redesdale, L.
Ritchie of Dundee, L.
Robertson, L.
Rosebery, L. (*E. Rosebery.*)
Rothschild, L.
St. Levan, L.
Saltoun, L.
Sanderson, L.
Sandys, L.
Sherborne, L.
Silchester, L. (*E. Longford.*)
Sinclair, L.
Somerhill, L. (*M. Clanricarde.*)
Somerton, L. (*E. Normanton.*)
Stanmore, L.
Stewart of Garlies, L. (*E. Galloway.*)
Templemore, L.
Teynham, L.
Tweeddale, L. (*M. Tweeddale.*)
Vivian, L.
Wandsworth, L.
Wenlock, L.
Wynford, L.
Zouche of Haryngworth, L.

Resolved in the negative accordingly, and the proposed Resolution agreed to.

Then it was moved to add to the said Resolution the following words "and (4) which provides for the transfer to three Agricultural Commissioners of the work at present undertaken by the Board of Agriculture in Scotland, whereas it is essential for the safety of the flocks and herds of Great Britain that the administrative responsibility under the Diseases of Animals Acts should remain in the hands of a single Department."—(*The Earl of Onslow*); agreed to.

House adjourned at Eight o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 11*th March*, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill (by Order.) Read a second time, and committed.

Stockport Corporation Bill. Reported with Amendments. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP B).

Sir HENRY KIMBER reported from the Committee on Group B. of Private Bills; That, for the convenience of parties, the Committee had adjourned till Wednesday next, at half-past Eleven of the Clock.

Report to lie upon the Table.

West Bridgford Urban District Water Council Bill. Reported [Preamble not proved]; Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to authorise the sale of Herne Bay Pier; and for other purposes." [Herne Bay Pier Bill [Lords.]

Herne Bay Pier Bill [Lords.] Read the first time; and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITIONS.

CHILDREN BILL.

Petition of the Temperance Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

COAL MINES (EIGHT HOURS) (NO. 2) BILL.

Petition from Birmingham, against; to lie upon the Table.

DIVORCE.

Petition from Great Yarmouth, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

LAND VALUES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Cathcart, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petitions for legislation: From Castleford; Cricklewood; Cwmbran; Llanfyllin; Sudbury; Wallingford; and Willesden; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Petersfield; and Temperance Committee of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland; to lie upon the Table.

METROPOLITAN SEWERS AND DRAINS BILL.

Petition from Islington, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Devonport; and Kilburn; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY.

Copy presented, of Revised Form of Attestation for Men enlisting into the Territorial Force [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BOYCOTTING (IRELAND).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd March; *Mr. Lonsdale*]; to lie upon the Table.

PRIVATE LEGISLATION PROCEDURE (SCOTLAND) ACT, 1899.

Order of 12th February for printing read, and discharged.

PAUPERISM (ENGLAND AND WALES) (HALF-YEARLY STATEMENTS).

Copy ordered, "of Statement of the number of Paupers relieved on the 1st day of January, 1908, and similar Statement for the 1st day of July, 1908 (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper No. 108, of session 1907.)"—(*Dr. Macnamara.*)

INVERNESS COUNTY COUNCIL AND ALLOTMENTS.

Return ordered, "of the Report of a Special Committee of the County Council of Inverness upon applications for Allotments in North Uist and Barra, made in September, 1897, together with any relative Papers."—(*Mr. Sinclair.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Amalgamation of the Coastguard and Customs and Waterguard Departments.

MR. WILKIE (Dundee): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if the Coastguard and Customs Waterguard Departments are to be amalgamated; and will the claims of the trained practical officers be fully and fairly considered for promotion to superior positions as vacancies arise.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) I have nothing to add to the statements which I have already made in the course of debate on this subject on 3rd and 10th March.

The Mercantile Marine—Treatment of Crews.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any Report has been sent to his Department with reference to the attempt made by some of the Chinese crew employed on the Liverpool steamer "Franklyn" to set fire to the forecastle of that vessel on 12th August last, two days after the ship had left Hong-Kong; whether he is aware that two of the Chinamen jumped overboard; whether any inquiries have been made into this matter; and whether a report was made in the official log-book of the ship.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) I presume that my hon. friend refers to a vessel called the "Frankby," on which a fire is reported to have occurred on 6th September last, two days before reaching Hong-Kong, but there is no reason to believe it was caused by the Chinese crew. One Chinese fireman disappeared on that date, but there is no report of another having jumped overboard. Full inquirie have been made, and proper entries made in the official log.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the fact that the crew of the steamship "Bramley," owned by the Reliance Steamship Company, Limited, allege that they have been subject to short allowance of food; whether he is aware that this vessel has been away from this country one year and four months, and that nearly the whole of the original crew have deserted from the vessel; whether he is aware that it is alleged that ten different stewards have been taken on this vessel during the present voyage; and whether the Board of Trade will cause inquiries to be made into the allegations made by the men.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The attention of the Board of Trade has been called to complaints by the crew of the "Bramley," and inquiry will be made into the matter on the return of the vessel to the United Kingdom. The owners of the "Bramley" inform the Board of Trade that a number of the crew deserted at various ports in Australia and California; but state that, so far as they are aware, there have been only two stewards on the steamer since she left England, and that a full and plentiful list of provisions is supplied to their vessels.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the complaint of the crew of the steamer "Craigisla," of Leith, who allege that they have been on short allowance of food during the present voyage of this vessel; whether he is aware that the crew complain that His Majesty's Consul at Alexandria endorsed in the official log-book of the ship the men's complaint; whether it is the intention of the Board of Trade to investigate the complaint of this crew on the vessel's return to the United Kingdom; and whether, in the event of the men's grievance being a substantial one, the Board will take proceedings against the master for failing to provide the men with a proper supply of provisions in accordance with the section of the Merchant Shipping Act.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The attention of the Board of Trade has been called to the complaint of the crew of the "Craigisla" to which my hon. friend refers. The Consul at Alexandria has been asked for a Report, and inquiry into the case will be made on the return of the vessel to the United Kingdom. Meanwhile I may remind my hon. friend that, under Section 25 of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1906, the crew can proceed against the master for compensation if he has failed to furnish provisions in accordance with the section.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the report of the court of inquiry which was held at Halifax to consider the circumstances attending the stranding of the steamer "Mount Temple"; whether he is aware that the court stated that the captain of the "Mount Temple" was in default in not using the lead for the purpose of taking soundings; whether he will state how many able seamen were signed on the "Mount Temple," and how many of them could prove three years' sea service; and whether he will cause further inquiries to be made of the officers as to whether the failure on their part to use more frequently the lead was due to the fact that they did not have a sufficient number of able seamen to take soundings in each watch.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) My right hon. friend's attention has been called to the Report of the court of inquiry held in the case of the steamship "Mount Temple," and he is aware that the court found the master in default in not using the lead. There were at least nine A.B.'s on the vessel at the time of the stranding, and as these were signed on at that rating in November last I have no doubt that they proved the three years sea service necessary to allow of their being rated as A.B. As the court found that the omission to use the lead was due to the neglect of the master, and as they do not suggest any other cause, the Board of Trade do not think it necessary to institute further inquiry into the matter.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the report of the court of inquiry held with regard to the loss of the steamer "Huddersfield"; whether he is aware that the stipendiary magistrate, who presided over the court, condemned the practice of allowing alien seamen to be signed on this vessel who were unable to understand orders given in English; whether he is aware that the court censured the captain of the vessel for failing to more frequently take soundings by the use of the lead; if he will state how many able seamen were signed on the "Huddersfield"; how many of them were able to prove three years' sea service; and whether he will cause further inquiries to be made of the captain and officers of the vessel as to whether the failure to more often use the lead was due to the fact that they had not a sufficient number of men in each watch.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) My right hon. friend's attention has been called to the report of the inquiry held in the case of the ss. "Huddersfield," and he is aware of the recommendations and finding of the court in regard to the casualty. Of the six deck hands serving upon this vessel two were engaged as able seamen, and I have no doubt proved their title to that rating. As the court found that the omission to use the lead was due to the neglect of the master, and as they do not suggest any other cause, the Board of Trade do not think it necessary to institute further inquiry into the matter.

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the report of the court of inquiry, held to investigate the circumstances attending the stranding and loss of the steamer "Tolesby" of West Hartlepool; whether he can state the number of able seamen who were signed on this vessel; how many of them were British and how many were foreigners; whether the foreign seamen were able to understand the English language; whether the able seamen were able to prove three years sea service; if he is aware that the court censured the master for failing to take soundings more frequently by the use of the lead; and if he will cause further inquiries to be made of the master and officers, as to whether the failure on their part to more frequently use the lead was due to the fact that they did not have a sufficient number of able seamen in each watch.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The attention of my right hon. friend has been called to the report of the court of inquiry held in the case of the ss. "Tolesby," and he is aware that the court censured the master for negligence in respect of the use of the lead. Three able seamen were engaged on this vessel at the commencement of the voyage in September last at Cardiff, and they were all foreigners. As the language test was not then in force I cannot say whether they understood English, but I have no doubt that they proved three years' sea service. As the reasons which the master gave before the court for his omission to use the lead are stated in their report, and as they do not in any way refer to the manning of the vessel, it is not proposed to institute further inquiry ino the matter.

Irish Housing Legislation.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether the provisions of the Bill he proposes to introduce for the better housing of the working classes will apply to Ireland; and can he state when the First Reading of it will be taken.

(*Mr. John Burns.*) I cannot at present fix a day for the introduction of the Bill. It is not proposed that it should extend to Ireland.

Whaling Stations on the Donegal Coast.

MR. C. MACVEIGH (Donegal, E.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to a resolution passed by the Conservators of Fisheries of the Letterkenny district, county Donegal, at their meeting on 28th February, protesting against the establishing of whaling stations on any part of their coast; and, seeing that the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) has taken active measures to prevent the pollution of the waters and destruction of the fish along the coast of Donegal, whether he will say what steps he proposes to take, and when, to prevent this whaling company from getting a foothold on any part of the foreshore of Donegal.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) Since my right hon. friend's reply on this subject last week the Board of Trade have received an intimation from the Irish Government that they contemplate the making of a bye-law, the effect of which would be to prohibit the establishment of any whaling station on the coast of Donegal. The Board of Trade have also received an intimation from the Arranmore Whaling Company that, in the circumstances, they do not propose to proceed with their application in respect of Arranmore. They have now applied for the permission of the Board of Trade to the construction of a wharf, slipway, and landing stage on the north side of Rusheen Island, Inishkea South, county Mayo. The Board will take the usual steps, by advertisement and otherwise, to ascertain whether there are any objections to a whaling station at this site.

The Government and The Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill.

MR. AINSWORTH (Argyllshire): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury, what attitude will be adopted by His Majesty's Government towards the Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill on its Third Reading stage.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) His Majesty's Government do not propose to offer any opposition to the Third Reading of this Bill.

"The Parliamentary Debates."

Mr. LEA (St. Pancras, E.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury who is responsible for the correct compilation of *Hansard* as to what is said in the House by Members; and under what Vote does the contract for this work fall.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) Under the terms of the existing contract the contractor is bound to supply Members who have delivered them two copies of proofs of all speeches delivered, and proofs are similarly given in the case of Questions orally answered. Hon. Members have thus an opportunity of correcting their own utterances. The contract is paid for out of the Vote for the Stationery Office.

Cost of Elementary Education.

Mr. W. PEARCE (Tower Hamlets, Limehouse): To ask the President of the Board of Education what are the latest figures of the yearly cost per child in elementary schools for England and Wales, excluding London, and for London only.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The latest figures available in respect of expenditure by local education authorities on elementary education are for the financial year ended 31st March, 1906. The total average cost per child in average attendance for that year was in England and Wales (excluding London) £3 9s. 3d., and in London £5 15s. 6d.

Service of Teachers in Contracted Out Schools.

Mr. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether, if the Education Bill becomes law, the service of teachers in contracted-out schools will be counted as recorded service.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) Yes, Sir.

Army Horse Breeding Subsidies.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is able to state the amount of the Government subsidies granted in France to breeders of horses suitable for military purposes; and how much is at present contributed out of State funds for a similar purpose to horse breeders in the United Kingdom.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) A sum of about £53,000 is voted annually for subsidising stud farms which furnish stallions to breeders of horses, with a view to improving the breed of French horses generally and providing a supply of horses from which good horses for military purposes can be bought. A sum of £51,000 is voted annually for premiums to breeders of horses suitable for military purposes. A sum of £1,200 is voted annually for prizes for military horse races in France. No funds are at present provided from Army Estimates for similar purposes.

Cavalry Regiments for the Cork District.

Mr. LONSDALE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that in the Cork district there is not a single regiment of cavalry to manœuvre with the artillery and infantry, he will say what steps will be taken to ensure proper combined training for the troops in this district.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The troops in the Cork district belong to the 6th division. Ireland has two divisions and a cavalry brigade. The necessary cavalry for the training of the 6th division is provided either from the cavalry or from the South of Ireland Imperial Yeomanry. Last year there were command manœuvres of all arms in Ireland.

War Office Writers' Pensions.

Mr. HORNIMAN (Chelsea): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the duties of writers are in any way different from those performed by certain men on the staff who are pensionable; whether there is any reason besides that of economy why this difference should be made; and what is the estimated cost of substituting a pension in lieu of the grant now given to men discharged on reaching the age limit.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) It is presumed that the pensionable staff referred to in the Question are the foremen writers. Their duty, in addition to their clerical work, is to supervise writers, and the responsibility of their position justifies the grant to them of pension privileges. As regards the cost of substituting a pension for a gratuity in the case of the writers, a calculation has been made in respect of one group only of the writers, but it is clear from this that the annual cost of granting pensions to the whole class would be very considerable.

The Duke of York's School.

MR. HORNIMAN: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the sum that may be received for the site, etc., of the Duke of York's School, Chelsea, should it exceed the cost of the new buildings and land near Dover, will be used for erecting further like accommodation there or elsewhere; and when it is expected that the removal of the boys and staff will take place.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) As regards the first part of the Questions I can give no information until the disposal of the site has been settled. As regards the last part of the Question, the date of the removal has not yet been fixed.

Writers at the Army Clothing Factory.

MR. HORNIMAN: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that, according to the War Office List, 1895, twenty-seven civil servants and sixty-four writers were then employed at the Royal Army Clothing Depot, where at the present time the numbers are thirteen and seventy-eight respectively, and that of the latter number five only are foreman-writers; and whether the work previously done by fourteen civil servants is now being performed by writers.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) When the examination of the clothing accounts was transferred to the War Office in 1900, the number of civil service clerks at Pimlico was reduced by nine Subsequently five civil service clerks were replaced by foremen writers. Therefore only in the case of the latter five is the work previously done by civil service clerks being performed by foremen writers.

Muzzle Velocity of Service Rifles.

MR. G. H. FABER (Boston): To ask the Secretary of State for War if our rifles fire with a velocity of 2,000 feet, whilst those of other great Powers have a velocity of 2,800 feet.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The muzzle velocity given by the short rifle is 2,060 foot-seconds. That given by the German rifle is about 2,900 foot-seconds, while those of the other great Powers vary from 2,000 to about 2,450 foot-seconds. The high figure for the German rifle is due to the reduced weight of the new German bullet.

Transfers from Special Reserve to Regular Army.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state how long men who enlist for service in the Special Reserve will be compelled to remain in the Special Reserve before they are allowed to transfer to the Regular Army.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) A Special Reservist below the age of eighteen cannot enlist into the Regular Army until he has completed six months drill on enlistment. If eighteen years of age he may join after completing three months drill on enlistment.

Cost of Egyptian Garrison.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): To ask the Secretary of State for War what is the total cost per annum of the British Army of occupation in Egypt, including the necessary charges for the training of troops and for pensions and retired pay; and how much of this total is refunded by the Egyptian Government.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The total cost, including the items mentioned but excluding sea transport, the charge for which cannot readily be assessed, is £620,000. The Egyptian Government refunds £150,000 a year, that being the amount by which the cost in Egypt exceeds the cost of the same force at home.

Territorial Army—Grant for Cyclists.

MR. LAYLAND-BARRATT (Devonshire, Torquay): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether any provision is made, under the Territorial Army scheme, to give to men serving as cyclist soldiers under that scheme the same special grant towards the upkeep of their cycles as was given to men serving in cycling companies attached to Volunteer battalions; and, if not, will he consider the advisability of making such a grant.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) In the Volunteers a capitation grant of £1 was paid to the commanding officer for each efficient cyclist, and out of this the commanding officer paid what grant he thought fit to the cyclist. Under the Territorial Force scheme a grant of 1s. 4d. per day will be made to County Associations for cycles used for annual training in camp, staff rides, and instructional tours, and the associations will make what payments they think fit to men bringing their own cycles.

Mobilisation Scheme for the Territorial Army.

Mr. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the Army Council have readjusted, or will readjust, the mobilisation scheme for the Auxiliary Forces, so that, as far as possible, each unit of the Territorial Force will be given its mobilisation station within, or near, its own county.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The mobilisation arrangements for the Territorial Force are at present under consideration. The importance of giving a war station in or near its own county to each unit will not be lost sight of.

The Territorial Army and Home Defence.

Mr. COURTHOPE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether arrangements have been made for placing the defences of any county in charge of the Territorial Force of that county.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The Territorial troops allotted for the garrisons of strategic points will be taken from the county or counties nearest to those strategic points, but generally speaking the Territorial Force will be used for the general defence of the United Kingdom.

Evicted Tenants on the Estate of R. T. Longan at Ballinacourty.

Mr. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a number of evicted tenants on the estate of Robert T. Longan, at Ballinacourty, county Waterford, having come to an arrangement with the owner as to their reinstatement, signed agreements to purchase in April, 1905; that, in October, 1906, an inspector of the Estates Commissioners, named Mr. P. V. Guiry, inspected the lands and informed the evicted tenants that they would be put back into possession in a very short time and would get grants to enable them to buy farming stock; whether, since October, 1906, any communication has been made to the evicted tenants, and will he say who is responsible for the prolonged delay in the matter; and whether there is any hope that the evicted tenants can now be reinstated under the agreements signed three years ago.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that six evicted tenants on the estate mentioned have agreed to purchase their former holdings as parcels under Section 2 of the Act. The Commissioners have estimated the advances they are prepared to make and the owner has agreed to accept these prices. The Commissioners also propose to make grants for the assistance of the purchasers, and these grants will be made when the evicted tenants are put into possession. The Commissioners have communicated with the owner upon this point. As the estate has been inspected and reported on, it is expected that the evicted tenants will soon be restored.

Re-instatement of Mrs. Kelleher of Quartertown.

Mr. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether any action has been taken by the Estates Commissioners to bring about the reinstatement of Mrs. Kelleher in the farm at Quartertown, Mallow, on the estate of C. A. Webb, from which her husband, since deceased, was evicted; if the holding has since been occupied by an emergency man named Woods, and is now in the possession of his cousin; whether inquiry will be made into the tenure Woods possessed, and if the present occupier has any *bona fide* interest; and whether, in view of the methods employed to compel the tenants on this estate to sign purchase agreements and to the high prices fixed, an inspection of the estate will be made before these agreements receive the sanction of the Estates Commissioners.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have inquired into the claim of Mrs. Kelleher, and have decided that she is suitable to work a holding if one can be found for her. The Commissioners have ascertained that the holding occupied by her late husband was taken on lease for thirty-one years by Richard Woods, who disposed of his interest in March, 1907, to a man named Moore, the present occupier. The matter is under the Commissioners' consideration. The Commissioners are not aware that undue pressure was exercised to induce the tenants on the estate to sign purchase agreements, but will be prepared, when dealing with the estate, to consider any representations to that effect which may be made to them.

Reinstatement of Peter Healy of Cloughlea.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the application of Peter Healy for reinstatement in his former holding at Cloughlea, on the Foot estate, near Killavallen, County Cork, has been brought under the notice of the Estates Commissioners; whether any inquiry has been made into the circumstances; and if there is a prospect of the restoration of Healy to the holding in the near future.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have considered Healy's application, and have decided that he is fit to receive a holding in the event of their being able to provide him with one when the estate in question comes before them to be dealt with.

Reinstatement of Representatives of late Denis Scanlon of Kilbradern.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether the Estates Commissioners received a resolution from the Limerick County Council and other public bodies in the county asking them to take steps to reinstate the representatives of Denis Scanlon, deceased, in the farm from which he was evicted at Kilbradern; and what do they intend to do in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners have received resolutions of the nature referred to. They have inquired into the claim of the representatives of Denis Scanlon, and have decided to take no action in the matter. Scanlon was evicted for the non-payment of a land purchase annuity.

Application for Land by Michael Hartnett and John Collins.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, if the Estates Commissioners would consider the claims of Michael Hartnett, labourer, and John Collins, tenant, on the Vereker estate, near Abbeyfeale, in the County of Limerick when they are apportioning the untenanted land on it purchased by them.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners will, when dealing with the untenanted land on the estate in question, consider the claims of all applicants in the locality, including those named by the hon. Member.

Purchase of the Shelton Estate, County Limerick.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether any progress has been made by the Estates Commissioners with regard to the purchase of the Shelton property, at Beaufort, near Newcastle West, in the County of Limerick.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners are negotiating for the purchase of 300 acres of untenanted land from Mrs. Deane Shelton, and have furnished a preliminary estimate of price but the owner has not yet intimated her acceptance or refusal of the same.

Expenditure on Structural Alterations in London Non-provided Schools.

MR. DICKINSON (St. Pancras, N.): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether he can give the total sum of money expended by the managers of non-provided schools in London in complying with the requirements for structural alterations issued by the London County Council, and will also state what proportion of this money has been raised by voluntary subscriptions, by the use of endowment funds, and by the mortgage of the school premises, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I have no information as to the cost of the alterations referred to or as to the amounts contributed by voluntary subscriptions. If it would be of any service to my hon. friend I could give him the amount of the capital funds of endowments, and the sums raised by way of mortgage of the school premises, which the Board have sanctioned by schemes and orders under the Charitable Trusts Act to be expended on repairs or alterations to voluntary schools in London since the Education (London) Act came into operation. But I am not in a position to say whether these sums have in all cases actually been expended or not.

Study of Agriculture in Rural Schools.

SIR F. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the President of the Board of Education what is the present number of rural secondary schools into whose curriculum the study of chemistry, physics, and biology in their relation to agriculture has been introduced, and in what counties; how many of such schools have endowments as grammar schools or otherwise, and how many are provided by county councils, by or in connection with agricultural colleges, and by private enterprise, respectively; how many such schools have school gardens and small farms or plots attached to them, giving an opportunity for experimental and practical instruction in the application of the scientific studies to real agricultural work; what is the present number of pupils, boys and girls respectively, in such schools; and whether any, and, if so, how many, and in what counties, such schools are being carried on in combination with a group of small elementary schools whose pupils are brought to the central school from their several villages, as in Canada and the United States.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) I regret that it is not possible at such short notice to carry out a sufficiently detailed investigation of the curricula of the rural secondary schools receiving grants from the Board to enable complete information to be given as to the various points in the Question. Taking England apart from Wales, there are about 190 secondary schools which could properly be described as "rural," and they are spread over all the counties of England. Twenty-eight are provided by county councils or other local authorities, and 148 are endowed schools. Eight are otherwise provided; no schools receiving grants from the Board are provided by "private enterprise" in the sense of making any profit. These schools provide instruction for 11,291 boys and 4,780 girls. Without communicating with the Board's inspectors I am unable to classify and formulate precise information as to the provision of school gardens or plots in connection with these schools or as to the degree of connection which they may have with agricultural colleges. These matters, in common with matters concerning the other branches of the curricula of secondary schools, are included in a careful investigation which is being conducted, and the results of which will, as far as possible, be made available in statistical or other forms in due course. I may perhaps add, however, that, of the 190 schools, 175 teach chemistry, 165 physics, 162 manual work, and seventy-two botany and nature study. In a few schools a special attempt has been made to provide special classes in horticulture, agriculture, and, in one case, bee-keeping. In reply to the concluding paragraph of the Question, it would seem that the principal purpose there suggested would probably be effected in this country by the establishment of higher elementary schools, or day schools or classes under Section 42 of the Technical Regulations of the Board, the relation of a secondary school to the neighbouring elementary schools being not altogether similar to that suggested in the Question as prevailing in Canada or the United States.

SIR F. CHANNING: To ask the President of the Board of Education what is the present number of centralised rural evening schools; in what counties; how many of such schools are provided by county councils, or by or in connection with agricultural colleges, or by private enterprise, respectively; in how many of such schools is the curriculum arranged in cyclic courses, and in how many long courses, and in how many short (four to ten lessons) courses in the suggested practical subjects are being carried out; and what is the number of pupils, male and female.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) For the current year the Board estimate at 3,500 the total number of evening schools, excluding all schools or centres affording fewer than twenty hours of instruction, aided by the Board, serving what may properly be considered to be rural areas for the purposes of this Question; of these about 99 per cent. are provided by county councils or other local education authorities. There are such schools in every county in England and Wales; but the Board are unable at short notice to give the number of those which are "centralised" as distinct from the other types of evening schools. In a large and increasing proportion of them the instruction given has a definite relation to the character and conditions of work of the rural population. The actual number of such schools in the session 1905–6 was 3,353, of which 3,319 were provided by county councils and 34 otherwise. Less than ten of these formed part of the organisation of any agricultural college, but it must be remembered at the same time that many county councils utilise the services of the staffs of agricultural colleges for the provision of expert instruction in special subjects in connection with such schools. Assuming the phrase "suggested practical subjects," in the second paragraph of the hon. Member's Question, to refer to subjects suggested in the Memorandum issued by the Board of Education in July, 1906, concerning rural evening schools, I may say that only in the case of thirteen counties are returns at the moment available with reference to the numbers of long and short courses in practical rural subjects. The information as to these counties is, however, sufficient to indicate the scale upon which instruction is being provided in this way. In the thirteen counties in question arrangements have already been made for 64 long and 403 short courses of practical work in such subjects as dairying, poultry-keeping, farriery, horticulture, and manual farm processes. Much of this work however is carried on during the spring and summer months, so that these numbers will probably be increased by the addition of courses for which arrangements are not yet completed. In reply to the concluding paragraph of the Question, I may say that in most rural evening schools aided by the Board of Education provision is made for changes from year to year in the programme of work. The degree of effectiveness to which this is carried is very variable; and while the Board are satisfied that a fairly complete cycle of subjects has been arranged for many schools they are unable to state how many have formally adopted the cyclic principle to which attention was directed in a recent publication by the Board of Education. In virtue of the provisions of Section 34 of the Regulations for Technical Schools, the Board have been able to direct the attention of local education authorities to many points in the curricula of rural evening schools which appeared to require attention. During the eighteen months that section has been in operation much has already been done to improve the evening school organisation so as to make it more practical and better suited to the needs of the rural community. The Board have no precise information as to the numbers of pupils now attending classes of the types my hon. friend has in mind, but they estimate that over 50,000 are receiving instruction otherwise than in "short courses."

Fees in Council Schools.

MR. ALFRED HUTTON (Yorkshire, W. R., Morley): To ask the President of the Board of Education whether the repeal of the Elementary Education Act, 1891, will enable local education authorities to reimpose fees in council schools so long as they exempt from payment the individual scholar whose parents desire free places.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) Not unless the consent of the Board of Education, under Section 17 of the Elementary Education Act, 1870, has been previously obtained. With the sanction of the Board fees can, under the existing law, be charged (Section 4 of the Elementary Education Act, 1891.)

Repayment of Loans for Small Holdings.

MR. ELLIS DAVIES (Carnarvonshire, Eifion): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether, in view of the fact that county councils, when purchasing land under the Small Holdings Act, have no means of obtaining money for the repayment of the purchase money except by charging the small holder with payment yearly of part of the principal as well as interest, he will make representations to the Local Government Board with a view to the loans to the county councils being made permanent and not temporary, as in the case of industrial undertakings, and so avoid the necessity for the county councils to compel the small holder to buy property for the councils.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) I will bring the suggestion of my hon. friend to the notice of my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board.

Agricultural Schools and Institutes.

SIR F. CHANNING: To ask the hon Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether any new farm schools or institutes of the type of the Hampshire Farm School at Basing or the Ridgmont Agricultural Institute in Bedfordshire have been started or placed on the grants list during the last two years; and what is the present number of school gardens provided for elementary secondary, and evening schools, respectively; and in how many of such school gardens are arrangements made for fruit cultivation as well as gardening.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) No farm institutes of the type referred to by my hon. friend have been established within the last two years. The question of their possible extension is engaging the careful attention of the Agricultural Education Committee. Arrangements for the provision of school gardens are made by the Board of Education, and, perhaps, therefore my hon. friend will address his other inquiries to my right hon. friend.

Northamptonshire Muzzling Order.

MR. CLEMENT EDWARDS (Denbigh District): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether the muzzling order for dogs, issued for certain parishes in the county of Northampton, includes the muzzling of hounds; and if any exemption has been made in the case of sheep dogs when at work.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The order applies to all dogs, including hounds; and it does not contain any exemption in regard to any particular class of dogs.

Detection of Rabies in Northamptonshire.

MR. CLEMENT EDWARDS: To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he will state what were the reasons which induced the Board of Agriculture to revert to the autopsy test for rabies in the case of the two dogs alleged to have been suffering from rabies in the town of Northampton; whether this method of diagnosis was discarded as worthless as far back as 1898; whether the port mortems were conducted by duly qualified veterinary surgeons; and upon what evidence did they arrive at the conclusion that they were authentic cases of rabies.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The Board have not accepted the post-mortem examination to which my hon. friend refers as conclusive evidence of the existence of rabies, and the final diagnosis awaits the result of the inoculation test. The post mortem examinations were conducted by a duly qualified veterinary surgeon, and his opinion was confirmed by the chief veterinary officer of the board.

Milk Guarantees.

MR. GIBBS (Bristol, W.): To ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he is aware that, although he has been advised that it is not necessary that each consignment of milk sold by the farmers should be accompanied by a warranty, the authorities in several localities are insisting upon such warranty, thereby causing great hardship to milk vendors; and what steps he will take in the matter.

(*Answered by Sir Edward Strachey.*) The Board are not aware of any case in which a local authority has taken action in the direction indicated; but if the hon. Member will be good enough to supply them with information on the subject inquiry will be made.

Employment of Soldiers by the Post Office.

MR. W. T. WILSON (Lancashire, Westhoughton): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of his declarations that he desired that the Post Office should be a good employer of labour, he will state whether it is his intention to employ soldiers serving with the colours to perform telegraphic duties in postal telegraph offices during the current year at wages much below those paid to established telegraphists; and whether such a system was introduced on the proposal of an official of his Department, on the ground that it was cheaper than employing ordinary telegraphists.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) As my hon. friend is aware, there is, unfortunately, at certain times of the year, exceptional pressure on telegraph work. In order to meet the exceptional pressure, to avoid excessive overtime, to which I am opposed, and to enable the established telegraph staff to obtain their holidays in better months of the year, it is necessary to obtain season assistants for telegraph work for part of the year, and at various places. Efficient season assistants are not easy to obtain, and the primary object which I have had in view in employing a certain number of soldiers to perform telegraphic duties as season assistants is to meet this exceptional pressure. One additional advantage of employing the soldiers is that they acquire a useful knowledge of telegraphy. The system was not introduced on the ground that it was cheaper than employing ordinary telegraphists. The officers in question are not employed in lieu of established officers, and do not receive less than the ordinary season assistants.

The Post Office Circular and the Savings Bank Department.

MR. W. T. WILSON: To ask the Postmaster-General if there are any reasons why the Post Office Circular should not be exhibited in the Savings Bank Department for the information of the staff generally; and, if not, will he give instructions for a copy to be exhibited in the same way as in other departments.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The hon. Member must have been misinformed. Copies of the Post Office Circular are duly exhibited in the Savings Bank Department.

Reserve Stock of Naval Stores.

VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH (Maidstone): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the value of the reserve stock of naval stores at Malta, Gibraltar, Bermuda, Halifax, Jamaica, Trincomalee, Vancouver, and at the three home ports at the present moment.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The value of reserves of naval stores (exclusive of coals for the Fleet) may be taken approximately at £4,000,000. The precise value and disposition of the stocks, so far as the home yards are concerned, is shown annually in the Navy Dockyard Expense Accounts presented to Parliament, but as regards the foreign yards it is not considered desirable to indicate the actual disposition of the stocks. As regards Halifax, Jamaica, Trincomalee, and Vancouver, no reserves, other than coals for the Fleet, have been kept at these yards since March, 1905, when these depots were closed.

Number of Craft in the Home Fleet.

MR. GRETTON (Rutland): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the total number of craft of all kinds in the Home Fleet, mentioning separately those in Special Reserve, at the time of the manœuvres last autumn, under the Commander-in-Chief of the Channel Fleet.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The total number of craft of all kinds, excluding submarines, was 189, of which twenty-one were Special Reserve vessels.

Combined Naval Manœuveres.

MR. GRETTON: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty with reference to the statement of the First Lord of the Admiralty in his Memorandum to Parliament, 23rd February, 1907, that the Channel, Atlantic, and Home Fleets will carry out periodic exercises together under the Commander-in-Chief of the Channel Fleet, who will take the supreme command in war, whether he can state how many vessels of the Home Fleet took part in the manœuvres last year.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) In the October manœuvres thirty-nine vessels of the Home Fleet took part.

The Nore Division of the Home Fleet.

MR. GRETTON: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty how many vessels belonging to the Home Fleet, exclusive of the fully-manned battleships, cruisers, scouts, and destroyers which were withdrawn from the Channel, Atlantic, and Mediterranean Fleets to constitute the Nore Division of the Home Fleet, took part in the annual manœuvres last autumn.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) Three Home Fleet vessels, normally not fully manned, took part in these manœuvres, viz., battleship "Mars," cruiser "Essex," and torpedo-gunboat "Speedwell."

Children as Half-timers in Factories.

MR. GILL (Bolton): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he can state the number of children employed as half-timers in the factories and workshops in the United Kingdom, and the number employed in textile factories in Lancashire and Yorkshire, together with the number in each large town in the two counties.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The latest figures available are those obtained from the Returns of employment for 1904. In that year the figures were as follows: Children employed in 1904 in the United Kingdom—

In factories, workshops, and laundries	37,265
In textile factories in Lancashire and Yorkshire	25,345
In textile factories:—	
Bradford	4,210
Brighouse	168
Halifax	1,018
Keighley	647
Todmorden	264
Accrington	348
Ashton-under-Lyne	270
Bacup	250
Blackburn	1,530
Bolton	1,068
Burnley	1,042
Bury	323
Chorley	180
Clitheroe	131
Colne	246
Darwen	623
Heslington	284
Heywood	325
Leigh	276
Mossley	127
Nelson	442
Oldham	534
Preston	950
Rawtenstall	200
Rochdale	543
Stockport (Lancashire part only)	186

The Indian Whipping Act.

SIR HENRY COTTON (Nottingham, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether now that the Bill for amending the Indian Whipping Act has been introduced into the Indian Legislative Council he will state the objects and reasons of the proposed legislation.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I have not yet received from the Government of India the statement of objects, and reasons of the Bill to amend the Indian Whipping Act.

Barrack Expenditure.

MR. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs): To ask the Financial Secretary to the War Office, if he will state the sums expended on building barracks and on repairing barracks during each of the last ten years, giving separately the expenditure in England (including Berwick-on-Tweed), Scotland, and Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Buchanan.*)

Sums spent on Barracks in each of the 10 years ending 31st March, 1907 in England, Scotland, and Ireland.

Year.	Building.			Repairing.			Totals.		
	England.	Scotland.	Ireland.	England.	Scotland.	Ireland.	England.	Scotland.	Ireland.
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
1897–8 - -	244,526	10,458	131,047	186,615	8,410	47,121	431,141	18,868	178,168
1898–9 - -	316,525	19,401	133,748	167,698	10,244	42,928	484,223	29,645	176,676
1899–1900 -	390,242	10,776	171,602	186,952	13,315	51,240	577,194	24,091	222,842
1900–1 - -	1,260,730	18,031	150,385	188,613	16,329	59,052	1,449,343	34,360	209,437
1901–2 - -	760,403	8,948	210,913	204,535	15,431	53,263	964,938	24,379	264,176
1902–3 - -	701,435	6,532	170,454	225,342	18,097	60,235	926,777	24,629	230,689
1903–4 - -	1,163,264	7,615	158,640	235,171	15,546	72,865	1,398,435	23,161	231,505
1904–5 - -	1,301,950	10,934	132,817	252,723	16,025	63,919	1,554,673	26,959	196,736
1905–6 - -	618,270	6,492	58,600	256,435	14,766	64,846	874,705	21,258	123,446
1906–7 - -	325,020	7,095	36,725	254,440	20,037	70,360	579,460	27,132	107,085
Grand totals	7,082,365	106,282	1,354,931	2,158,524	148,200	585,829	9,240,889	254,482	1,940,760

Value of Machinery lying idle at Woolwich.

MR. W. T. WILSON: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state approximately the capital value of the machinery that is at the present time lying idle at the Woolwich Arsenal.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The exact capital value of machinery at present lying idle in the Ordnance Factories in the Royal Arsenal cannot be stated until after the close of the financial year, but it may be roughly estimated to be about £250,000.

Territorial Force—Officers' Outfit Grant.

MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether officers of a disbanded Militia battalion will be given any grant towards the purchase of a new uniform if they elect to join any branch of the Territorial Army instead of the special Reserve.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Officers joining the Territorial force from the Militia whose transfer necessitates a change of uniform will be eligible for a grant to cover the actual expenditure for purchase or alteration of uniform not exceeding £20 in all.

Discharges from Waltham Abbey Gunpowder Factory.

MR. STAVELEY-HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state the number of men now employed at the Royal Gunpowder Factory at Waltham Abbey, and the number of men employed on the same date in 1905; whether it is intended to make further discharges, and, if so, to what number; and how many of the men discharged since the 31st January 1906, possessed ten years service and upward.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The number of men and boys employed at the Royal Gunpowder Factory, Waltham Abbey, on the first Saturday in March was 1,340 in 1905 and 698 in 1908. It is not intended to make any more discharges on reduction; the further reduction to bring establishment within the approved limits will be effected by wastage. The number discharged on reduction since 31st January 1906 with ten years' service or upwards is twenty-five.

Discharges from Woolwich Arsenal.

MR. STAVELEY-HILL: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state the number of men employed at Woolwich Arsenal, and the number employed on the same date in 1905; whether it is intended to make further discharges, and, if so, to what number; and how many of the men discharged since 31st January, 1906, possessed ten years' service and upward.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The number of men and boys employed in the ordnance factories at Woolwich Arsenal on the first Saturday in March was 15,122 in 1905 and 11,643 in 1908. It is not intended to make any more discharges on reduction, except in a few special cases of men who wish to leave. Any further reductions will be effected by wastage. The number of men discharged since the 31st January, 1906, with ten years service and upwards, is 1,317.

The Walking-out Uniform of the Territorial Army.

MR. A. ALLEN (Christchurch): To ask the Secretary of State for War, whether the walking-out uniform of the Territorial Force will be of a standard pattern and colour for each arm of the service, or whether it will be of the same colour, etc., as that of the Regular regiment to which units are affiliated.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) This question has not yet been finally decided.

Territorial Army—Messing Allowance to Officers during Training.

MR. A. ALLEN: To ask the Secretary of State for War, whether a messing fee, and, if so, of what amount, will be allowed to Territorial officers during training.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) A daily allowance of 4s. in aid of messing expenses will be made to Territorial officers during annual training in camp, courses of instruction, etc.

Territorial Army—Officers' Outfit Grant.

MR. A. ALLEN: To ask the Secretary of State for War, whether Volunteer officers transferring to the Territorial Army will receive an allowance for any necessary change of uniform.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) When the transfer necessitates an alteration of uniform the officer will be eligible for a grant to cover the actual expenditure involved for purchase or alteration of uniform not exceeding £20 in all.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Navy Estimates.

MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, why there has been omitted from the Navy Estimates for the new financial year Appendix No. 8, which has appeared for many years past, showing the cost of the different classes of vessels added in each year to the Navy and the estimated annual rate of depreciation; and whether he can state why the tables showing the number of men in nucleus crews have also been omitted.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): The Appendix has not been omitted, but it is now called Appendix No. 7. The nucleus crews are included in the column headed "Active Service" in accordance with the arrangements made for the current year, and after the consideration which I promised the hon. Gentleman on 17th April last.

MR. BELLAIRS: Will the right hon. Gentleman obtain information as to the number of men in the nucleus crews if I put a Question on the Paper?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Certainly.

Natives in the South African Mines.

MR. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies how many natives from Central Africa are now employed on the Premier Diamond Mine and on other South African mines; if these natives have been recruited under official sanction; and, if so when was this sanction given.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): According to a Return up to the end of July last there were 463 Nyassaland natives on the Premier Mine. These natives on the Premier Mine were recruited as an experiment under a sanction given by the Secretary of State in November, 1906, for recruiting 500 natives. Sanction was at the same time given for the recruiting experimentally of a further 500 for surface work only on the gold mines, but these latter were not recruited. I understand that there are a certain number of Nyassaland natives at work on the mines who have not been recruited but have found their own way down, though I do not know how many.

MR. LYTTELTON (St. George's, Hanover Square): Will the right hon. Gentleman lay on the Table Papers with regard to the recruiting of Central African natives during the last eighteen months?

MR. CHURCHILL: Yes, Sir.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): Are these labourers separated from their wives, and do the conditions under which they work constitute servile conditions?

[No Answer was returned.]

MR. BRIDGEMAN: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if any limit is placed on the number of natives permitted to be recruited from Central Africa for the Transvaal mines.

MR. CHURCHILL: After very careful consideration the Secretary of State has informed the Governor of the Transvaal that the resumption of recruiting Nyasaland natives cannot be authorised in existing circumstances. No recruiting has taken place since the end of 1906.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend): When was the Governor so informed?

MR. CHURCHILL: No natives have been recruited since 1906. The question was should it be allowed again, and it was decided last month that the conditions which prevail in regard to mortality would not warrant it.

MR. BRIDGEMAN: Is there no recruiting then from Central Africa?

MR. CHURCHILL: No organised recruiting, but we cannot prevent individual natives finding their way down.

Dinizulu.

MR. FLYNN (Cork, N.): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that Mr. Jellicoe, one-time counsel for Dinizulu, has reiterated his original statements concerning the trial of this native chief, to the effect that the Natal Government is making use of every technical rule of local law to defeat the pledge given to the Imperial Government to secure to Dinizulu an open, fair, and impartial trial of the charges now pending against him, and also refers to the official acknowledgment that the charges against Dinizulu have not in any way been amplified by any specific facts as to whom he is accused of inciting to murder, or who was the person murdered, or when the incitement was given, or in what the acts of treason, sedition, rebellion, etc., consist; and what present steps are being taken by the Colonial Office to secure that this chieftain shall be guaranteed an impartial trial.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Secretary of State is aware of the views of Mr. Jellicoe, whose statement will be carefully examined. With regard to the last part of the Question I cannot add anything to my full reply of yesterday to a Question by the hon. Member for Wycombe.

In reply to a further Question,

MR. CHURCHILL said he was informed that the usual procedure under the law was being followed. He asked, however, for notice of legal Questions.

New Hebrides Convention.

MR. STAVELEY-HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Report of the High Commissioner of the Western Pacific on his recent visit to the New Hebrides to proclaim the Convention will be laid upon the Table of the House.

MR. CHURCHILL: As I promised the hon. and gallant Member for St. Andrew's Burghs on 13th February, a copy of the Report has been placed in the Library of the House for the use of Members who may care to study it.

MR. STAVELEY-HILL: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the regulations prepared by the Resident Commissioners of the New Hebrides on recruiting and the conditions of labour will be laid upon the Table of the House.

MR. CHURCHILL: The regulations when settled must of course be published, and copies will be made available in this country for anyone who wishes to see them. The question of reprinting them as a Parliamentary Paper will be considered when they have been finally settled.

Chinese in the Rand Mines.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Chinese employed in the Rand mines, as their contracts expire, will be allowed to recruit for the mines on the same basis and be governed by the same regulations as the natives now employed.

MR. CHURCHILL: I am astonished that the hon. Member should not understand the position more clearly after all the discussions that have taken place. Certain mining interests in the Transvaal desired to employ Chinese indentured labour. The people of the Transvaal object so strongly to the presence of the Chinese in their country that special restrictions of an extraordinary and degrading character had to be imposed upon the imported Chinese labourers to secure among other things that they did not mingle with the population, did not engage in business, did not acquire land, did not perform skilled work of any kind, and were expelled from South Africa as soon as their term of labour had expired. These restrictions are comprised in the Chinese Labour Importation Ordinance, and they are at present the law of the Transvaal. That law, for whose details the late Government is responsible, will come early in 1910 to an end for ever when the existing indentures are terminated and the last Chinaman has gone. Meanwhile every Chinaman must be deported as soon as his indentures expire. Thereafter no Chinaman will be allowed to enter the Transvaal unless he enters freely, and to that the people of the Transvaal are, I believe, unalterably opposed.

MR. LYTTELTON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether his attention has been drawn to the Report of the Commission on Labour Condition in the Mines of the Transvaal, signed by Messrs. Stockenstroom, Cresswell, Hamilton and Whiteside: whether Mr. Cresswell who is well known to Members of this House is the gentleman who took a leading part in the agitation against Chinese labour in the Transvaal and in this country: whether the Report is to the effect that there is no essential difference between the importation of Chinese coolies and Portugese natives, and whether it is a fact that on the average of the last two years the death-rate of such natives is more than 100 per cent. heavier than that of the Chinese.

MR. CHURCHILL: His Majesty's Government are awaiting with much interest the arrival of the Report in question, and meanwhile it would obviously be premature to form opinions and still more to take action of any kind.

SIR GILBERT PARKER asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that the Portuguese East African natives must all be repatriated as the Chinese must be repatriated.

MR. CHURCHILL: I am fully informed by this time, I should think, of all the conditions.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was aware that, although by law the Portugese natives must be repatriated, as a matter of fact they never were repatriated.

MR. CHURCHILL: I do not wish to embark upon an attempt to impart all my information to the House.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary for the Colonies whether he can say what are the reasons assigned by the Transvaal Government for their proposed effort to recruit labour outside South Africa for the Rand mines.

MR. CHURCHILL: I understand that the Transvaal Government are anxious to secure as large and continuous a supply of unskilled labour under proper conditions as is possible.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the natives of Madagascar have a strain of Oriental blood?

[No Answer was returned.]

Quebec Battlefields.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether it is the intention of this Government to cooperate with the Canadian Government and the Canadian people in the preservation of the battlefields of Quebec, where the British Army added to its fame, by a subscription to the funds for this imperial memorial.

MR. CHURCHILL: The consideration of matters relating to this important celebration has been confined to the arrangements for and programme of the visit which His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales (accompanied by a powerful squadron of the British Fleet) has graciously signified his intention of paying to Canada at the end of July next—an intimation which has given much lively pleasure both here and in the Dominion. The question of a subscription has not yet come before His Majesty's Government, and I am, therefore, not at present in a position to make any statement with reference to it.

Postal and Telegraphic Rates between Great Britain and France.

MR. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Postmaster - General whether he is aware that a penny postal and telegraphic rate between Great Britain and France would be welcomed by commercial men in this country, and there is reason to believe would be favourably regarded by the French Government; and whether he will consider the desirability of entering into an arrangement with the French Government which would tend to extend the commercial relations between the two nations.

THE POSTMASTER - GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): The French post office has made no proposal to me on this subject. Such a reduction as that which the hon. Member suggests would involve a very large sacrifice of revenue, and I am not prepared to advocate it under existing circumstances.

Liverpool and Hong-Kong Mail Subsidy.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General what was the revenue obtained in the last completed year from postal matter conveyed by the trans-Canadian route under the Liverpool and Hong-Kong mail contract; and what proportion this revenue bore to the subsidy paid to the contractors.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The gross revenue collected by the British Post Office on the letter and parcel mails despatched from this country by the Canadian Pacific service for the year 1907 is estimated at £35,000. To this should be added a sum of about £3,000 received for the conveyance of foreign and colonial mails. The annual subsidy payable to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company is £60,000, of which £15,000 is contributed by Canada, and £45,000 by the British Government. The subsidy, of course, does not cover the cost of dealing with the mails in this country.

Adult Night Messengers and the Hobhouse Report.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that the adult night messengers are not affected by the classification or any other scheme, he will say what is the cause for delay in putting in force the recommendations of the Hobhouse Committee; and will they be put into operation forthwith.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: All questions relating to the pay of adult night messengers have now been settled, and the revision is being carried out. No officer will suffer from the delay.

MR. SLOAN: But what has been the cause of the delay?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The enormous pressure in carrying out the multifarious classification.

MR. SLOAN: Is it now settled?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I have said so.

Inland Revenue Stamps.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General what annual sum, if any, is transferred from the receipts of the General Post Office to the Inland Revenue in respect of postage stamps used for Inland Revenue purposes.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The amount transferred from the receipts of the General Post Office to the Inland Revenue in respect of postage stamps used for Inland Revenue purposes in the year 1906–7 was £582,520, as shown on page 25 of the Finance Accounts.

Bexhill Postal Arrangements.

MR. COURTHOPE: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether a decision has yet been reached as to the establishment of an additional sub-post office at Bexhill.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: This Question is still under consideration. I regret that I am not yet in a position to arrive at a decision.

Rural Postmen's Duties.

MR. COURTHOPE: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in arranging postmen's duties to allow nine clear hours at their own homes, any allowance is made for the time occupied by mounted rural postmen in preparing horses and carts in the morning and putting them away at night; and whether such time occupied in stable duties counts as part of their duty.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: It is the practice to arrange the duties of rural postmen is such a manner as to give them nine hours at their homes; and in the case of mounted rural postmen reasonable allowance is made for the time necessary for attending to their horses and carts. Stable duties are taken into consideration in fixing the amount of work the men are called on to perform.

Inland Revenue Stamps.

MR. COURTHOPE: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General what was the average revenue derived annually from the issue of Inland Revenue adhesive stamps.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury): The amounts paid over to this Department by the Post Office as the estimated revenue for the United Kingdom, derived from the issue of Inland Revenue adhesive stamps for the three years ending 31st March, 1908, are as follows: Unified stamps at 1d.: 1905–6, £543,000; 1906–7, £547,000; 1907–8 £551,000. Unified stamps above 1d.: 1905–6, £34,800; 1906–7, £35,520; 1907–8, £36,240. Increased amounts of £4,000 for Unified stamps at 1d. and of £720 for those above 1d. are paid over each year by the Post Office.

Licenses in Scotland.

MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he will state the number of public house licences at present in force in Scotland; the number of spirit grocers' licences; and the number of hotel licences.

MR. RUNCIMAN: The number of licences at present in force in Scotland is as follows: Public-house licences, 6,472; spirit grocers' licences, 3,604; hotel licences, 372.

Affortestation on the Inverliever Estate.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland which Department will control the afforestation of the Inverliever estate.

MR. RUNCIMAN: The Commissioners of Woods and Forests.

Lewis Sanitary Condition.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland in view of the fact that it is now nearly three years since Dr. Dittmar, the medical inspector for the Local Government Board for Scotland, reported the sanitary condition of the townships in the Island of Lewis as dangerous to the public health, will he state whether he has yet succeeded in making arrangements with the Treasury such as will admit of assistance being given towards the construction of houses on new sites.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): No such arrangements have been made. But I am in communication with the local authority with a view to obtaining complete information as to houses of crofters and cottars in Lewis.

Lewis Cottars.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he has yet received a list of cottars and others resident in the townships in the Island of Lewis who would be willing to migrate to the mainland if the Congested Districts Board arranged reasonable aid for their settlement; and, in view of the Scottish Office declarations on this subject, will he state whether any scheme for the encouragement of migration to the mainland has yet been considered.

MR. SINCLAIR: My hon. friend has himself been good enough to furnish me with a list of the nature referred to. Before the Congested Districts Board can take any action further information is required as to skill and experience and also as to ability of those concerned to rent, stock, and cultivate holdings.

Beauly and Ness Rivers Estuary.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, seeing that, at pages

30 and 32 of the First Report of the Fishery Board for Scotland, the opinion is expressed that the estuary of the Beauly and Ness rivers has been too far extended, and that there is no sufficient ground for extending the estuary beyond a line from Chanonry Point to Fort George, will he state whether he has yet considered the expediency of calling for a Report on the subject, especially having regard to the fact that the estuary as present extends into the open sea four miles beyond the point recommened in the Fishery Board Report.

Mr. SINCLAIR: I have made careful inquiry into this subject. Any alteration of existing boundaries would require legislation, and from the information I have received, I do not consider there are sufficient grounds for that step at present.

Illegal Trawling in the Moray Firth.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, having regard to the fact that sixteen trawlers were detected on forty-four different occasions in the Moray Firth in December and January, will he state how many of these vessels were flying a foreign flag, and the nationality of such flag; and in how many instances proceedings have been instituted for illegal trawling.

Mr. SINCLAIR: So far as I am aware all the trawlers referred to were flying a foreign flag; twelve were flying the Norwegian and the others flags of other foreign countries. So far, in one case proceedings have been instituted.

Mr. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): Are not the Government prepared to grant the same rights and privileges to British fishermen in British waters as those which foreigners possess?

Mr. SINCLAIR asked for notice of the Question.

Maynooth College and Queen's College, Belfast.

Captain CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state the amount of State aid granted to Maynooth College and Queen's College, Belfast, respectively, since their establishment, the number of students at present on the rolls, and the present rateable value of these two colleges, respectively.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that Question, may I ask him if he is aware that the first grant to Maynooth College was made by an Irish Parliament, composed exclusively of Irish Protestants?

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Birrell, Bristol, N.): Yes, Sir; I knew that.

Captain CRAIG: And so did I.

Mr. BIRRELL: It was given in evidence before the Robertson Commission on University Education in Ireland that Maynooth College received from the State amounts varying from £8,000 to £9,000 a year from its foundation in 1795 up till 1845, when the annual grant was increased to £26,360 a year. This latter grant was continued until 1871 when it was withdrawn, the sum of £369,040, representing fourteen years' purchase, being paid to the college in compensation, out of the Irish Church Fund. The Board of Works also expended on buildings and maintenance, and remission of building loans, the sum of £52,835. The Queen's College, Belfast, has received £7,000 a year since its foundation, together with grants-in-aid, amounting in all to £82,600, and the Board of Works have expended on buildings and maintenance £95,558. The number of students at Maynooth for the year 1907–8 is 562; the number at Belfast for the current winter session is 380. Both of the colleges are exempt from rating.

Ballybricken Cattle Drive.

Captain CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on Wednesday night, the 26th February last, a cattle drive on a large scale took place in the Ballybricken district, County Limerick; can he state to whom the lands belonged; what was the object of the outrage; have any arrests been made; and have any persons been brought to justice.

MR. BIRRELL: The fact is as stated in the Question. The cattle which were driven off belonged to five grazing tenants on Roche Kelly estate. The police have no knowledge of the object of the drive, which can only be a matter of opinion. No evidence is forthcoming against any of the offenders. No arrests, therefore, have been made.

Irish Schools—Fees for Bilingual Teaching.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of schools in Ireland where the bilingual programme is adopted and the fees paid to the teachers of those schools, the fees paid or proposed to be paid to teachers who, though not adopting the bilingual programme, teach Irish as an ordinary school subject within ordinary school hours, and the fees paid or proposed to be paid to teachers who teach Irish as an extra subject outside ordinary school hours.

MR. BIRRELL: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that the bilingual programme has been sanctioned in 120 national schools. A fee of 4s. may be paid for each unit of the average attendance of pupils receiving bilingual instruction in schools classified at the annual inspection as "fair"; a fee of 6s. in schools classified as "good"; and a fee of 8s. in schools classified as "very good" or "excellent." On the restoration of fees for Irish as an extra subject, special payment for it as an ordinary subject ceased. Fees may now be paid for Irish taught as an extra subject to pupils of the third and higher standards, according to the following scale: In the third standard, 3s. per unit of the average attendance at the Irish lessons; in the fourth standard, 6s. per unit of the average attendance; in the fifth standard, 9s. per unit of the average attendance; and in the sixth and higher standards, 12s. per unit of the average attendance.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL: What fee will be paid if Irish is taught as an ordinary subject, and not as an extra?

*MR. BIRRELL: As I have just stated, fees are not now paid for Irish as an ordinary subject.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.): May I ask if under this system more is paid for teaching Irish than for teaching modern language in three-parts of the country where Irish is absolutely useless?

MR. BIRRELL: The hon. Gentleman may infer what he likes.

Ballinalee Catholic School.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether any report has been made to the police as to the breaking of the windows of the Catholic male national school at Ballinalee, County Longford; whether he is aware that recently, in consequence of a dispute with the parents and master of the Protestant school at Ballinalee, five Protestant children left the Protestant school and went to the Catholic school instead; and whether the police have any clue as to the identity of those who broke the Catholic school windows.

I beg also to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the police of Ballinalee are now able to identify the perpetrator of the outrage on the Catholic school at Ballinalee on the night of 23rd January, 1908; and whether any magisterial inquiry will be held in the case.

MR. BIRRELL: It was reported to the police that four panes of glass were broken in the male Catholic school at Ballinalee on the night of 22nd January. Six Protestant children have left the Protestant school in consequence of a dispute between the parents of the children and the teacher, and are now attending the Catholic school. The police have no evidence as to the persons who broke the windows and consequently on magisterial investigation can be held.

Land Purchase in Longford—Tully Grazing Land.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland can he state whether the Estates Commissioners have entered into communication with Mr. James W. Bond, D.L., as to the sale of his grazing lands at Tully, Asnagh, and Ardagullian; and with what result.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners have approached Mr. Bond with reference to his lands referred to in the Question, but he declines to sell. He states that he has himself worked the lands since 1875, and that they were worked by his father and grandfather before him.

Crofton Estate, Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in the case of the sale of the Crofton estate, at Kiltycreevagh, County Longford, arrangements for sale had been completed between the former owner and his tenants, but that on his death his successors have refused to continue the negotiations and instituted a campaign of eviction instead; and will he therefore direct the attention of the Estates Commissioners to this case with a view to their interference in the interests of peace in the locality.

MR. BIRRELL: I have already informed the hon. Member that the Estates Commissioners have no knowledge of the matters referred to in the Question, and that they do not consider the case to be one in which they could interfere. No proceedings for the sale of the estate have come before the Commissioners.

Newtownforbes Petty Sessions—Absence of Crime in Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at the last Petty Sessions Court of Newtownforbes there was not a single case for hearing of any kind; whether he is also aware that on the whole the charge of the Judge at Longford Spring Assizes was to congratulate the grand jury upon the state of the county; and will he in view of these circumstances now direct that the extra police at present quartered on Longford be withdrawn.

MR. BIRRELL: It is the fact that there was no case for hearing at the last petty sessions at Newtownforbes. It is also the case that at the recent assizes for Longford the Judge described the general condition of the county as satisfactory, but he specially excepted a certain district from this description. It is in this district alone that extra police are required, and the Inspector-General informs me that the present condition of the district is not such as would justify the withdrawal of the police.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: Would it not be possible to draft police from districts where their services are not needed instead of imposing a charge for extra police on other parts?

MR. BIRRELL: We are doing the best we can, but of course we cannot denude other parts of the county of police.

The Ormonde Hunt.

MR. HOGAN (Tipperary, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say whether Major Dease, R.M., who sentenced a number of young men at Cloughjordan last week to various terms of imprisonment on charges connected with the stoppage of the Ormonde hunt, actually seconded a resolution publicly to hunt against the wishes of the people of the district; did any other magistrate take part in the trial of these men; and were they tried at petty sessions or a special Court.

MR. BIRRELL: I have referred this Question to Major Dease, who informs me that it is not the fact that he seconded a resolution of the nature referred to in the Question. On 3rd instant Major Dease heard an application by the police to bind to the peace seventeen persons who were charged with cattle driving. The defendants were ordered to find sureties or in default to be imprisoned.

They refused to give bail and were committed to prison, but some of them have since been released on giving bail. The application was made to the resident magistrate alone. Petty sessions were not being held on that day.

Mr. J. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): Was the Major at the hunt meeting?

Mr. BIRRELL: I cannot say.

Mr. J. MACVEAGH: Is his special qualification as a magistrate that he is a landlord and a Militia major?

[No Answer was returned.]

The Dublin Crown Jewels.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Irish Government has been drawn to the detailed statement which appeared recently in a certain London newspaper to the effect that the police authorities, in their investigation into the loss of the Dublin Crown jewels, discovered the existence of a most grave and criminal scandal affecting a number of officials of Dublin Castle; and whether the Government will order a full and public inquiry into the whole matter.

Mr. BIRRELL: I am glad the hon. Member has asked this Question. The statements that have appeared in certain London newspapers are a parcel of lies of a particularly cruel and offensive kind. No grave or criminal scandal affecting officials in Dublin Castle has been discovered. No person or persons are being shielded from prosecution, whether for the theft or for any other crime. The police are busily engaged in prosecuting their inquiries. Criminal proceedings will at once be taken when any evidence justifying prosecution is forthcoming. A full and public inquiry at present would not be of any use, and would probably interfere with the course of justice.

Mr. MOORE: Has it been publicly stated that the right hon. Gentleman himself has charged one official in Dublin Castle with being party to a grave and criminal scandal?

Mr. BIRRELL: No, Sir; it is absolutely untrue.

Captain CRAIG: In view of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman that a public inquiry would not be of any use in this case, is he of opinion that the private inquiry, details of which have been made public, has been of any use either?

Mr. BIRRELL: Yes, Sir; it has served some purpose.

Captain CRAIG: What purpose?

[No Answer was returned.]

Irish Sub-Land Commissioner's Appointment.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state upon whose recommendation Mr. P. F. Mullaly was appointed a Sub-Land Commissioner; whether he passed any examination to test his qualifications; and why it is necessary to furnish this official with special assistance in respect of scaling and mapping.

Mr. BIRRELL: Mr. P. F. Mullaly was appointed by warrant of the Lord-Lieutenant bearing date 1st April, 1907, to act as a temporary Assistant Land Commissioner for the ensuing year. I am not aware that Mr. Mullaly was appointed upon the recommendation of any person. He was appointed upon his personal application, and the Lord-Lieutenant was fully satisfied as to his qualifications. He was not required to undergo an examination. The rules do not prescribe any examination for the post. The Land Commission inform me that they have not furnished Mr. Mullaly with any special assistance in the performance of mapping and scaling work.

Mr. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.): In what county has he been working?

Mr. BIRRELL: I will ascertain.

The Glenahiery Explosion.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the evidence given by District-Inspector Preston at Waterford, on Friday last, with reference to his Report on the Glenahiery explosion and the remarks of Mr. Justice Kenny thereupon; and whether, having regard to the publicity given to that Report by official sanction and to the fact that it contained a false charge against Lord Ashtown, he will direct a public inquiry into the circumstances connected with the preparation of this Report at Dublin Castle.

The following Questions on the same subject also appeared on the Paper:

MR. MOORE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the sworn evidence if District-Inspector Preston that his Report on the explosion at Glenahery was altered and amended in Dublin Castle so as to convey the charge that Lord Ashtown was privy to or concerned in the explosion; will he state if the Report was then signed by District-Inspector Preston; who were the persons responsible for this alteration; was the Report, as published, a violation of a rule relating to reports on malicious injuries in the constabulary code; was such alteration made; was such Report signed by Mr. Preston under the direction of the Inspector-General; and what action he proposes to take in the matter.

MR. MOORE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland by whose authority certain original reports and statements relating to the explosion at Glenahiery were removed from the file at Dublin Castle and destroyed, so as to prevent their production in Court on the hearing of Lord Ashtown's claim.

MR. MOORE: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if his attention has been called to the statement on oath by District-Inspector Preston, in reply to Mr. Justice Kenny, that he was prepared, and did do so, at the bidding of his superior officer, to put his name to a statement affecting Lord Ashtown in which he did not believe; and if it is intended to take any action in respect of this officer.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the admissions made by District-Inspector Preston on the hearing of the appeal arising out of the Glenahiery incident; and whether he proposes to take any, and, if so, what, action in the matter.

EARL WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether in view of Inspector Preston's admissions in the Glenahiery case, it is intended to retain him in the service.

MR. BIRRELL: My Answer applies to all these Questions. District-Inspector Preston, in whose district Glenahiery Lodge is situated, was, at the date of the explosion, absent on special duty in the North of Ireland. He was at once recalled by the Inspector-General and directed to make an inquiry into the circumstances in the ordinary course of his duty. Having investigated the circumstances of the explosion, he prepared at his office in Cappoquin, County Waterford, and submitted to his superior officer, Mr. Jennings, the County Inspector of that county, a Report dated 7th September, 1907, stating the results of his inquiry. The County Inspector forwarded that Report to the Inspector-General of the Royal Irish Constabulary at Dublin Castle in the usual course, and without note or comment. The Inspector-General, considering the Report to be of special importance, summoned District-Inspector Preston to the Castle, and subsequently took him, with the Report, to the Under-Secretary, with the view to its being considered whether it was desirable, in the interests of justice, that the Report should be communicated to Lord Ashtown and the local councils of Waterford as the opposing parties in the pending litigation. The Under-Secretary, regarding the question as one for the law officers, referred the matter to them. The law officers were of opinion that it was essentially just and necessary that a statement of the matters within Mr. Preston's knowledge should be sent to the parties, in order to prevent the undoubted surprise and possible injustice which would follow if these matters, as to the important part of which Mr. Preston was corroborated by the Home Office expert, Captain Lloyd, were disclosed for the first time by Mr. Preston as a witness in Court. They were, however, of opinion that the Report of 7th September, inasmuch as it contained suggestions and views of Mr. Preston, and matters some of which had occurred before his arrival on the scene and were therefore outside his own knowledge, could not be properly submitted to the parties, but that Mr. Preston should prepare a statement to be sent to them, confined to the actual matters to which he could personally depose. Thereupon, Mr. Preston proceeded to a separate room in the Castle for the purpose of preparing a statement on that basis. He, accordingly, prepared and signed the statement, dated 11th September, without any interference, direction, or suggestion from anybody. This statement was read in the presence of the Inspector-General, the Under-Secretary, and the two law officers, and no alteration whatever was made or directed to be made therein. It was then, by the direction of the Inspector-General, sent to County Inspector Jennings for transmission to the parties. This was accordingly done. The transmission of this statement was in no sense a violation of any rule or circular of the Constabulary Force. On the contrary, it was in the highest sense in conformity with the spirit and intentions of these rules. It contained merely a narrative of facts, and made no charge against any individual. The publication of the statement which afterwards took place was made without the desire, knowledge, or sanction of the Government, and the Government is in no way responsible for it, directly or indirectly. In view of the imputations made I have considered it my duty to lay upon the Table of the House District-Inspector Preston's Report of 7th September, 1907, and his statement of 11th September, 1907. It will be apparent to anybody that instead of representing a change to the prejudice of Lord Ashtown, the statement of 11th September was a modified, not to say a mitigated, reproduction of Mr. Preston's Report of 7th September. It did not contain a single statement not to be found in the Report of 7th September; nor was there omitted from it a single matter to which Mr. Preston could personally depose. On 14th September, 1907, Mr. Jennings, County Inspector, submitted a Report, in which for the first time he expressed dissent from the conclusions arrived at by Mr. Preston in his Report of 7th September, which had been forwarded through him. Immediately on its receipt, Mr. Jennings was directed to furnish copies of this Report to the parties, which he forthwith did. In the process of preparing the statement of 11th September, District-Inspector Preston made for his own guidance certain pencil marks and notes on the margin of his original Report of 7th September. He also made a manuscript draft of the statement which he had been directed to prepare. When completed this draft was typed and signed by him. The draft was then destroyed and the pencil marks made upon the original Report of 7th September partially affaced by him. This is the explanation of, and the sole foundation for, the allegations contained in the Question of the hon. and learned Member for North Armagh. No document upon the file has been effaced, destroyed, or removed therefrom. All are intact. If any hon. Member is desirous of inspecting the original Report of District-Inspector Preston of 7th September, with his pencil marks and notes still partially legible thereon, I shall be glad to show it to him. My attention has been called to the newspaper reports of the cross-examination of District-Inspector Preston at the recent trial at Waterford. If accurately reported, I can only say of Mr. Preston's answers, in view of the facts which I have now stated, that they afford but another example of the evident confusion to which an unprotected witness, who has been most severely attacked, and for whom nobody is appearing, can sometimes be reduced in our Courts, when in the hands of an able cross-examining counsel. Regarding the answers, it must, however, be observed that according to the newspaper accounts, M·.

Preston, on re-examination, expressly re-affirmed the accuracy of every single statement in his statement of 11th September furnished to Lord Ashtown and his own personal responsibility for it. In reply to the hon. Member for Mid-Armagh, the Government will not direct an inquiry, as suggested in his Question. In reply to the noble Earl the Member for the Horsham Division, it is intended to retain District-Inspector Preston in the service?

Mr. LONSDALE: Can the right hon. Gentleman explain why, in the Report sent by District-Inspector Preston, there is an entire suppression of all facts which indicated that the explosion was the work of an outsider?

[No Answer was returned.]

Mr. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Inasmuch as the original Report of September 7th is now published for the first time, and was withheld from the Court in the recent inquiry, and in view of the fact that that Report contains a number of startling and sensational statements, raising all sorts and kinds of suspicions with reference to this case, I would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Government can maintain their attitude of refusing a full sworn inquiry into all the circumstances of the case.

Mr. GORDON (Londonderry, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that on the hearing of the appeal, counsel for Lord Ashtown called for that Report of 7th September, and the Inspector-General of Police successfully refused to produce it? He stated it would be against the public interest to do so. Will the right hon. Gentleman say how he can justify the publication of that Report by laying it on the Table when counsel has not an opportunity of cross-examining with regard to it, particularly having regard to the evidence given by Mr. Preston, and the result of the cross-examination?

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL for IRELAND (Mr. Cherry, Liverpool, Exchange): Allow me to answer. The Inspector-General was distinctly informed that he was at liberty to produce the Report if called for, and he attended in Court with it to do so. Why he did not produce it I do not know. I may add that the inspector-general was subpœnaed by both sides, and was examined by neither.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: I must respectfully repeat my Question, whether in view of the publication of this new document, which contains a number of extraordinary statements, the Government can maintain their attitude by refusing a full inquiry into all the circumstances attending this alleged outrage?

Mr. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): Before the right hon. Gentleman answers that, and arising out of his reply, he referred to the White Paper, which has been in the hands of Members within an hour, although it appeared in the Press some hours ago. That Paper contains the Reports of District-Inspector Preston, two of which were already published and one of which has been withheld. Is it not a fact that prior to the receipt by the Inspector-General of the Report from Mr. Preston, the Inspector-General had received Reports from County Inspectors Jennings and Rodgers and District-Inspector Tweedy, and whether those Reports were not in direct conflict with the Reports of Mr. Preston; and why were they not included in the Report to Parliament in common justice to a man who is under a charge in these Papers, who cannot defend himself, and who is entitled to have the full case put before the country?

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is it not a fact that these Reports which have been asked for were already published in the papers?

Mr. MOORE: Not one of them.

*Mr. SPEAKER: This is really turning into a debate.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Will the Chief Secretary give an Answer to the Question which I have put twice?

Mr. BIRRELL: You see, the document referred to in the first Report contains, I quite agree, opinions, whether valuable or not, of that inspector, which are now for the first time given to the public. But the Government have long been aware of the nature and contents of that Report, and they do not see anything in the suggestions made by this gentleman of sufficient importance as likely to lead to anything. But if both sides want a public inquiry the last thing that the Government wish is to conceal or keep back anything. I do not think myself that Mr. Preston's first Report will afford much assistance to a public inquiry.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I give notice that, on the first opportunity available, I will move a Resolution to the effect that a public inquiry should be held.

MR. MOORE: May I ask was Mr. Preston accurate in stating on oath that in the Castle he was given by a certain number of officials in the case the heads of Reports to write.

MR. BIRRELL: No. He was entirely inaccurate.

MR. MOORE: If a constabulary officer——

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member has asked a Question, and has got an Answer.

MR. CHERRY: I may say with regard to the Question of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Dublin, that so far as I know, the first Report that the Inspector-General got was that from Mr. Preston who was the District Inspector for the district, and by whom in the ordinary course it would be made.

MR. WALTER LONG: That may be the case, but is the right hon. Gentleman prepared to tell the House that within a few days the Government did not receive reports from the two county inspectors and District Inspector Tweedy, in direct conflict with his Report?

*MR. CHERRY: No. So far as I am aware they did not receive such. The only Reports that they received, to my knowledge, were those from District Inspector Preston, and County Inspector Jennings. The other police officers belonged to different counties.

MR. WALTER LONG: I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether the Report which he says the Government did receive from County Inspector Jennings was not in direct conflict to that received from Mr. Preston, and why is it not included in the White Paper?

*MR. CHERRY: District inspector Preston's first Report was furnished by the county inspector without note or comment. County Inspector Jennings' Report furnished on 14th September, was sent to the Castle, and immediately sent to the parties, and has been published. There was no necessity therefore, to include it in the white Paper. Mr. Preston's two Reports are there, so that hon. Members may compare them, and see whether the statements made about the Government are true or not.

*MR. SPEAKER: Other questions on this subject must be put down.

Railway Communication with Belfast.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will lay before the House copies of the correspondence that has passed between the Secretary of the Vice-Regal Commission on Irish Railways, the Great Northern Railway Ireland), the Belfast and County Down Railway, and Dr. Wylmants Olpherts, Downpatrick, relative to the frequently recurring failure of the passengers by these railways, travelling by the 3 p.m. train from Dublin via Newcastle, to connect with the 6.40 p.m. train to Belfast at Newcastle, thereby entailing inconvenience and expense.

MR. BIRRELL: I am informed by the Vice-Regal Commission on Irish Railways that the correspondence referred to in the Question has not yet concluded. The Commission are awaiting replies to letters recently sent to the managers of the railways concerned and when the correspondence is complete the Commissioners will consider the desirability of furnishing copies for presentation to Parliament if required.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: Cannot some influence be brought to bear on the railway companies so that the travelling public may not be inconvenienced by the want of connection at the common terminus?

MR. BIRRELL: My powers in this matter are very limited, but I will do my best.

Cullenagh Cattle Drive.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether a cattle drive took place on the night of Tuesday, 3rd, March last, on three farms at Cullenagh near Maryborough, Queen's County; if so, whether he can state the names of the owners of the farms; and whether the police can assign any reason for the outrage, and have they brought anyone to justice in connection with it.

MR. BIRRELL: The fact is as stated in the Question. The three farms belong to Mr. Toler of Birr, and they are occupied by Messrs. Hodgins, Wynne, and Waters respectively. The police cannot state what the reason for the offence may have been. The offenders have not been brought to justice.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.): Can the right hon. Gentleman form any estimate of the time when there will be some arrests in connection with these outrages?

MR. BIRRELL: It depends entirely on what evidence is forthcoming.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): Is it the fact that this property has been sold and the Estates Commissioners have it for redistribution?

MR. BIRRELL: I do not know.

Ballinagar Outrage.

CAPTAIN CRAIG: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the house of a herd named John Minogue, of Ballinagar, near Woodford, County Galway, was fired into on Thursday night, 3rd March last; was anyone in the house when the outrage was committed; have any arrests been made; and do the police know of any reason for this man being molested.

MR. BIRRELL: The police authorities inform me that a gunshot was fired into John Minogue's house on the occasion in question. The man's daughter and son-in-law and their two children were in the house at the time, but from the direction in which the shot was fired it does not appear that personal injury was intended. No arrests have been made. The police are not aware of any reason for the offence.

CAPTAIN CRAIG asked whether in view of the reply that no personal injury was intended the right hon. Gentleman meant to distinguish between intimidation and deliberate firing.

MR. BIRRELL: No, Sir, I do not. I regard both offences with horror and disgust.

CAPTAIN J. CRAIG: Will not the Government take some steps, by reintroducing some measure such as that dropped last session, to prevent these outrages?

[No Answer was returned.]

MR. JOHN ROCHE (Galway, E.): Is it not the fact that this man is an evicted tenant, on the most friendly terms with his neighbours and at the time the shot was fired was he not actually attending a United Irish League branch meeting? Is not the impression in the district that——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order: The hon. Member must give notice.

Lord Shaftesbury's Carrickfergus Estate.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can state whether Mr. Thomas McKaig, in the West Division of Lord Shaftesbury's Carrickfergus estate, is a first or second-term tenant and, if a first-term tenant, why did the Commissioners threaten to exclude his holding unless he signed a purchase agreement at a second-term price within the zones; and if he will state the exact number of tenants in the Greenisland district of the West Division of the said estate, the number who have signed, and the number who have refrained from signing purchase agreements respectively.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners inform me that Mr. McKaig is tenant of a holding under judicial agreement, dated 10th January, 1905, and is therefore, a first-term tenant. As regards the exclusion of McKaig from the sale, it is to be said that he has not signed a purchase agreement. The Commissioners have nothing to add to the facts stated in my reply to the hon. Member on 5th instant on this subject. The Commissioners are not aware to what particular portion of the estate the hon. Member refers as the Greenisland district of the West Division, and therefore cannot give the information asked for in the concluding part of the Question.

Carntall National School.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if the Commissioners of National Education have decided to close Carntall national school, situated in the County of Antrim; and, if so, what provision is going to be made for the children who, by the closing of this school, would be compelled to walk two and a half miles to the next nearest school, many of whom would be unable to do so; and whether, in view of the fact that the entire people of the district are unanimously in favour of the school being continued, and some time ago raised money for its repair, he will consider the advisability of retaining this school, at least until better accommodation is available for the children who attend it.

MR. BIRRELL: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that they have not yet come to a final decision in this matter. The question of closing the school has been under their consideration, and they have referred the case to their inspector for inquiry. Upon the receipt of his report, they will further consider the matter.

Ballinalee School Teachers.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state the name of the present teacher of the Protestant national school at Ballinalee; whether he is aware that this teacher was dismissed from several appointments in the North of Ireland for political displays; whether his qualifications were examined before he was accredited to Ballinalee; and whether the Board will admonish him to restrain his political ardour in that district in the interests of peace.

MR. BIRRELL: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that the only national school under Protestant managership at Ballinalee, County Longford, is Curraghcahill National School. So far as the Commissioners are aware, the present teacher of that school is Mr. James Traynor, and this teacher has not served in any national school in Ulster since 1886. He served in two schools in Antrim prior to that year, but there is no record of his having been dismissed from either of them for any reason.

Irish National Board of Commissioners.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the meetings of the National Board of Commissioners are held once a fortnight, at which only about one-third of the members attend regularly, that the other two-thirds attend on an average about once a month, and that as a result the work of the Board is in the hands of the Resident Commissioner and a few of the higher officials; and whether, having regard to this fact, he will take steps to alter the constitution of the Board, so as to have it composed of persons of a representative character who would take an active interest in primary education.

MR. BIRRELL: The ordinary meetings of the National Education Board are held once a fortnight, but special meetings and Committee meetings are also held at various times in each year.

The Commissioners inform me that it is not correct to say that only one-third of the members attend regularly, or that two-thirds of the Board attend only once a month. They state that the work of the Board is in the hands of officials only in so far as the officials have been authorised by the Commissioners to carry it on. I am not aware that there is any foundation for the suggestion that the present members of the Board do not take an active interest in primary education.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he can say whether about a year ago the Commissioners of National Education appointed a person from outside the Education Office to investigate cases of alleged inefficiency on the part of the teachers; if so, whether it was owing to the Resident Commissioner or any of the secretaries of the Board having no practical knowledge of such matters, none of them ever having been an inspector of schools; whether such a person is still so employed; was there any justification for the appointment; and what salary was attached to it.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that in view of the change in the duties of the chiefs of inspection by which these officers were for the future to be largely engaged in outdoor work, they found it desirable, about five years ago, to bring in one of the other inspectors to the central office to assist in the preparation of certain special work which had previously been discharged by members of the inspection staff. The answer to the second part of the Question is in the negative. An inspector is still employed at the central office, but he receives no remuneration beyond his salary as inspector.

The Senior Secretary to the National Board.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that there is a great deal of dissatisfaction amongst inspectors of national schools in Ireland, occasioned in no small degre by letters frequently sent to them by the senior secretary of the National Board; whether he is also aware that up to a few years ago this official was merely a clerk in the Education Office; and whether, in view of this fact, he will say by whom was he appointed to the office, and what were the qualifications that obtained for him that position.

Mr. BIRRELL: The Commissioners of National Education inform me that they are not aware that dissatisfaction exists amongst their inspectors from any cause. The senior secretary of the Board was appointed in 1900. He was a clerk in the service of the Commissioners, and for the preceding ten years had been private secretary in succession to three Resident Commissioners, including the present holder of that office. The secretary in question was appointed by the Board, who inform me that the qualifications which he possessed were great experience and knowledge of the business of the Board and conspicuous ability in the discharge of the various duties entrusted to him.

Sir George Colthurst's Estate.

Mr. SHEEHAN (Cork County, Mid.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutanent of Ireland whether he is aware that in connection with the claim of the labourers and small landholders on the estate of Sir George Colthurst, Ballyvourney, to the distribution of the home farm amongst them, Mr. Commissioner Bailey assured the hon. Member for Mid-Cork, both personally and by letters, that an opportunity would be given to those who contested the *bona fides* of the tenancy of Mr. Jeremiah Hegarty of being heard in support of their contention by the Estates Commissioners before the question was finally determined; and will he state whether this promise of Mr. Bailey will be observed by the Estates Commissioners.

Mr. BIRRELL: The course which the Estates Commissioners propose to follow in the matter is fully stated in my reply to the hon. Member's Question of the 9th instant. Before coming to a final decision in the matter they will carefully consider any statement or representations put forward in connection with the tenancy of Mr. Hegarty. There is no record on the official files of any promise by Mr. Bailey to the effect stated in the Question. Personal correspondence of individual Commissioners is not recorded in the office.

MR. SHEEHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the estate of Sir George Colthurst, Ballyvourney, County Cork, has been purchased direct by the Estates Commissioners from the owner; and, if not, will he explain the circumstances of the sale and the terms agreed upon; have the tenants on the estate to the extent of not less than three-fourths in number and rateable value, undertaken to purchase their holdings from either the Land Commission or the owner; and, if not, will he explain how it is that the Estates Commissioners have been collecting interest on the purchase money on this estate, and generally treating it as if it were an estate to be purchased within the meaning of the Land Act, 1903.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners inform me that the estate of Sir George Colthurst is being purchased by the tenants direct from the owner. The average number of years purchase in the agreements lodged is: first term tenants, 19·9; second term tenants, 22·5; non-judicial tenants, 19·6. The provisions of the Act as to three-fourths of the tenants in number and rateable value undertaking to purchase are not applicable to sales direct from landlord to tenant. The lands have not yet been declared an estate, nor has the estate been inspected in detail.

MR. SHEEHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Estates Commissioners intend to make any inquiries into the circumstances under which it is alleged that Denis McCarthy, of Reinabubbul, on the estate of Sir George Colthurst, Ballyvourney, received the sum of £6 from the estate agents as an inducement to sign his purchase agreement; has this tenant since repudiated the agreement on the ground that his signature was obtained by fraud and duress; has he refused to pay instalments of interest to the Commissioners, and have they processed him and endeavoured to execute the decree against him; and, having regard to the special circumstances of this case, will he take steps to secure an immediate inquiry by the Commissioners.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners will consider any application which Denis McCarthy may make to them, with notice to the owner, that his agreement should not be acted on, but in the absence of any such application they see no reason for special inquiry as to the payment of £6 stated to have been made to the tenant. The Commissioners have no information as to the circumstances in which such payment may have been made. McCarthy has failed to pay the usual interest on the purchase money, and steps are being taken for its recovery.

Mr. Leader's Millstreet Estate.

MR. SHEEHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware thatt he relieving officer, Millstreet Union, has served the usual notice preparatory to an eviction on Cornelius Rahilly, of Carriglea, Millstreet, County Cork, on the estate of Mr. H. W. Leader; whether he is aware that the present rent of the tenant is £70, whilst the Poor Law valuation is only £25; that an application to fix a fair rent was dismissed by the Land Sub-Commission at Millstreet, in February, 1906, on the ground that Rahilly was a future tenant; that an appeal was entered against this decision, and the farm sold by execution sale, at the instance of the landlord, on 13th April, 1907, before the appeal came to trial; and whether, seeing that various efforts were made at a settlement without result, he will consider the advisability, in disputes of this nature between landlord and tenant which lead up to eviction, of recommending that the Estates Commissioners should intervene to bring about a settlement.

MR. BIRRELL: The Estates Commissioners inform me that no proceedings for sale in this case have been instituted before them and that they have no knowledge of the facts alleged in the Question. Assuming, however, that the facts are as stated in the Question, the case is not one in which they would have power to interfere. The matter in dispute appears to relate to the payment of rent, and the Commissioner's powers of intervention do not apply to such cases.

Seven Day Liquor Licences in Ireland.

MR. BARRIE (Londonderry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state the number of seven-day liquor licences at present in force in Ireland, the number of six-day licences, the number of spirit grocer licences, and the number of hotel licences.

MR. RUNCIMAN: The number of liquor licences at present in force in Ireland is as follows: Seven-day licences, 13,992; six-day licences, 3,019; spirit grocers' licences, 1,000; hotel licences, 229.

Horse Breeding in Ireland.

MR. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) whether his Department has been consulted with reference to a scheme for the encouragement of the breeding of horses suitable for Army purposes in Ireland; and whether the Department is prepared to co-operate in that direction.

MR. BIRRELL (for Mr. T.W. RUSSELL): The Department are aware that communications on this subject have been passing between the War Office and the Board of Agriculture and Fisheries. They understand the matter has not yet got so far as the formulation of a scheme for consideration. In so far as that scheme may refer to Ireland the Department will of course be consulted.

Technical Instruction in Belfast.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland) if he is aware of the need that exists for increased accommodation for technical instruction in Belfast beyond that at present available; that it can only be met by the provision of a building grant; and whether, in view of the fact that at the annual meetings of the Irish Technical Congress recommendations have been repeatedly made to provide such a grant for Ireland, and to the fact that it is supported by all shades of public opinion in Ireland, he will give the matter his favourable consideration.

MR. BIRRELL: The Department are aware of the need that exists in Belfast and in other urban districts in Ireland for increased accommodation for technical instruction. This need could be met by the provision of a building grant. The matter has for some time engaged the anxious attention of the Department, and it is at present under the consideration of the Treasury.

Historical Monuments.

MR. HORNIMAN (Chelsea): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether he has considered the need of an inventory being made of the ancient and historical monuments and constructions in England and Wales; and whether there is any reason why a Commission for this purpose should not be appointed at once.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: In the event of this being done, will not the first duty be to make an inventory of the ancient and historical monuments and constructions in the House of Lords?

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fifeshire, E.): My right hon. friend is not in a position to make any statement at the present time; but he is willing to consider any representations that may be made to him on the matter.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: The right hon. Gentleman has not answered my Question.

MR. ASQUITH: I said my right hon. friend is willing to consider any representation that may be made on the matter.

POLLING ARRANGEMENTS (PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHS) BILL.

Reported, without Amendment, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 86.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 86.]

Bill to be taken into consideration upon Friday, 3rd July.

POLICE (SUPERANNUATION) BILL.

Reported, with an Amendment, from Standing Committee A.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 87.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 87.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Friday, 3rd July, and to be printed. [Bill 150.]

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES.)

Sir **WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON** reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee A. (added in respect of the Law of Distress (Amendment) Bill): Mr. Micklem; and had appointed in substitution (in respect of the Law of Distress (Amendment) Bill): Mr. Arnold Herbert.

Report to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

NATIONAL MILITARY TRAINING BILL.

"To amend The Territorial and Reserve Forces Act, 1907, and to authorise National Military Training in the Territorial Force," presented by Captain Kincaid-Smith; supported by Colonel Carlile, Viscount Castlereagh, Mr. Hills, Viscount Helmsley, Mr. Lynch, Viscount Morpeth, Mr. Rees, Mr. Rowland Hunt, Mr. Frederick Edwin Smith, Sir Edward Tennant, and Captain Waring; to be read a second time upon Wednesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 151.]

TRAWLERS' CERTIFICATES SUSPENSION BILL.

"To enable Courts to suspend the Certificates of Trawlers convicted of illegal Trawling," presented by Mr. Weir; supported by Mr. Morton, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Leicester Harmsworth, Mr. Cathcart Wason, Mr. Bryce, Mr. Sutherland, Mr. Younger, and Major Anstruther-Gray; to be read a second time upon Friday, 20th March, and to be printed. [Bill 152.]

SUPPLY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1908–9.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a number of Land Forces not exceeding 185,000, all ranks, be maintained for the Service of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland at Home and Abroad, excluding His Majesty's Indian Possessions, during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1909."

*MR. **ARTHUR LEE** (Hampshire, Fareham) said he hoped that in the observations which he had to offer upon the right hon. Gentleman's scheme he would be acquitted of any hostile attitude or of any attempt to indulge in captious criticism. He recognised that the right hon. Gentleman's position at the War Office was not a bed of roses. He had his best wishes for success in the onerous task which he had undertaken, and whether his scheme was good or bad, at any rate it held the field. Whilst he must plead guilty to the charge of being an Army Reformer, he was probably the only Army Reformer in existence who had not got a scheme of his own. There were many things about the right hon. Gentleman's scheme which he did not profess to understand at present, but there were other things which, if he understood them rightly, aroused his apprehensions. He was aware of the perils which beset the path of the critic. An hon. Member, a supporter of the right hon. Gentleman, came down to his constituency a short time ago and, referring, he presumed, to the august hospitality which marked the initiation of the Territorial Army scheme, said that anyone who criticised that scheme was guilty of disloyalty to the Sovereign. He was naturally averse to incurring that charge, and he was somewhat relieved that the religious ceremonies which were intended to inaugurate this great undertaking had now been indefinitely postponed, or at any rate, that they were not received with much warmth by the County Associations, because, whilst one naturally objected to the charge of disloyalty, one would still more dislike to be suspected of impiety. He did not wish to discuss that question at length, but at any rate he was prepared to take the risks involved in a certain amount of criticism. Not so very long ago we had gone through a great war, and the lessons of that war had been investigated by a number of Royal Commissions and influential Committees, and if he read the reports of those Commissions and Committees aright it appeared to him that their general conclusions might be summed up as follows. First of all, that there was great need of a larger Reserve of trained soldiers; secondly, that there was a great need of a larger Reserve of trained officers; thirdly, that there was need of a larger supply of efficient artillery; fourthly, that the Volunteer Forces with their present training were not fitted to undertake the duties which they were designed to perform; and, fifthly, that we should at all costs maintain an adequate reserve of stores. The question, therefore, which they had to ask was whether the right hon. Gentleman's scheme or his administration at the War Office had remedied those cardinal defects. He feared it would be optimistic to say that they had. First of all, as regards an adequate Reserve of trained soldiers, at the present moment there was, as the right hon. Gentleman had admitted, an abnormal boom in the strength of the Reserve, but his scheme, when its effects became operative, would produce far less Reservists than the schemes which had preceded it. It would produce less Reservists because he would have largely reduced the units, because he had reduced the number of men serving with the colours who eventually passed to the Reserve, and because he was bringing home units from abroad which were put on a reduced establishment and therefore to that extent were decreased in Reserve-producing power. He was aware that the right hon. Gentleman was taking great credit for the fact that at last he had succeeded, when others had failed, in realising the Cardwell ideal of an equal number of battalions abroad and at home. But at what cost had he done it? There was another predecessor of the right hon. Gentleman of the name of Procrustes whose habit it was to adjust, in an arbitrary and cruel manner, the physical proportions of his victims, but it could not be denied that he effectually crippled them in the process, and the right hon. Gentleman had done great injury to the Regular Army by his arbitrary reductions. The present prosperous condition of the Reserve was as the right hon. Gentleman must know quite temporary and illusory. The Reserve was like a cistern. There was a pipe flowing in and a pipe flowing out, and the ideal was that those pipes should be of the same diameter. As a matter of fact, under what they might call the Brodrick system of short enlistment, the inflowing pipe was much larger than the outflowing pipe, but now, under the system proposed by the right hon. Gentleman, the inflowing pipe would be greatly restricted, whilst, when this boom came to an end about 1914, the outflowing pipe would be enormously enlarged and the result must be that there would be in the future a greatly reduced Reserve of trained soldiers. As regards officers the right hon. Gentleman had admitted a most serious shortage, but he would deal with that, if he might, a little later on. As regards a larger supply of efficient artillery, instead of there being more batteries under the right hon. Gentleman's scheme, there would be less batteries of effective fighting value. He was filling up some of the batteries with partially trained men, but at any rate he was taking thirty-three of the regular batteries and converting them into mere depots with two guns apiece and reducing their fighting value to an extremely low point. As regards the Volunteers, they had been undoubtedly reduced in number according to the right hon. Gentleman's own figures, and their training had certainly not been increased. As far as he could judge, under the Territorial Army Scheme, it would be diminished if anything. As regards stores, he did not wish to go into that at length now, but there were many disquieting symptoms in the Estimates which suggested that the reserves were being drawn upon and not replaced, and he would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman one specific question, viz., was the standard of reserves of stores laid down by the Mowatt Committee and adopted by the late Administration maintained in its entirety to-day?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington) nodded assent.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE, continuing, said he was glad of that, because from the way in which this question was treated in the Estimates, it was a little difficult to arrive at such a satisfactory conclusion. Those were the main points on which he proposed to criticise the right hon. Gentleman's scheme. They were bound to fill a looker-on with a considerable amount of anxiety, but there was one point even broader than any he had mentioned and which must be obvious to all. Our only effective forces were being largely reduced by the right hon. Gentleman, whilst the Territorial Army, which was intended partially to replace those forces, had not yet materialised, and the old Auxiliary Forces of which it was to be composed, had considerably shrunk during his administration. The right hon. Gentleman took up that point in his speech the other day, when he said there had been much criticism about reductions, but after all, he added, had the country ever the prospect of such a force before it, and if such a force could be got at less cost it was a great gain; and so on. The right hon. Gentleman held out to them a prospect, perhaps a visionary prospect, but, in the meantime, he had effected a very real and serious reduction of over 20,000 trained soldiers, and perhaps of twice that number when the effect on the Reserve came into full force. His chief complaint was that what the right hon. Gentleman had done, so far, was to prune down our existing effective force, while the force with which he designed to replace it was at that moment only on paper and might indeed be only an aspiration. He would like to consider for a moment the constitution of this force which was to replace those who had been reduced, in other words the Territorial Army, and of course he wished to consider it as it would be when it was completely organised and in full working order. What its fighting value would be was of course a very large speculation, but he must confess that the views of the officer, who was, he understood, the Commander-in-Chief-Designate of the British Army, in the event of war, were certainly not sanguine or very encouraging in this connection. Sir John French, in reporting upon the manœuvres of 1907, made these remarks, he understood, to all the officers of the Aldershot Division with regard to the fighting value of the Territorial Army. He said that assuming that three divisions of the Territorial Army had been mobilised for three months it was impossible to estimate their value as compared with Regulars, but it was not too much to say that the military value of the whole of the three divisions did not equal that of one regular division. That was not a very sanguine statement, but after all the General's estimate was optimistic, because he assumed that in the event of war the Territorial Army would have at last three months embodiment in which to prepare. Was there any ground for assuming that? If this country was to be invaded at all it would be by surprise and the period available for preparation was not likely to be anything like three months. We should be lucky if it was even as much as three weeks. Before he passed away from this point of the training and the state of preparedness of the Territorial Army, he wished to dwell for a few moments upon a very interesting point, at least a point which was very interesting to him, and that was the question of the proposed Territorial Field Artillery, an arm which after all required far higher and more scientific training than any other arm in the proposed force. He had had some slight spars with the right hon. Gentleman on this subject before, but he was sure he would admit that it was a very serious subject, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would recognise that any criticisms he made were uttered solely because he was particularly interested in this branch of the service. A short time ago he asked the right hon. Gentleman two questions in this House. The reply to the first he was in complete agreement with, because the right hon. Gentleman said the duties of the Territorial Artillery in the event of war in no way differed from similar duties of the regular artillery. Then he asked the right hon. Gentleman whether it was the opinion of the Army Council that the Territorial Army field batteries, armed with a considerably less efficient weapon and considerably less trained, could be properly confronted with the quick-firing batteries and high trained *personnel* of a Continental Army. The right hon. Gentleman's reply to that was certainly peculiar, and he could only assume that it was meant to be humourous. He said that these converted 15-pounder guns would be more mobile and better adapted for use within the close wooded terrain, such as the Territorial Army would usually operate in. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman had any reliable information as to the part of our coast which would be invaded, but there were many points which were open to attack which were not wooded and which would not lend themselves to the right hon. Gentleman's convenient theory. Then the right hon. Gentleman went on to say that he (Mr. Lee) had not applied his mind to the subject, but if he would read an interesting little book which had been recently published by a distinguished officer he would find it laid down that it was "absolutely vital that the artillery should be of the most mobile character, and the range of the guns necessarily short, and that was put forward to justify a statement of the right hon. Gentleman that the range of these new field guns was an effective one, although it was a thousand yards less than that of the guns supplied to the Regular Army. He took the right hon. Gentleman's advice and he invested the sum of 3s. 6d. in this book which he recommended him to study, and he had done his best to apply his mind to it. But why the right hon. Gentleman asked him to direct his attention to this particular work he could not imagine, because the writer, Colonel Callwell, who was a very distinguished officer and a man for whose opinion he had a great respect, stated, although making them far more clear than he could have hoped to do, the precise objections to the training and equipment of the Territorial Artillery which he had ventured to urge on more than one occasion. He did not wish to go into the matter at any great length, but he would allude to one or two points from the chapter specially recommended for his perusal. Colonel Callwell said that there were many areas in the United Kingdom where the ground was open and where artillery would play as prominent a part as in Flanders or Manchuria. He further said the invading batteries would be of the highest class and of the highest efficiency in regard to *personnel* and power of armament, and he asked the question if our batteries would merit so flattering a description. Further he said that we could not afford to ignore that the management of artillery in the United Kingdom presented exceptional difficulties and called for an exceptionally high standard of training, and that only highly trained and thoroughly compete nt*personnel* could hope to get a full effect, and then Colonel Callwell added, as a final refutation of the right hon. Gentleman's argument, that numerical superiority in guns could not avail. His concluding argument, which was interesting, and to him new, was that field-guns were not the most important weapons for this purpose of home defence, but light howitzers and mountain guns would, under the peculiar conditions of fighting in this country, be more effective weapons. Colonel Callwell's theories were reinforced by most students of war and by our military *attaches* in Manchuria, who had shown that it was impossible for inferior guns to stand up with success to guns of greater range and greater power. General Sir Ian Hamilton said, in a lecture at the United Service Institution a short time ago, that possibly three or four of these Territorial Army batteries might give a warm time to one battery of the kind now in the possession of Continental armies. That was a disputable, but, at the best, not a very encouraging opinion. After all we came down to this: was the Territorial Army intended for war or was it not? The right hon. Gentleman said he trusted it would never be called upon to fight at all, and if it was not intended for war it was a pity that money was being wasted on it. But if it was intended for war he ventured to reiterate his assertion that both as to its training and equipment it was hopelessly ineffective and handicapped for the task which it would have before it. His criticism came under two heads, first *personnel*, and, secondly, *matériel*. He dealt with the *personnel* question and the training at some length last year, and he did not wish to weary the Committee by going into it again, but he might say that further consideration and consultation with artillery officers only confirmed and strengthened the belief which he expressed on that occasion. Moreover, he believed, from all he could ascertain, that the officers of this proposed Territorial Artillery were awakening to the fact that they were being asked, or were going to be asked, to perform duties which they could not possibly discharge under the conditions proposed. Taking as a sort of touchstone the amount of training that was given to the Lancashire Militia Field Artillery, which produced results which were exceedingly creditable to the officers and men concerned, but which were not in any way high or very efficient, they could see that under the right hon. Gentleman's scheme he proposed to give to the Territorial Field Artillery not more than a quarter or a fifth of the training which was given to the Lancashire Field Artillery, and he did not provide what was the mainstay of that corps, a stiffening of one Regular gunner to every two Militiamen, and also 40 or 50 per cent. of the non-commissioned officers from the Regular Army. As to *materiel*, he was much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for giving him an opportunity of going down to Woolwich and seeing this new gun of the Territorial Army. It was most interesting, and he must say that the ingenuity with which the efficiency of the gun had been increased reflected the utmost credit upon the officers of the Ordnance Factory at Woolwich. They had succeeded in making a very passable brick with exceedingly little straw, but, after all, the gun itself was precisely the same gun that we had during the South African War, with the same range, ammunition, and rifling, and as far as the man at the other end was concerned—the enemy—the shell that reached him was precisely the same as it was before, although it might reach him at a slightly greater rate of fire. But the individual round was no more and no less effective than it was before. The carriage had been altered and greatly improved, and the result of that alteration and improvement was that it was steadier and led to an increased rate of firing, which he believed had advanced to the maximum of ten or twelve rounds a minute, unaimed fire, as compared with the eighteen or twenty of the quick-firing gun of the Regular Forces. At any rate, it had only two-thirds of the rapidity of fire attained by a true quick-firing gun, which was so-called because the business of loading was one operation. The cartridge, the shell and the ignition were all in one. In the gun for the Territorial Army the cartridge, shell, and means of ignition were separate, and there were three operations required for loading as compared with one; and it was that fact which reduced the rapidity of firing. Moreover, the result of the adoption of the very ingenious carriage made the gun more complicated than that of the quick firing-gun supplied to the Regular Forces. This handicapped comparatively untrained troops. It had another serious disadvantage. The right hon. Gentleman in answer to his Question had spoken about the gun as being more mobile, but he found that the gun as now altered was much heavier than it was before; it was, in fact, no lighter than the 18-pounder quick-firing gun supplied to the Regular Army.

MR. HALDANE: It is more mobile because it carrries a good deal more ammunition.

*MR. ARTHUR LEE said he could not admit that a larger amount of ammunition was the same thing as increased mobility. It had nothing to do with mobility; therefore, the right hon. Gentleman's contention about the gun's increased mobility fell to the ground. Then the gun had not a defensive shield such as was supplied to the guns for the Regular Army.

Mr. HALDANE: It will have.

***Mr. ARTHUR LEE** said he was very glad to hear that. Its absence would have a very bad moral effect on untrained troops when they had to fight. To sum up, he admitted to the full that the 15-pounder converted gun was a much better weapon than it had been, but was still considerably inferior to the gun supplied to the Regular Army. Its effective range was much less, and it would be outranged and outclassed by the guns with which it would have to fight. He must here relate his own personal experience of the lamentable moral effect that the equipping of untrained troops with inferior weapons was bound to produce in war. During the campaign in Cuba he witnessed Volunteer regiments absolutely demoralised, because they had been sent to the front with inferior weapons to the Regular troops. Yet they also had been told that the weapon which they had was most efficient and better suited, perhaps, to their requirements than any other, and that although the range was a little less, yet the bullet was more powerful. But, as soon as they came under fire, the effect of this was that these inexperienced troops were beaten before the fight really commenced. He thought that was the universal experience of war. But to return for a moment to the book which the right hon. Gentleman had recommended, and to its most interesting conclusions on the question of Home defence, Colonel Callwell said that what we wanted, in view of the character of this country, were mountain guns and howitzers. This field gun did not approximate either of those. Was the right hon. Gentleman going to accept the advice of this distinguished officer? Was he going to provide mountain guns and howitzers for the Territorial Army?

Mr. HALDANE: I think they are included.

***Mr. ARTHUR LEE**: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would give them some more definite information as to the weapons with which the Force was to be armed. On this point, he ventured to urge upon the right hon. Gentleman, both from the point of morale, and of fighting efficiency, that if they were going to have this Territorial Artillery at all, it should be armed with a gun at least equal to the gun of the Regular troops, alongside which they would have to fight. After all, those extra guns would be invaluable as a Reserve; they would facilitate co-operation in war between the Regular Army and the Territorial Force, because they would avoid the confusion of two kinds of ammunition, and altogether he thought it was a point to which the right hon. Gentleman must address his attention. The Territorial Army was bound to fail in war unless it was adequately trained and efficiently armed. In addition, he thought it was bound to fail in peace unless it was adequately, and even generously financed, and that entirely by the State. He did not believe it was possible to count upon any extensive private financial aid being forthcoming for the right hon. Gentleman's scheme. He was already asking a great deal. The service in the Territorial Force, and perhaps even more, the service on the County Associations was very onerous. It was being given at present without stint and particularly by that class, the landowners of the country, who were the object of special attack by some of the right hon. Gentleman's friends behind him. But there was a growing determination, so far as he could judge, in the County Associations, to resist any kind of private subscriptions for the Territorial Force. As far as he could see the citizen was perfectly willing to give his service, but the State must foot the Bill, and foot it amply. He believed the right hon. Gentleman's scheme would collapse from sheer want of men unless there was some more generous financing in the direction, first, of providing separation allowance to all married men in the ranks, and not merely to non-commissioned officers; and, secondly, that the one shilling a head which was to be placed to the credit of the commanding officers must be expendable at their discretion, after consultation with their men. At present there was undoubtedly wide-spread alarm in the force, owing to the uncertainty as to what it was the War Office was going to ask of the Territorial soldier. He was talking the other day with a Volunteer officer, who told him that 100 men out of the 113 in his company, as soon as they saw the attestation form, announced that they would not join the Territorial Force. It was only by giving them a supper, with liberal refreshments, that he persuaded them to defer their decision, and they promised to wait until the new attestation form was issued. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would bring it out at the earliest possible moment and that it would be of a reasonable character. If it was not, the Territorial Army, which was the right hon. Gentleman's baby, would, he was afraid, not survive its bringing into the world. With regard to the very important question of the shortage of officers, the deficiency which the right hon. Gentleman disclosed was very alarming, 5,000 at home, and 3,000 in India. This was a pressing problem, and the right hon. Gentleman's proposals to replace that deficiency were very optimistic, and, he feared, ineffective, to produce a class of officer sufficiently trained. The qualifications which the right hon. Gentleman proposed were so sketchy that they would really give these officers very little military value, if any at all. Take his scheme of *à la suite* officers. The right hon. Gentleman, who was a great linguist, was adopting a French expression to describe a German idea, and when he translated it into English it lost the whole of its substance. What was this *à la suite* system which he suggested as a parallel to that obtaining in Germany? There they allowed a young man who had satisfied the most severe educational, physical and social tests, to serve for one year, as a private, in the Regular Army as an "ein-jahrige" Volunteer. In that year he was spared nothing of the tremendous training which the Prussian private soldier has to undergo. After he had again passed the educational, physical, and social tests, he was given a commission as second lieutenant in the Landwehr. Every year after that he was called out for service with the same fully-mobilised regiment in which he would have to serve in the event of war. Yet, after all this, it was a matter of complaint in Germany that these officers were not sufficiently trained. The right hon. Gentleman's proposed scheme of *à la suite* officers was a mere caricature of what he had described. It would give no serious training at all. The right hon. Gentleman was going to take young gentlemen from public schools and the universities, who, comparatively speaking, had been playing at soldiers in the Volunteer corps of those institutions, and then, as the result of that very limited experience, he was going to let them off eight months out of the twelve, and was going to attach them for four months to a battalion at Aldershot. This, no doubt, would be a very interesting and enjoyable experience for them. They would do a certain amount of work, tempered with week-end visits to town, and he hoped he would not be thought wanting in respect if he suggested that they might be called "The Wild Oats Contingent." At any rate, they would have little, if any, serious value as officers, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would stiffen up the conditions for these Reserve officers, if he wished them to be in any way effective. In conclusion he would only say that whilst the intentions of the right hon. Gentleman no doubt were admirable, yet so far he had only reduced the substance of our defensive forces and offered us a shadow in exchange. The Government was mainly intent upon a reduction of Army expenditure, but the reduction they had effected in money was extremely slight, while the reduction in men was extremely serious. While the right hon. Gentleman had initiated a vast scheme dealing with both the Regular and Auxiliary Forces, they had yet to reap the projected benefits of it. While he did not wish to taunt the Secretary for War with swapping horses when crossing the stream, he did feel that the right hon. Gentleman was open to the charge of having hamstrung both his noble steeds as a preliminary to essaying the passage.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the non-professional cavalry and artillery were a point of the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman which they had seized on last year as being the touchstone to the value of the new proposals. The non-professional cavalry had already disappeared and with the exception of the Irish Yeomanry the scheme of attaching any non-regular cavalry to the expeditionary force for any purpose whatever had been abandoned. As regards field artillery, those of them who had for a great number of years advocated the trial of the experiment of a partly non-professional artillery, that was to say, of the Lancashire system, had always shrunk from the attempt to create a Volunteer Artillery, purely Volunteer, or even a Militia Field Artillery, purely Militia. They had suggested a mixed basis or a Militia basis with a longer training than the ordinary Militia training. These experiments, of which the late Secretary for War preferred the Volunteer to the Militia and of which some of them rather preferred the Militia or Lancashire experiment, were stopped by the present Secretary of State, and he proposed to substitute a Field Artillery on the territorial system which had been described with a certain necessary amount of vagueness up to now. The very deep doubts that many of them entertained with regard to what was being done on this subject forced them to give special attention to the matter. With regard to other matters, they were very much in the position in which they had been for some time past, but this was one which was extremely pressing at this moment because the rural Volunteer was being swept away. The whole infantry of his own Parliamentary division, for instance, which brought a great many recruits to the Regular Army, had been abolished, and the only thing that remained in the whole division, with the exception of a few troopers of the Gloucestershire Hussars, was Garrison Artillery, which he presumed would either be abolished or turned into Field Artillery. An hon. Member had told him the other night, that he was called upon by his County Association to put down two battalions of Infantry Volunteers and to create Field Artillery. That gentleman's brother, who was in the Regular Artillery, had informed him that the latter task was impossible of performance. It was a very pressing matter all over the country just now. It was a pity that in the answer to which reference had just now been made the technical word "quick-firing" should be used of the converted gun. In the technical sense it was not a quick-firing gun. It did not answer to the definition of a quick-firing gun, so that it was rather a mistaken name. In regard to weight, of course, our gun, even of the Regulars, was the heaviest of all guns. We had adapted a heavier field gun than any other Power, and all the other Powers concurred in thinking our Regular gun far too heavy. Now he came to the matter he wished to deal with in connection with this subject. The discipline of our Horse and Field Artillery had triumphed over the difficulties of the South African War. There was no portion of the British Army which had shown such a consistent discipline and courage in South Africa as did the Regular Artillery, and they came through the War on universal admission triumphantly. The reduction of that force was a reduction which *prima facie* should not take place until they saw their way to the new scheme by which it was to be replaced. It was a great pity that the experiment which was begun some years ago was not continued and that a proper trial was not made of the Lancashire scheme. Here again, as in many matters, there was no party capital to be made out of it. A large sum was taken year by year in the Estimates for increasing the three batteries to nine, but it was never done. Again with the mountain gun, the Monmouthshire mountain battery was abolished by the late Government, and many of them raised a violent protest against the change at the time it was made. But there had been a tendency to represent the retention of the number of men of the Field Artillery by his right hon. friend as waiting until he had something to put in its place. They could trace the extent to which the artillery had been retained rather accurately by the number of artillery horses, and in all previous changes they had been accustomed to take the number of horses as the test of the condition in which they were kept up. In recent years the Artillery horses in India had been constantly increased. A very large increase had taken place in the last two years for which they had figures. In this country they had been constantly decreased. His right hon. friend had ninety-nine batteries of Field Artillery at home. He was going to keep eighty-one of them as four-gun batteries, horsed, and eighteen as two-gun, horsed. He kept all, therefore, on what they used to call the lower establishment, and eighteen on an establishment lower still. As for the Artillery to be substituted, for this they had the right hon. Gentleman's own words as a test. He had said several times that no Artillery was of any use except the very best, and these words had been repeated by several officers of distinction who took part in two debates at the United Service Institution, one on the Canadian system and one on the Swiss system of Field Artillery. There it was pointed out that a very much larger amount of training both in Canada and in Switzerland was given to Field Artillery than to the ordinary Militia, and the increasing need for it was obvious when they remembered the difficulties of that indirect fire which was now almost the only artillery fire in certain countries, and when they remembered the claim which the French had rightly made to have a four or five years start over Germany by the mere fact of their knowledge of the quick-firing gun. That claim was acknowledged by the Germans, and there were German military writers of much distinction who had called attention to the permanent inferiority in which they stood. The importance of artillery was shown by the fact that the French, who had a diminishing proportion of the population and of the money that Germany had, were nevertheless going to increase their artillery by no less than a third, bringing their artillery in proportion to their Army to a far higher strength than had ever been attained before by any Army in the world. He had asked the other day whether even the short training of the Field Artillery now to be created was a real training. Were even the number of drills set down real drills? He had quoted recently the addresses given by two commanding officers and one adjutant, as to the number of these drills. The whole attempt of these officers was to persuade the men that there was nothing in it and that, having been nominal garrison gunners or infantry private Volunteers, they could easily assume the new responsibilities. They were told, for instance, that they would not be fined if, by force of circumstances, they were debarred from attending drills. Any genuine excuse would be accepted. No commanding officer would exercise pressure on the men. They would be in the same position as before. For recruits, the number of drills was to be forty-five, of which thirty must be put in before camp, but sometimes they would get three drills in one day. One of the officers asked what provision would be made for the drivers getting in their drills. Of course that was a most essential point. The driving accounted for the larger portion of the skilled or trained men in the artillery. There were some, of course, who were more highly trained still, but they were fewer in number. The Colonel's reply was that forty-five drills were required in the first year, but that three might be put in in one day. The adjutant said drivers would get a drill if they put in an appearance, and that presence at lectures would count also. Camp was only for eight days, but if a man particularly wished it it might be extended to fifteen days, and there would be ample time for the men to get in the required drills. These reassuring promises to the Volunteers where they were changing to Field Artillery when they had had no experience whatever of artillery, except a certain amount of garrison artillery work, led him to think that they would not be able to attain a high standard, even a Militia standard, for this Field Artillery. He did not believe in invasion or the probability of war, but they were going to spend a great deal of money on the creation of this Force and from any point of view it was necessary that the experiment should be tried under circumstances likely to give satisfactory results. Supposing the artillery were to be employed, as was intended, against raids and in the defence of fortified river mouths, it was always assumed that there would be Territorial Field Artillery available, as well as the Garrison Artillery in the batteries on the spot. For such a service as that even they would require an amount of training, to get any results worthy of their expenditure, such as this system was not likely to provide. In the attempt to create a Divisional system with its proportion of Field Artillery they were getting rid of Infantry Volunteers, who wished to remain in districts where a great deal of valuable service was given and where a spirit was kept up which was the very essence of the Volunteer movement, and which they would lose. It was, of course, much easier to get the men together in towns, but what would be the effect of these proposals upon that spirit, which they wished to retain, and upon the recruiting for the Regulars and the Yeomanry? He was afraid it would mean the total extinction in all the rural counties of the existing Infantry Volunteers. What had happened in his own division he imagined was happening all over the country in the rural parts. In his division of Gloucestershire they had three companies of infantry, but one had already come under the Welsh scheme. It was too far for the Gloucestershire men to go, and the result was that they had been disbanded. Only that day he had received the information that the Gloucestershire County Committee had disbanded the other two companies, so that they were now left with no Territorial Infantry at all in his division. In the rural parts good results could not be obtained so cheaply as in the more closely concentrated districts. For this reason, he expected that his Artillery would also be disbanded. They would not be able to get the same men to come into their Field Artillery, and it was idle to rely upon the chance of getting the same men to come into the new Territorial Artillery. The present diminution in the strength of the artillery, in spite of the retention of 2,000 men, was, he thought, clear from the figures as to artillery horses. The total of Horse and Field Artillery horses at home had fallen off very fast indeed. Last year they had fallen to 9,880, and they had fallen this year by between 800 and 900, and, in addition, they must deduct, he thought, 1,500 as being admittedly unfit. That fall had taken place before anything had been created to put in its place. Infantry were being got rid of, and the proposed experiment, which had already broken down in the matter of attaching Yeomanry as divisional cavalry to the Regular Army in the field, was destined to failure as regards artillery if pursued on the same plan.

*Mr. BELLOC (Salford, S.) said the remarks he was about to make were intended for the purpose of affording some suggestions upon vital points touched upon by the right hon. Gentleman opposite and by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean. In the first place, by the turn the debate was taking it was clear that the House appreciated, as he thought all weighty opinion in Europe appreciated, that artillery was the point. Gunners were often amused by the other arms of the service, and nowhere more than in Germany, of exaggerating the importance of their arm. He could not see how any man of historical reading, still less any man with a knowledge of contemporary Europe, could doubt that artillery was invariably the point. In the future, other things being equal, in a contest between two rival forces the artillery would more than ever be the deciding thing. In the case of the particular Auxiliary Force which they were proposing to establish the question before them was whether the artillery was sufficient for its purpose or not. Nobody would deny that if this country had a bottomless purse and unlimited resources, with a different history and past, they would prefer a Regular Force and that force only. They had, however, to recognise the fact that it was proposed to form an Auxiliary Force and that the artillery for that force should also be auxiliary. He knew that there was a great deal to be said against that proposition. For example, a somewhat parallel case—though not strictly parallel—was Austria-Hungary, where there was a system of Militia Reserve, but the artillery was kept professional. In Switzerland, the artillery received a more extensive and regular training than the infantry. There were circumstances in this country, and chiefly social circumstances, which would probably make for the strengthening of an Auxiliary Force if the artillery of that force remained auxiliary. So long as they depended upon an Auxiliary Force, with the present temper of the English people and the comparatively small choice offered, all these things probably made it wise that our Auxiliary Force should be homogeneous, and that the artillery should be auxiliary like the rest. What they had to consider next was whether for the moment the artillery proposed passed a certain minimum of efficiency, and when they were dealing with what he would not call a makeshift, but a second best, that was the point they had to decide. He agreed that it was not all they wanted, but they had to consider whether what was proposed in regard to the artillery passed that minimum of efficiency as far as *personnel* and *matériel* were concerned. As to the *personnel*, he had said before in that House, and he thought it was the very generally received opinion, that more training for the artillery would be a good thing, and especially for the drivers. He was not going to return to that subject at any length, but they could not make a driver in forty-five drills, and they could not make a driver at all with lectures. The training, in his opinion, was insufficient, and there was a very strong case indeed for increasing the efficiency of the *personnel*. How that would fall upon the financial side of the scheme he could not say, but if one had a perfectly free hand in the matter, the first thing one would think about would be an increase in the efficiency of the *personnel*, which he thought ought to be kept auxiliary. As to the *matériel*, there were, he thought, strong points of criticism against the converted 15-pounder. The weight behind the team was, with its ammunition, over 40 cwt. That was too heavy, and so was the 18-pounder. He believed that the 18-pounder was designed in a hurry after the lesson of the South African war, and before that lesson had been sufficiently digested. But since that time they had had the lesson of the Manchurian campaign, in which the Japanese Artillery, of which the initial velocity was wholly inferior to the Russian, had the great advantage of lightness, and that probably made the chief difference between the two artilleries. But if they complained of the weight of the converted 15-pounder, they must complain, also, of the weight of the 18-pounder. There was no great advantage in the substitution of the one for the other in the matter of weight behind the team. The converted 15-pounder did not use fixed ammunition, and that was a disadvantage which it was difficult to exaggerate. The whole feeling of a man who used fixed ammunition was different from that of the man who used ammunition in which the ignition charge and projectile were in three separate pieces. If they took men out of the Auxiliary Force—which was not at all an improbable circumstance—and tried to turn them into trained artillery, the fact that they were not in the habit of using fixed ammunition would be a very serious drawback. Granting the disadvantages of which he had spoken, and which might be taken as temporary, no one doubted that they would eventually have to convert their limbers and waggons for the use of fixed ammunition, and the whole thing turned upon whether they got sufficient rapidity of fire, and, in his opinion, rapidity of fire would be everything in modern warfare. The whole thing turned on the question whether they could get rapidity of firing sufficiently. The House knew that there was considerable controversy on the Continent for many years as to the advantage of this rapid firing. There was a considerable school in Germany who denied that it was an advantage, but they had been converted. We also had been converted, though very tardily. This was not a matter suitable to debate, but by way of affirmation of that view, if his personal opinion was worth anything, he would state that rapidity of fire would be everything in the moment of war. The results of the 15-pounder gun compared with the regular gun as 12 to 18. The House would agree with him that rapidity of fire depended more on the *personnel* of the Army than anything else. They might have a gun that would nominally get rid of thirty projectiles a minute, but the coolness of the man who was laying it counted for more in the rapidity of firing than anything else. The fact that one gun had a somewhat slower rate of fire than another was not the important point. What we wanted was the proper *personnel* to work the guns. As to the question of range, he thought it was the experience of all those who had seen an actual campaign that when they got beyond 4,000 yards it did not very much matter with Field Artillery what the range was. The fact that the 15-pounder had more initial velocity than the 18-pounder was for our climate and under any circumstances in which it was likely to be used comparatively unimportant. What happened in the Manchurian campaign was a stronger point in regard to the question of range than any theorising on the matter. The fact that the converted 15-pounder had a shorter range than the 18-pounder did not seem to matter, and the fact that the projectile was of less weight seemed to him to be actually an advantage. He did not think the weapon, which was merely a transition weapon, was a matter of very great importance, but the training of the *personnel* did seem to him to be a matter of grave and immediate importance.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): I do not rise for the purpose of replying generally to the broad points which have been raised in the debate. I desire to answer the questions which have been raised in regard to the artillery. I think it will be for the convenience of the Committee that I should deal with these points now. The first is a broad one, and it has been admirably dealt with by my hon. friend the Member for South Salford. We had to face the broad question whether it was desirable to give the Territorial Force artillery at all. My right hon. friend the Member for the Forest of Dean rather considers that it would not be desirable.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I am in favour of a mixed system.

MR. HALDANE: I am not sure how far the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite goes—whether he would take the Austrian Militia system of giving Regular artillery to the Volunteer Field Force. On that I have to say that the Government took a very strong view, and I myself took a very strong view. I do not believe that you can put heart into a Territorial Force raised on a volunteer basis unless you show that you are relying upon them for all arms. And how are you going to get the finest quality of men unless you give them a chance? The Field Artillery is recruited from big towns in the main like Glasgow and Sheffield, where you have artisans who are very highly technically trained men familiar with the working of the complicated mechanism that modern guns possess, and who are far in advance by their previous civilian training of the average man whom you take into the ranks and train. Sheffield and Glasgow have been particularly to the fore in the past, and they are showing a disposition to lead in the future. I admit that I have no hope of getting artillery as good as you could get if you gave men a very long training and took them together, but I do think it is worth while in making a beginning to try and get the best civilian talent in the country. I do not believe you will get a Territorial Army unless you make it an Army complete in all arms. The very essence of the plan is to bring in all arms and have as complete an organisation as you can, and as like to the organisation of the Regular Army. It is perfectly true that it is difficult to get people to give a great deal of time to this matter, and that the training for Field Artillery makes a great strain upon the time of the average Volunteer. But if the hon. and gallant Member opposite had seen, as I have seen, the keenness with which the artisans in the towns have come out and manned their batteries, worked at them, taken a pride in them, studied their mechanism, and gone out into the field with Regular artillery with a full desire to show that they can do as well as the Regular troops, he would realise that there is a stimulus behind these men which makes up for a good deal of the lack of opportunity. We have considered it worth while to make the experiment, and our only desire is to ask for as much training as we can get consistently with the civilian occupations of these men. I have spoken so far of the *personnel.*

I come now to the *matériel*, and I think there has been a good deal of exaggeration as to the shortcomings of the gun. I admit at once that it is not as fine a weapon as our own new field gun, which is second to none in the world. I am glad to say we are ahead in our field gun—I will not say of France—but of most of the other Powers. But when you compare the converted 15-pounder with the German gun it is very instructive.

MR. ARTHUR LEE: Is this the latest German gun?

MR. HALDANE: It is the gun that the German Army have. The German gun has an effective range of 5,500 yards, our converted 15-pounder of 5,900 yards, so that we are ahead in that. The muzzle velocity of the German gun is 1,525, and of our gun 1,581. In regard to the number of bullets in the shrapnel, ours is 230, and the Germans 300, and as regards the weight of projectiles, ours is 14 against the Germans 15. That is a very good comparison, for you cannot say that a gun which has a greater muzzle velocity and a greater effective range is deficient when compared with another. But even admitting—which I think is questionable—that the German gun is a better gun, it is not very largely a better gun, and it cannot be said that you are arming the Volunteer Force with an imperfect gun. I would like to arm the Volunteer Force with the 18-pounder, but I suppose the House realises that that is a process which would run away with a great deal of money.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): Never mind that.

MR. HALDANE: I would like not to mind it, but there are other people who would mind me, and very properly, if I were guilty of any such extravagance. We are beginning by giving the citizen Army a weapon which is good and efficient, but you are not bound to give it the best weapon all at once. Now I come to the other point about this gun. It has a more rapid rate of fire. Of course, it has not fixed ammunition, and the other gun has fixed ammunition, and the result is that, working at high pressure, you can probably get twenty rounds out of the 18-pounder for twelve that you can get out of the new gun. But to get that rate at all it is a fancy performance. It can be done, but you cannot do it in the aimed firing. But when you come to taking aim as an ordinary thing the approximation is probably closer, for the time that it takes to adjust the shrapnel limits the use of the gun. Therefore, no doubt you do get materially quicker fire when you have fixed ammunition. Fixed ammunition is an extremely stimulating thing, but the disadvantage is not so overwhelming as to put the gun with compound ammunition out of the category of a good and effective gun in the field. Fixed ammunition is heavier to carry. In the case of the converted 15-pounder there are forty-six rounds in 42 cwts., and in the case of the 18-pounder there are twenty-four rounds in 42 cwts. I do not deny that the fixed ammunition, when it is got up to the gun, is much more satisfactory for the purpose of quick firing in large quantities.

MR. ARTHUR LEE: Will the right hon. Gentleman explain in what way the converted 15-pounder is more mobile than the 18-pounder?

MR. HALDANE: Simply because more ammunition can be carried with fewer wagons. What is the use of mobile guns if you have not mobile ammunition? The two go together. I agree that the question of mountain artillery has been neglected in this country. In order to meet that difficulty the Government are arming the Highland Division Artillery with mountain guns. With regard to the Regular Artillery, on which I have been challenged, when the Government came into office we found a state of things which I am sure could not have been anticipated, but which shows the difficulty of military organisation. There are nominally on paper, ninety-nine batteries of field artillery at home, but you could not put more than forty-two batteries in the field, because no provision had been made for the increased number of men of the ammunition columns. No Power, so far as I know, possesses in its divisional ammunition columns a large proportion of highly-trained soldiers. They put in any sort of people who have sufficient training to go into the ammunition columns. The Government propose to do better than that. The first question we asked ourselves was, what number of guns is wanted for a field force composed of all or nearly all the troops which we have at home for the purpose of the Cardwell system, and organised in six divisions? Six divisions so organised are a much larger expeditionary force than we have hitherto been in a position to send abroad. What the Government aimed at doing was to arm that force with just so much artillery as would enable us to mobilise that force effectively, and not merely on paper. From the ninety-nine existing batteries of field artillery we took sixty-six batteries, including howitzers. We propose to form the remaining thirty-three batteries into training brigades at a low establishment, and to train people on a Militia basis so as to provide the 15,000 men who are wanted for the ammunition columns and the wastage of war.

Mr. WYNDHAM (Dover): Are the thirty-three batteries mentioned by the right hon. Gentleman to be taken for the Artillery Special Reserve, and not for the Territorial Force?

Mr. HALDANE: For the Artillery Special Reserve only.

Mr. WYNDHAM: There will be sixty-six battalions left. If fifty-four batteries are taken for the expeditionary force, what will be done with the balance?

Mr. HALDANE: The sixty-six batteries include howitzers, just as the ninety-nine batteries include howitzers. I believe there will be fifty-four batteries of field artillery and twelve of howitzers. The training brigades, if they are successful, will provide 15,000 men. They are at work, and into them will be converted the Garrison Militia Artillery. which have ceased to be of use and which have a *personnel* of over 12,000 men. The purpose is to provide, not for the Territorial Force, but for the Regular Artillery. The Government have gone on the principle of keeping the artillery of the Territorial Force and of the Regular Force absolutely distinct. To use one for the other would be to go back to the old state of confusion. We cannot get military efficiency unless we have clear principles, and clear principles demand that we should not use what belongs to one force for another force. That being so, we are producing sixty-six batteries of field artillery, including howitzers, to be the artillery complement of the six divisions of the expeditionary force. The point made against me is, "What is left?" Why should there be anything left? Nobody contemplates that the whole of the six divisions shall be sent abroad unless we feel that we can rely upon the Navy and the Territorial Force to protect us against invasion. If there is reason to apprehend invasion we can keep two divisions at home. That will give us a much larger and more effective force than we have ever had before, because it is a force as large as two Army corps, and complete in all arms. This force will be provided with artillery and ammunition columns, and with six months wastage of war, which we have never had before. I am speaking, not of that which has been accomplished, but of what the Government hope will be produced by the machinery that is at work. I do not pretend that these things have been worked out. We are discussing a plan; and the most perfect plan is a plan that will give us, not only ammunition columns, but also wastage of war. That is what we will get by turning thirty-three batteries into training brigades. Therefore this is an infinitely better arrangement than the old one. If anybody asks where should we be if we were invaded and wanted Regular Artillery and our six divisions were away, my answer would be, where should we have been if we had sent our forty-two batteries of artillery abroad and the remainder of the guns of the ninety-nine batteries? Under the new system we shall be better off by twenty-four batteries than under the old system. We shall have a much larger expeditionary force, and if we apprehend danger we shall not send the whole of it abroad. We shall be able to do as much as before and still preserve our safety. The Government wish to work the artillery of the Territorial Force and of the Regular Force independently of each other, except in certain points where we have specially connected them. To mix up the artillery of the two forces would be a cardinal sin against that principle.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said he was highly pleased to hear the statement which the right hon. the Secretary of State for War had made with regard to the artillery of the Territorial

Force. They were cordially indebted to the right hon. Gentleman for maintaining with difficulty the view he had adopted in the face of expert opinion. The Volunteers had done what they could with regard to the artillery and were willing to try and do more. He referred particularly to the efforts which had been made by the people of Sheffield and Glasgow. But he would not be doing right if he did not tell the right hon. Gentleman that there was a little feeling in Sheffield about the battery of horse artillery being taken away and put into a rural district in the West Riding. The experts, of whom the Secretary for War spoke, said that the artificers who resided in Sheffield would not be able to take part in the battery drills. That was a question which the Secretary for War should look into again. He thought that the Secretary for War owed some apology to the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean and the hon. Member for the City of Edinburgh with regard to the whole cost of the Territorial Force. These Members told the right hon. Gentleman last year that the cost of the Territorial Force would be largely in excess of that of the Yeomanry and Volunteers; and the hon. Member for Shropshire told him that his calculations were erroneous. To-day the Secretary for War had admitted in full that the new Territorial Force was going to cost a great deal more per man than the old Yeomanry and Volunteers. That was a very different statement indeed from the assurances given last year on the strength of which the House passed the Territorial Army Act. No one could accuse the Secretary of State for War of intentionally misleading the House, but still the fact remained that he came down now and said that all his prophecies of economy had been falsified and the force, it appeared, was going to cost a very great deal more per man than the old Yeomanry and Volunteers. It was to be hoped that the country would get an improved value for this extra cost, and that they would get as many men as they did in the old Volunteers and the Yeomanry, but at the present time it did not appear that they would. He hoped that the extraordinary old attestation forms which went out would be cancelled, but he did not know whether they had been altered or not. He had not himself seen or heard any authoritative declaration on the subject.

MR. HALDANE said the new form had been in the Vote Office since Monday afternoon.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT was glad to hear that the document had been withdrawn. It was high time it was, as it was such a foolish one. How it could possibly have been issued he could not conceive, but it was a great waste of money to have 500,000 of them printed and sent round and then withdrawn. In connection with the Territorial Force he hoped that in the future before any document of such a character was issued the greatest care would be taken not to put into it ridiculous things about imprisonment and hard labour, religion and baptism, and all sorts of things. He had not seen the new form, but an hon. friend near him said that hard labour was in it still; it was a great pity if that was the case. He wished to know whether the organisation of the Territorial Force in London would be continued under the old system of brigades under colonels of the several regiments of Guards. Of course, nobody had the slightest fault to find with regard to those gallant officers who had always taken the greatest interest in the Volunteers, and had done all they could to advance their efficiency. The object of the new organisation was that the brigadiers should be with their brigades if they were mobilised. Would not the colonels of Guards in the event of mobilisation be required by their own regiments?

MR. HALDANE: No; their duties in their regiments can be performed by substitutes. These officers will go to their brigades of the Territorial Force and command them.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: Will they receive the same pay as the brigadiers in the country?

MR. HALDANE: No; because in peace-time these officers still have to perform their duties in connection with their regiments.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT said he understood that the brigadiers in the country received an allowance of £150 while these colonels of Guards got £800 a year.

MR. HALDANE: As colonels in the Guards.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT inquired if that was to continue, and if a war occurred they were to give up their colonelcies of the Guards and go as brigadiers of the Territorial Force.

MR. HALDANE: Yes.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT said it seemed to be rather an extravagant way of managing that a brigadier should receive £150 a year in the Provinces, and £800 a year as a colonel of the Guards in London. If the right hon. Gentleman did not look closely into the expenses of every detail he would find the cost of the Territorial Army would very much exceed the cost of the old Volunteers and Yeomanry. The right hon. Gentleman had a paper scheme of cavalry, infantry, and artillery in exact numbers, no redundancy here or there, but whether he would find that the officers and men would come forward so readily under such a system was he thought very doubtful indeed. But whatever he did the right hon. Gentleman would have to watch very carefully the registration of the force and the expenses, and not make a difference between the expense of carrying it on in the counties and the Metropolis, and members of the Territorial Force should have equal opportunities of advancement in all parts of the country.

*MR. BENNETT (Oxfordshire, Woodstock) said he would like, with the permission of the House, to refer for a few minutes to a question already discussed at some length on these Estimates, he meant the question of the shortage of officers. He had known from personal experience how difficult it was to have to command a company of Volunteers for years without the help of any subaltern officer; but apart from this note of personal grievance, he felt sure that every Member of this House would agree with him that the question was one of really vital importance to the efficiency and success of our Army. He had no doubt that the figures given by the Secretary of State for War were accurate, but he did not quite understand how the right hon. Gentleman arrived at them. He took for granted that the shortage of 5,000 officers for the Home Forces did not apply in any great degree to the infantry battalions of the Line, for most infantry regiments appeared to be fairly complete in that respect, and in the case of regiments which had lost battalions through disbandment, there were a number of supernumerary officers waiting outside, so to speak, and ready to join as any opportunity for re-absorption presented itself. The startling deficiency of officers in the Brigade of Guards appeared to have been made good. The shortage in question therefore seemed to exist mainly in cavalry regiments, the Special Reserve, and Territorial battalions. The lack of an adequate supply of officers for cavalry regiments seemed, as usual, to be due almost entirely to the expense of living in such regiments. And, as long as present social conditions continued, he did not see how life in a cavalry regiment could possibly be made comfortable for a poor man, even if official and necessary expenses were cut down to the lowest possible figure. So far as any deficiency in the commissioned ranks affected infantry battalions it was due first and chiefly to the absence of a "living wage." He had known scores of men at the University and elsewhere who had been compelled to abandon any thought of military service on those grounds. Young men of promise and ability naturally thought twice before they embarked on a career which provided them with £90 at the start, and £200 when they had risen to captain's rank. That question of the inadequate payments made to an officer would have to be faced by the country sooner or later; in that case, as in all cases, if the country wanted a really good article they ought to pay a reasonable price for it. Any small and paltry increment in the pay would be useless; in fact, glad as he and other Members of this House were to see the private soldier in the receipt of more money, he felt rather sceptical as to the real efficiency of this increased pay in the matter of securing additional recruits. Most officers who had experience of recruiting would, he thought, admit that not one recruit out of a dozen when he enlisted cared about or knew about the payment which he would receive. This question of pay was not really one of the most operative causes in the supply of recruits for the Regular Army. On the other hand, no heavy increase in an officer's pay seemed, at any rate for the moment, to be expected in view of the swollen Estimates. A second cause which probably tended to act as a deterrent was the discomfort and heavy expense entailed upon married officers from constant removals and changes, and further, the lack of houses for themselves and their families at military centres like Tidworth and the Curragh. Further, it was probably fair to say that the unjust obloquy sometimes directed against our officers in newspapers and public utterances acted as a source of discouragement. Officers were frequently spoken of as if they were hopelessly lazy, self-indulgent, and inefficient. They all remembered the unworthy epigram of the South African war period, "Lions led by asses." And a noble Lord, who was intimately connected with military affairs and ought to have known better, alluded the other day to subalterns who were to be found after one o'clock reading a novel with their feet on the fender. He ventured, however, to think that most military messes would be drawn blank in the afternoon, and even if a tired subaltern were found at such an hour reading a novel it was quite likely that he had already been hard at work from 6 a.m. or 7 a.m. onwards—an hour at which his noble critic had not yet emerged from his bed—or had even spent the preceding night at some damp spot on Salisbury Plain or the environs of Aldershot. He would, however, like to join issue on one point with the exceedingly interesting speech of the hon. Member for South East Durham, who had maintained that the alleged stringency of our Army examinations kept many suitable young men from joining the service. The hon. Member had spoken of examinations as a method of weeding out incapables—or words to that effect—but a qualifying examination like that of the Army Entrance had of course a positive aspect—it guaranteed to the nation and the taxpayer a certain standard of ability in the young men who were to train our troops and control our forces. The hon Member had described our young officers as "paragons of virtue and knowledge," but, so far at any rate as knowledge was concerned, such a description was really extravagant. He had acted as an examiner for many years in the entrance examination for Woolwich and Sandhurst, and he could assure the House that the standard of that examination, while quite creditable and adequate, could not be fairly described as unduly high. The young men who succeeded in it appeared to correspond with, say, the rather better class of pass men at Oxford or Cambridge; and as regards the mathematical test to which the hon. Member alluded very few indeed of the Infantry and Cavalry Cadets took the more advanced paper, and the general standard was very far removed from that of the humblest honour man in the class lists of the Universities. As to examinations for promotion, such tests were, of course, always irksome to any man after twenty-five, but nevertheless he thought that few thoughtful soldiers would seriously advocate their abolition; in some cases, indeed, if these further examinations did not exist, an officer would never open another military book after he joined his regiment. The familiar statement had been made in a previous speech that owing to the severe educational tests at present in vogue the great Duke of Wellington were he alive to-day would be unable to enter the service. He probably would not, and if he succeeded he would be of very little use. These analogies from the early part of last century were quite valueless. Doubtless badly educated officers and men fought well in the Peninsula or at Waterloo, but then they fought against armies as badly educated as themselves. The hon. Member for S.E. Durham had told the House that he had come across highly educated men who could not fight. What inference did he wish them to draw—that uneducated soldiers were more efficient than educated ones? He sincerely hoped that that popular athletic fetish — the man with a minimum of brains, a modicum of character, and a great deal of muscle—would not be unduly worshipped at the War Office. To recommend any lowering of the standard of military education seemed to him a veritable counsel of despair in an age when warfare was daily becoming more scientific, and specialised knowledge was, so to speak, in the spirit of the times. Could anybody imagine such a proposal being made at Berlin or Tokio? The military value of badly educated enthusiasts was not at all borne out by experience. The so-called "lessons of the South African War" had long ceased to interest the British public, but after all the fact remained that the brunt of such carnage as took place in that war at Colenso, Belmont, Graspan, Magersfontein, Spion Kop and Paardeberg, was borne almost exclusively by British Regular troops, led by trained and educated officers, while irregular officers possessing equal courage, but the merest modicum of training were, as a general rule, from a military standpoint, hopelessly inferior. As regards the supply of officers for the Special Reserve and the Territorial Army, he thought that the grant of £20 in the former case would prove most useful, and would often be a real inducement to a young man of limited means. The right hon. Gentleman's scheme for securing a supply of officers from fourteen Universities was highly ingenious, and he hoped it would work well. But there was one rather disconcerting fact. Something like 50 per cent. of the young men who served in the University corps at Oxford—the same was probably true of Cambridge—were intending to take Holy Orders. The bacillus of warlike enthusiasm seemed to find a peculiarly acceptable resting place in the clerical organism. The University corps usually numbered some half-dozen clergymen among its officers, and he considered that the presence of young clerics in red jackets at a military mess was ridiculous and somewhat depressing. He was afraid that that fact—the large percentage of future parsons in a University corps would seriously upset any calculations as to the supply of officers from such a source. At any rate he sincerely hoped that not a penny of public money would be spent on any young man who, after his period of training, intended to take orders. No less a sum than £8 10s. a year could, under the new regulations, be spent on a man who in a year or two would exchange his red jacket for a black coat and so become quite useless — he meant, of course, from a military point of view. A great deal of nebulous and ill-informed talk was indulged in with reference to the question of promotion from the ranks. The hon. Member for Stoke felt strongly upon this point, but then he was a confirmed optimist in military matters. He had, *e.g.*, declared that directly an invader set foot on the shores of England a "million bayonets would flash in the sunlight." The hon. Member probably believed that officers could be produced with equal facility, and the only foolish thing that his hon. friend the Member for Leicester ever said in his hearing was his suggestion that military training was of little practical value, and that if a shrewd Scottish labourer were turned out on a dark night and told to find his way to some definite point—perhaps, say, a public-house—that would be far more useful training than anything that could be supplied at Sandhurst. The fact was that there was probably very little demand amongst the rank and file for promotion—at any rate under existing economic conditions. What sergeant-major at, say, thirty-five, would seriously desire to become a subaltern with less than £2 a week, and the certainty that if he were still a captain at forty-five he would be compelled to leave the service? As regards the County Associations he regretted that in some cases they had not co-opted a larger number of the local employers of labour—the most fruitful source for furnishing fresh recruits. Further, there was undoubtedly a lurking suspicion abroad in many places that the War Office officials did not evince a very sympathetic spirit towards the new Territorial Army. He hoped that this suspicion was not well founded. He welcomed the new form of attestation in lieu of the forbidding document previously issued. He believed that a highly placed official at the War Office in reviewing the earlier and more drastic edition of the form in question had said, amongst a number of officers, "Well, if that doesn't choke them off nothing will." Unless the new movement had real and practical sympathy and encouragement from the authorities he was afraid that those in the counties who were doing their best for the Territorial Army would be seriously handicapped.

*Mr. WYNDHAM (Dover): I feel some compunction in intervening thus early, all the more after the breezy speech of the hon. Member, which has exhilarated our proceedings. I do not propose to follow in a similar vein. I owe an apology to the Committee for venturing to address them at all when suffering from a cold, and I hope they will extend their indulgence to me, if I have difficulty in making myself heard. I should like to express my very great regret that the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Croydon, is prevented from taking part in the debate by illness, which keeps him at home. So far, the debate has turned almost exclusively upon artillery and the relation of artillery to the Territorial Force. But this Vote affords the proper occasion for scrutinising the Army policy of the Government as a whole, and to-day it is, I think, invested with unusual interest by the fact that we had last week from the Secretary of State for War a detailed account of the progress which he has made with a plan, the importance of which nobody will deny, and he accompanied that account with a very frank admission that the plan could not be completed for a numbers of years. That suggests that we shall not be wasting our time, if we scrutinise fairly, but very closely, that plan at this comparatively early stage in the evolution of the right hon. Gentleman's projects. If I am to attempt that scrutiny with anything like reasonable brevity, I must waive certain quite legitimate arguments that I may resume upon another occasion. I do not propose to criticise the alleged economies which the right hon. Gentleman sometimes claims and which we find to be of a somewhat illusory character. I do not propose to comment upon the fact which the right hon. Gentleman admits that his strengths are very far below his establishments and may not reach those establishments. I want to look at his plan: and not at his merits as a frugal administrator or the amount of material at his command for completing that plan. I shall, therefore, speak in terms of establishments and not of strengths. But if we are to scrutinise his plan fairly, we must recognise that in common with any plan which ever has been or will be proposed to the House, it is at once limited in extent and complicated in its design. Any such plan must be limited by the prior obligation of maintaining our sea-supremacy and must be complicated by the great variety of objects for which the British Army exists. I do not know that it is necessary to refer to these objects again, but if I do so briefly, it may enable the Committee to follow more closely the bearing of what I have to say about the plan. Our Army has in the first place to maintain our garrisons abroad, and therefore we must have a Regular Army at home as well as a Regular Army abroad. In the second place, we have to organise the Regular Army at home in order that it may liberate the Fleet, reinforce the foreign garrisons and deliver a counter attack if the war is ever to be finished, except at the cost of financial exhaustion. In the third place, we have to give to some other forces that amount of training which is necessary to liberate the expedition, to expand and support it, and to maintain confidence at home when both the expedition and the Fleet have gone from our shores. Admitting the difficulties of any Secretary of State for War who has to face that complicated problem, I say, if we are to scrutinise this plan effectively as well as fairly, we must test it by looking most closely at those points of weakness which are, I believe, inherent in any plan which any Secretary of State for War can produce under these conditions. Under any plan your Regular Army, consisting of bodies of troops trained for a considerable period, is going to be smaller than your non-Regular Army, consisting of troops trained, it may be, for a very short period. That being so the points of weakness in this plan and in every plan are to be found in those essentials to an Army ready to take the field which take time to create and which cannot be made efficient unless they are practised with units and with larger bodies of troops, with battalions, and brigades, in time of peace. What are they? First comes that which has figured so prominently in this debate, artillery. Secondly comes the regimental officer. Thirdly, I think I would mention the leader of a combined body of troops, the brigadier or divisional-general. In the fourth place we have to think of creating Reserves of trained Regulars for the wastage of war; and I do not think we can omit from our regard in the fifth place the provision of supplies and munitions of war and stores and, above all, horses. I leave out cavalry, because I am satisfied with the plan in respect of cavalry. When I speak of supplies of munitions of war and stores you have to think of something more than merely supplies. You have to think of the power of expansion in your sources of supply. These are the weak points in our position. You can make any number of guns in an arsenal, but you cannot make batteries in an arsenal. You can make an expert in the study, but you cannot make a regimental officer in the study. You can make an inspector of brigades, the units of which are trained separately for a fortnight, but you cannot make a brigadier. If you have a small long service Army you do not make a Regular Reserve. You make pensioners. In the most crucial part of the right hon. Gentleman's plan he is taking boys of seventeen for part of the year, mainly in the winter, for initial training, and is going to call them up at uncertain intervals for twenty-one days in the succeeeding five years. By doing that you will add to the ranks of the unemployed, and I deny altogether that you will create a trained Reserve of Regular soldiers. So, too, in respect of supplies, you can accumulate reserves of supplies at the risk of their decaying. But you cannot by that means maintain a power of expansion in your own Factories, or the workshops of the country. And, certainly, you cannot improvise horses. It takes six years to breed and train them. In the light of these general considerations let us look at the right hon. Gentleman's plan; and, first, at the completed part of it, which consists entirely of reductions. I need not dwell very long over it, but I must repeat that we dissent *in toto* from two of his reductions. We dissent altogether from the reduction of nine battalions of infantry in view of what I have said, and from his diverting thirty-three batteries of artillery to the purpose of creating his Special Reserve of Artillery. Take the remainder of his reductions affecting what were the old Auxiliary Forces; the abolition of twenty-one battalions of Militia, and the absorption of all the other battalions of Militia into what I hope I shall be able to show are mere depots, and not very good depots; and take again his reduction of a great number of Volunteer battalions, even obliterating a battalion of regular infantry and asking them to become Artillery or Yeomanry soldiers instead. By reducing the number of these battalions and making their shape more uniform I do not think the right hon. Gentleman is proceeding upon the best lines when he has to deal with a voluntary system. In a voluntary system it is unwise to reduce the number of your *cadres*. I wish we had an English word for that. "Mould" would do. We mean a receptacle of a suitable shape which is not necessarily filled with the material you desire. In a voluntary system it is a mistake to reduce the number of your moulds and to insist on uniformity of pattern. For, if they are fewer it is more important that they should be filled; and if they are all the same shape, less likely. I pass that general criticism upon the completed part of the right hon. Gentleman's plan. I say of these reductions, emphatically of the reduction of infantry battalions and the diversion of thirty-three batteries of artillery and, though with less emphasis, of the reduction of the Militia and their absorption into depots, and the reduction of the Volunteers and the impressing on them of a rigid type of uniformity; all that part of his plan, I say, must be placed on the debit side of the account. To see what the credit side is and whether it will balance the debit side, we have to look at the speculative part of his plan. Surely, it will be admitted that the whole value of the speculative part of his plan must turn upon this. Supposing we were at war again; supposing we were engaged in a great war, perhaps greater than the South African War, should we have a better condition of things than we had in March eight years ago? I think that is a fair test. At that time the criticism which was put forward with greater justice than some criticisms which had been put forward, was that after sending a considerable expedition over sea, and after some months had elapsed, we had no adequate machinery in this country for training fresh troops to supply the waste of war. Will it be better when the speculative part of the right hon. Gentleman's plan becomes effective? I do not want to trouble the House with figures. I am going to talk in establishments as I promised. Taking his plan and his establishments, before the war we shall have at home 130,000 Regulars with the colours, 135,000 in the Reserve, and that is a very favourable view, 80,000 in the new Special Reserve, 315,000 in the Territorial Forces, or a total of 660,000 men. Looking at their organisation from the point of view of infantry alone, there would be eight battalions of Guards, seventy-four battalions of the Line and 101 of the so called Reserve battalions which figure on page 167 of the Estimates under the Special Reserve. Then the Expeditionary Force of 160,000 goes abroad: the 68,000 men form the colours, the 70,000 from the Regular Army Reserve, and the 24,000 from the Auxiliaries. What number would then be left for training in order to make good the wastage of war, to expand and support the expedition, and to make the Territorial Force a real security for public confidence when the Regular troops have been despatched? There would be 62,000 men left with the colours and 65,000 with the Reserves, but those left with the colours would be the boys not fit to go on active service, and those left with the Reserves would be those less fit to go abroad. They would number 127,000, and where are they to go? They would of course occupy all the space in the barracks filled by the 130,000 men with the colours before the war. Under these circumstances the right hon. Gentleman would not have much barrack accommodation for proceeding to train the other parts of the Army. Perhaps the answer I shall receive will be that we must look to the Special Reserve. I may point out that for these 127,000 there will be very few definite units in existence. The right hon. Gentleman says he is going to send fifty-four batteries of Field Artillery abroad with this expedition, but then he will have no Field Artillery left in this country, consisting of Regulars, who have been fully trained. Therefore, the men with the colours, the artillery, and the men coming back from the Reserve will not find a single battery with which they can be trained. There will be only two battalions of Guards and eight battalions of the line left. I may tell the right hon. Gentleman that the task of organising 127,000 men into any force which can support or expand the expedition will be a formidable one. He will probably say that he has the Special Reserve, and that is the crux of the whole plan. If the Secretary for War can satisfy the Committee and the country that his Special Reserve is what he hopes it will be, he will lift a load of anxiety from the minds of many, who are really anxious that his plan should not fail. As it stands I cannot believe that this Special Reserve will lift any anxiety from the minds of any men who really scrutinise it. It is to be in two parts, artillery and infantry, and (in so far as the artillery part of the Special Reserve is concerned) we dissent from the right hon. Gentleman's policy. We doubt its wisdom, and we think he will have to retrace his steps at a great cost to this country and a loss of time even more serious in the work of preparation for war. With regard to the infantry, the plan stands in great need of amendment, but in respect of both I should like to say that until this Government resumes the barrack policy of their predecessors it will be impossible to train troops after the outbreak of war. It is clear that under these circumstances the existing barracks will be filled up by the 127,000 Regulars. What, then, is the right hon. Gentleman going to do with the 62,000 infantry and the 15,000 artillerymen of the Special Reserve? He cannot push them all into seventy-four depots, for he has admitted that you can only train 200 at a time in the depots. Under these circumstances how are these men going to be trained and taught? I wish to point out that in regard both to the artillery and the infantry the plan is purely speculative unless you proceed to provide the necessary barrack accommodation. The right hon. Gentleman has this afternoon asserted that by retaining only fifty-four batteries of field artillery and howitzers up to sixty-six, and using thirty-three batteries as a training school for this section of the Special Reserve, he has made our position far better than it has ever been before. I very much doubt whether our position under this plan will be any better than it was eight years ago. The right hon. Gentleman has reverted absolutely to the very figure at which the plan for organising the field artillery of our Home Army stood in the year before the South African War. The year before that war I introduced the Army Estimates, and I asked for fifty-four batteries of field artillery in the Regular Forces at home, and that proposition was almost ridiculed by the right hon. Gentlemen the Member for the Forest of Dean. At this date eight years ago we had actually sent thirty-six batteries of field artillery and six batteries of howitzers out of this country, apart from India and the Mediterranean. Now the right hon. Gentleman is going to revert to the same number of field artillery batteries in the Home Army that we asked for in 1899, although the lesson of the South African War was that we needed 150 batteries of Regular field artillery in all. If there was any lesson which was burned into the minds of all those who went through that war, it was that you had largely to increase your Regular artillery. I regret to note that the right hon. Gentleman is decreasing the artillery even below the danger limit, and by reverting to six years' service with the colours he is depleting the Reserve of the artillery which the Member for Croydon and Lord Midleton did so much to fill up. If you preserve your 150 batteries it will be easy to have some short service men, but the right hon. Gentleman is now going back to the prewar standard so far as Regular trained artillery is concerned, and therefore we must as an Opposition absolutely dissociate ourselves from that part of his policy.

May I now look for a moment or two at the infantry part of the Special Reserve? I ask the Committee to consider it, first, in the light of the provision of officers; and, secondly, in the light of the provision of trained men. The hon. Member who spoke last had a good deal to say on the question of the provision of officers. I am aware that we have to face a shortage of officers on mobilisation. The officers whom the right hon. Gentleman hopes to get, by certificates and attachment *à la suite* to a regiment, may be a valuable adjunct to our Army at the time of mobilisation, but they cannot be regimental officers. They may be able to read a great deal, but it does not follow that they will be able to lead at all. You can teach a man to read. But you cannot teach him to lead. There is, even, one form of reading which cannot be taught. That is the reading of maps. It is really easier to teach an intelligent youth to make a map than to teach him to read it with that accuracy, rapidity, and confidence which is necessary if he is to reach a place on the earth's surface indicated on the map. No one can read a map so as to be able to lead troops unless he has been in the habit of reading maps, therefore I dismiss these officers who are to be four months with a Regular regiment probably when the regiment is very busy. I dismiss them from my mind as regimental officers who could be put in charge of troops. Thus we have to look at the Special Reserve. Now what sort of training will those officers get, and what sort of officers will you get for the Special Reserve? Taking the establishments, there are to be twenty-six officers, Militia officers, who have not been fully trained in the Regular Army. The right hon. Gentleman has got to attract those officers to this work in connection with the seventy-four Reserve battalions in depots, and twenty-seven battalions elsewhere. What attraction is he going to offer? You can only get them by paying them in money, in opportunities for amusement, or in, shall I call it, glory? or general respect, and interest in their profession? There is no other way. Now, is any man going to come into these depots to grind away at boys at seventeen or eighteen years of age during the winter months, and then grind away at other boys, winter and summer, for five or six years? The right hon. Gentleman says that an officer has to do it now at the depot. But I would remind him that this work is now done by the permanent staff, who are men in the regular career and profession of a soldier, with hopes of promotion. Any one of them may become a colonel or a general. But these twenty-six officers of whom I am speaking are expected to grind out their lives under these sordid conditions, and in insanitary barracks, upon unpromising material, without hope of promotion. The right hon. Gentleman is very sanguine indeed if he believes he will get the officers under these circumstances. Under the scheme 62,000 infantry are required for the Reserve battalions. I want to ask a question, but I think I have the answer to it, because it was given to-day to my hon. friend the Member for Fareham. I wanted to know whether the recruit coming into these depots was at liberty to join the Regular Army at any time after going to these battalions, or whether he had first to complete his training. The recruit I now understand must serve six months before he goes in to the Regular Army. I think that is right, but has the right hon. Gentleman realised what it entails? It entails the cutting down of that stream of recruits which the Army has hitherto received from the Militia. When the men enlisted under the old system they could be taken by the sergeant the next day to go into the Regular Army at eighteen, and it was by that means that you fed your Regular Army. After they reach eighteen the right hon. Gentleman will allow them to go into the Regular Army but not before. To that extent you somewhat stint and diminish the stream of recruiting which used to come from the Militia into the Regular Army, and you prejudice your chance of filling up your home battalions. But who are the others who do not go to the Regular Army but remain in the Special Reserve? They are boys of seventeen. They are those youths who are never going to be tested. And, yet, it is upon them that the right hon. Gentleman is going to rely for his trained Regular Reserves who are to make up the wastage of the Regular Army. In the old days it used to be said that of every three men who went into the British Army only one survived to be of use in the Reserve. I think that was putting it too high. I think it was one in every four. But even for that system there was this to be said. A man who had been seven years with the colours was a man whose constitution was firm and who knew his business. On the other hand, these youths will never be tested under the system now proposed. The Special Reserve, unless it is very much amended, will crumble under the stress of war, and when it crumbles it will reveal what we have always said is the great defect of the right hon. Gentleman's scheme. It will leave a great gap, or chasm, between the Regular Army and the citizen Army. There is in this scheme no plan for bridging that gap in time of peace. If you try to bridge it in time of war, you will only produce a chaotic result. I have endeavoured to scrutinise the plan fairly; and, certainly, closely. I am far from saying that it is incapable of being amended. If the right hon. Gentleman will make his infantry Special Reserve a Reserve of battalions, and not a Reserve of depots, I think more could be said for it. At present it is a mere set of recruiting shops. The right hon. Gentleman the other night professed great regard for the Cardwell system. If he will make these Reserve battalions into battalions regularly and progressively trained during a whole year, he will be carrying out the Cardwell system to the conclusion which Lord Cardwell seems to have thought necessary if it was really to supply this country with the Army it needed. The Cardwell system was at one time exposed to a great deal of criticism and even obloquy. It was restored to its position in the public confidence largely by the action and evidence of one man, Sir Patrick MacDougall. He said that, if the Cardwell system was to work, you must do two things. The first was to identify the Militia more closely with the depots of the Line. Well, the Government have done that with a vengeance. They have absorbed the Militia in the depots of the Line. But he went on to say that that was useless if they attempted to turn a depot into a battalion during the "hurry and rush" of a war. That is what will happen if the right hon. Gentleman does not amend his scheme and make these battalions battalions in fact as well as in name—battalions in which the recruit will be trained progressively in squad drill, battalion drill, and brigade drill, and in which he will attend manœuvres during one year of his life. I think it ought to be two years. If the right hon. Gentleman does not do that, he will be courting disaster. I have endeavoured to show that the value of the plan depends upon the conditions it will give us some two or three months after an expedition has started in a war. I have said that, those conditions will depend, in the main, upon this part of the right hon. Gentleman's scheme, namely, the Special Reserve. We reject the artillery part of that scheme, and we do not think the infantry part will stand the strain of war unless it is amended in the direction I have ventured to indicate. I ought to answer a question which suggests itself to my mind, namely—What of the Territorial Force? We wish that Force well. I do not see how the right hon. Gentleman will ever be able to mobilise that Force unless the Government resumes the barrack policy of their predecessors. I have indicated earlier that he cannot mobilise his Special Reserve under the existing conditions of barracks. Apart from that, the new Territorial Force is now the old Volunteers and the old Yeomanry paid a little bit more or a little bit less, trained a little bit more or a little bit less, but we do hope, better equipped, better staffed, and better led. I hope all those anticipations will be fulfilled. But I cannot say too earnestly that, unless the right hon. Gentleman by amending the Special Reserve portion of his scheme, places something substantial between the citizen army and the Line, a burden will be cast on the citizen force which it cannot bear —which it cannot be expected to bear— except at a cost infinitely above any sum which has been mentioned in the House, and, in my opinion, some compulsory provision adopted, not for the sake of fighting efficiency but for the sake of fairness as between man and man, when you are asking the citizen to give up not only, as he does now, his holiday, but, as he must then, a considerable portion of his working and wage-earning time.

*Mr. REES (Montgomery Boroughs) said that after all this great scheme depended in a great measure upon the County Associations, and he wished to ask something connected with the Territorial division of his own county. It was proposed that there should be a North Wales Infantry Brigade, with headquarters at Wrexham. That brigade was to consist in part of companies of infantry drawn from Merionethshire and Montgomeryshire. Merionethshire was not so much worthy of the attention of the right hon. Gentleman as Montgomeryshire—a county that had always provided the Army with Regular soldiers, militiamen, volunteers, and yeomanry. It was worth the while of the right hon. Gentleman to take special pains to encourage a county like Montgomeryshire, which was not backward in performing its duty in this all-important respect. He did not believe they would get very many men from Merionethshire. Then it was decided that their Militia battalion was to be disbanded and that their colours were to be handed over to the Territorial Force. Notices had been sent round asking the officers and men whether they would serve in the new Territorial battalion. He was happy to tell the right hon. Gentleman that the officers had all consented to do so. They naturally did not like their regiment to be abolished after having been in existence since the days of Queen Elizabeth, serving in the Crimea and fighting in South Africa. That was to their credit, and nothing else could be expected. They felt the abolition very much and so did the county. As regarded the men, they were behaving very well, and were willing to transfer, but the transfer must be made quickly, or they would retire or go into another force. He begged the right hon. Gentleman, in order to ensure his scheme a good trial in Montgomeryshire, to keep the Cardiganshire company at Aberystwyth for Montgomeryshire and to see that the transfer from Militia to Territorial Army was effected as early as possible. A matter in connection with the present state of affairs which he would like the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider was his refusal to make the Volunteer regimental sergeant-majors warrant officers. He was not an expert, and he did not see the objection to that being done. He knew that one advantage would be that it would greatly please these officers, and he would beg the right hon. Gentleman to give the matter his best consideration. He would also appeal on behalf of the quartermasters. They were men whose future appeared to be somewhat precarious. A great amount of work had fallen on them during the past few months, and it would be hard if they were to be thrown out of employment, and if they did not get some consideration in the shape of pay for the work they had done in connection with the new scheme. He regretted, too, that separation allowance was not given to privates in the Territorial Army, and commended this matter to the attention of the right hon. Gentleman. The Secretary of State had shown a conciliatory disposition in other matters, and he was sure he would consider the points to which he had called attention. If he had not brought them before the House these matters might not have received that full recognition which they deserved. As regarded the secretary to the County Association, in his county the secretary, Major Mytton, received the magnificent salary of £40 a year. There was once a curate who was passing rich on £40 a year, but they could not get a War Minister even for a County Association on that sum, and he would like this gentleman to get better pay. It was quite true that he made his salary up to £60 by adding on the duties of Merionethshire, but he should have more, because he was a good officer who went out to the Boer War, had influence in the county, and would do the work well. They had also a capable and energetic chairman in Mr. Lomax, and he believed that affairs would march. Many hon. Members had attacked the Cardwell system of linked battalions for supplying our Army abroad, but he had not heard of any other working system which would do the work so well. If there was such a scheme it would be interesting to know if it possibly could be regarded as a substitute for the Cardwell system. There was, so far as he knew, only the alternative of a locally raised long-service Army for India, but he did not think that the men could be raised in that way as in former days. These old soldiers were splendid fighters, who fought in forage-caps, drank brandy, used language, and defeated with great slaughter every enemy they were sent to attack. But they could not get such men now in India, neither would public opinion of the present day regard them altogether with approval. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the cadet corps in his speech. Did he refer to the cadet corps in the public schools only or to the other cadet corps as well, and was any difference to be made between them? Were the rifle corps at Eton and Harrow, for instance, to be changed in any way?

MR. HALDANE said that the cadet corps of public schools like Eton and Harrow were now organised under the General Staff as Volunteer corps, and would be part of the Corps of Officers being trained. They would be in no way discouraged; on the contrary, they would be continued as at present.

*MR. REES said he was very glad indeed to hear it, as it was a very admirable training for the boys of these two schools, who had lately fought a bloodless and interesting battle on the plains of Uxbridge. The system was admirable, and he had the opportunity of seeing how good it was mentally and physically for the boys, and how it developed in them a sense of discipline, and of combined action, as well as teaching them how safely and usefully to handle their weapons. The hon. Member for Woodstock had referred to various matters which he thought tended to discourage the right sort of men coming into the Army as officers. One reason which made the Army unpopular as a profession was the unnatural and unreasonable fuss and criticism which was made when any domestic disturbance occurred owing to any officer not being able to get on with his brother officers. He thought that the officers of a regiment formed the most just tribunal in the world, and he did not think that any hon. Member in the House could display more tact, consideration or kindliness than they showed to comrades who had risen from the ranks, or to any brother officer, unless he set himself against the excellent traditions, habits, and customs of the average British officer. He must say that he had always admired that in the officers in the Army. It had not been proved that officers combined to oppress other officers who were not likely to turn out efficient, and the manner in which some commanding officers had been treated when a charge of that kind was brought forward was enough to turn good men away from the Army. Their conduct was not only brought before the Army Council, but before the hon. Member for South Donegal, who claimed some special jurisdiction in such matters, and before the House. They were tried and re-tried before the whole matter was over, and though they had done their best, and often deserved sympathy quite as much as the so-called victims, they were treated as malefactors. He was certain that officers were rather afraid, not of doing their duty at the front in the day of battle, or of doing it day by day in time of peace, but of being haled before the public in that way and disparaged in the newspapers and the House of Commons. Too much was made of what he regarded as domestic matters in the regiments affected, and he pleaded for forbearance, and urged that regiments knew what was good for them and for the Service, at least as well as the Press and Parliament.

MR. CROOKS (Woolwich) said he wished to ask the indulgence of the House as he did not feel quite robust after his long illness. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War would give some better assurance than he had done in regard to national public safety as to the condition of things at Woolwich. Last year, for reasons, they were shut out of an opportunity of discussing the discharges at Woolwich Arsenal, and what was called the "minimum." Numerous questions were asked, but the answers to them were on the whole unsatisfactory. There were many deputations and demonstrations which took the side of Woolwich as Woolwich, and said that it was a national danger to deplete the Arsenal of the best kind of workmen. The Secretary for War had absolutely ignored the conclusions of the Committee over which the hon. Member for Barnard Castle had presided, and the result of the policy adopted by the right hon. Gentleman was that the indirect expenditure for the work being done on armaments had increased in some cases by 40, 50, and 100 per cent., while machinery which cost £250,000 was lying idle in the Arsenal at the present moment The best workmen were now looking askance at Government employment, whereas the nation should aim at safeguarding the employment of such men and show an example to private employers. 1898 could be taken as a normal year; from 1886–87 until 1898 there was a steady increase in the number of men employed as the Army Estimates increased. In 1898 the Army Estimates had reached £20,096,000. This year they were £27,459,000, an increase of £7,363,000 over the year 1898, yet the normal strength of the Arsenal had been reduced by 3,400 men, and the productive strength by 4,130 men. If the Navy Estimates were taken with the Army Estimates, it would be found that the expenditure was increased by over £20,000,000 since 1898. Yet the Arsenal was reduced below the productive peace strength of 1898 by over 4,000 men. The increase in strength of the Arsenal up to 1898, as the Army Estimates increased, and the decrease in the strength of the Arsenal since the war, notwithstanding the continued increased Army expenditure, showed pretty conclusively that during the war the contractors had got a grip on the permanent officials that had resulted in the policy of the minimum for Ordnance Factories. As to Establishment Charges, in the year 1898 when the number of productive workers was 13,479 the strength of the Central Office Stores and Medical Department was 510 men. Now it was 642. The total charges for establishment and indirect expenditure amounted approximately to £900,000 per annum. On a basis of 9,000 for "minimum," and not 8,400 as fixed, this meant that every productive worker had to earn £100 per annum besides his wages to cover establishment and indirect charges. It actually worked out at more than this, but he had taken round figures for purpose of illustration. Was that business? What did the business men of the House say to a policy that was costing the nation hundreds of thousands of pounds per annum? Both the Murray Committee and the responsible Ministers agreed that it was necessary to keep the establishment on a war footing while reducing the productive side to a minimum. The consequence was that every job done for the Army and Navy, whether by the Ordnance Factories or the contractors, cost the country more. In the Royal Carriage Department the percentage charged on production for indirect expenditure had reached over 100 per cent. Every job given away from Woolwich which could be done there meant a less chance of reducing the enormous percentage of indirect expenditure, and consequently an enhanced cost to the nation. He would give an illustration. Recently the Royal Carriage Department was asked for an estimate for the manufacture of stores. The estimated price worked out at £9,633 12s., as against £7,964, the trade price. As the loss of the order would have meant a further discharge of men in the Royal Carriage Department, which was already below the "minimum," an analysis of the price was submitted to the Army Council with the view of obtaining the order although the estimated price was higher than the trade price. The analysis proved that of the £9,633 12s. no less a sum than £2,417 1s. was charged as general indirect expenditure, which would have to be met whether the Royal Carriage Department had the order or not. That was to say if the Arsenal was kept fully employed the price could be reduced by £2,417 1s., making the price £7,216 11s. as against the £7,964 of the trade. The serious part to business men was that if the work was given to the trade it would mean that the cost of the job would be £7,964 plus £2,417 which the Ordnance Factories were taxed with because it was not fully employed, making a total of £10,381 1s., as against the £9,633 12s. charged by the Royal Carriage Department, including the percentage of indirect expenditure. The Master-General of Ordnance, in submitting the analysis to the Army Council with the recommendation that he should be empowered to give the work to the Royal Carriage Department, made the significant comment—

> "Although the prices quoted by the factory will involve some extra expense (over trade price) it must be remembered that the work will assist in reducing the proportion of indirect charges borne by our other orders."

The Army Council agreed that the Master-General of Ordnance—

> "Should give such orders to the factories as will enable him to provide the necessary employment for the minimum establishment of the Royal Carriage Department when the estimated cost is not more than 20 per cent. in excess of the trade price."

On this decision of the Army Council the even more significant comment was made by a responsible officer—

> "That in view of increased indirect expenditure (now 100 per cent.) 60 per cent. increase over trade prices appears to form a fairer basis of comparison than 20 per cent."

Both from a business point of view, and the point of view of the safety of the nation the minimum stood condemned. The illustration he had given showed how on a £10,000 order the enhanced cost to the nation, by reason of the minimum, reached the sum of £2,400. The percentage charged for indirect expenditure on production when the Arsenal was employed as in 1898 was between 40 and 50 per cent. On the minimum it was 100 per cent. It was therefore a simple sum in proportion to find out what the policy of the minimum was costing the country. The "minimum" also tended to remove that competitive check on contractors' prices, which hitherto had been some sort of a safeguard against "ring" prices. He thought the facts he had quoted were sufficient to show that the War Office or the Army Council could have kept the Arsenal fully employed without loss to the nation. Even the Murray Committee were constrained to report, after suggesting that the minimum should be 8,000, that the Chief Superintendent of Ordnance Factories had given in evidence—

> "That he considered the present total of 14,037 (employed in November, 1906) was not susceptible of any further reduction."

The Committee after recording this grave warning said—

> "We do not feel able to make any definite recommendation as to the exact number to be adopted for the minimum establishment, which requires further examination, and a fuller knowledge of the circumstances of each of the factories than we can claim to possess."

Private inquiries went to show that the serious warning of Mr. Donaldson but feebly expressed the fears of the administration of the Arsenal under this policy. It was an open secret in Woolwich that many shops had been so depleted that it would be impossible to expand quickly to a maximum output at a time of national crisis as at the South African War, when the Leader of the

Opposition himself confessed that the small arms ammunition stores were depleted within a few weeks of the commencement of the war. It was only because of the splendid staff of the Arsenal that it was possible to cope with that national crisis. Yet the bulk of these men had been scattered to the four corners of the globe. The whole difficulty in this case seemed to be not that we could get more men than officers but that we had more officers than men. If the Government really wanted a number of men to do some training for the Territorial Army he thought they might relieve the Arsenal of these superior employees. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to look at this case, not because he happened to be the Member for Woolwich or because he represented the men who had been put off. He appealed for the men who were there and asked the House not to sanction a policy which had distributed all over the world the workmen who saw the country through the crisis of the South African War. The best workmen now looked askance at Government employment. The reductions which had been made were a national disgrace and danger, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give them some assurance that the points which he had raised would be looked into, and where it was possible to place work in the yards, not on the establishment charges but at a fair price, it should be so placed. They should give the men a fair chance and not put on their backs this heavy and evil burden which they could not bear. The Government had the plant, the machinery, and the skill, and they ought to be able to utilise them in the interests of the workers, and to the best advantage of the nation.

COLONEL KENYON-SLANEY (Shropshire, Newport) said the hon. Member's advocacy of Woolwich Arsenal had been so strong that he hoped he would not think it was because of want of sympathy with him that he did not follow him in the line he had taken. What he had said was sufficient to impress the adamantine heart of the Secretary of State for War. He wanted, however, to refer to some previous points in the debate. Whenever he had listened to a debate upon Army matters, especially to a debate in which the welfare of the new Territorial Army loomed so large, he had been utterly disappointed by the tone adopted by so many speakers. He had heard, for instance, three or four speakers who prefaced their remarks by saying: "If the Territorial Army was ever wanted," "We hope it never will be," and "We think it never will be." He thought that that was the wrong attitude to take if they wanted to criticise with any effect and the Territorial Army was to be a reality and not a sham. They should look at it from the point of view that it was going to fight, and if it was going to fight they wanted it to win. That was the line which he should wish to be taken by the House and the country in regard to the Territorial Army if they wished it to be a real instrument which should satisfy the necessities of the nation. The proper view was that it would have to fight, and it would have to fight under circumstances of peculiar difficulty, circumstances which would make the most exacting demands on its powers of discipline and warfare. It was only honest and fair that they should not exaggerate the capabilities of the Territorial Army, but they had heard quoted two or three very great authorities who had served His Majesty the King. First, Sir John French was reported to have said that, assuming that he had three divisions of the Territorial Army mobilised for three months, then he thought that those three divisions might be equal for war to one Regular division. Did anyone suppose that our possible enemies, those against whom we created a Territorial Army, did not take note of these criticisms and the opinion of our best soldier that they had only to bring one soldier to three. Again they had that brilliant and most trusted soldier, Sir Ian Hamilton, who was said to have stated that if three or four batteries of the Territorial Force were engaged with one battery of the enemy they might be able to give them a hot time. That just supported his contention throughout that they were deluding and humbugging the country if they told them that the Territorial Force they proposed to train was an effective force; they were throwing dust in their eyes, because what the country meant by an effective force was a force of their own soldiers who would meet a force of any other country at least man for man. They did not want a force in which each of our men was to be reckoned as only one-third of a man in a foreign country. What they had heard that evening intensified the argument which they had had brought before the House, that the training of the Territorial Force was not sufficient to make it effective, and what they ought to insist upon was that the right hon. Gentleman should make that fact patent and clear to the country. He thought the Secretary for War was earnest in desiring that the hat should not go round and private subscriptions be brought in for the aid of the Territorial Army, but undoubtedly there was a very considerable suspicion in the country that if that Army was to be made a success it would have to depend upon local effort and local subscriptions. If so the Territorial Army was doomed and it became a worthless thing. Another point was that the right hon. Gentleman in bringing in such a great scheme as this had found it impossible to avoid treading on a certain number of local toes. It had been necessary for him to ask from counties that which they could not provide, and to ask other counties to give up that which they had provided and were proud to provide. In the rural counties the result of the scheme would be largely to disembody the force now existing. He knew of one county in which there were two straightforward and satisfactory battalions. By the right hon. Gentleman's scheme only one battalion was to be taken from that county. The disappointment had been so great that he was afraid it was doubtful whether they would get even one battalion. In the rural districts they could only raise what used to be called Volunteer battalions. But now the Territorial battalions were to be on the basis of units of companies. They could not get a company unless the district was sufficiently large for the whole company to be recruited pretty close at hand. They could not expect men to join who lived in scattered villages, and who would have to walk some miles to their drill. They would practically get their Territorial battalion on the basis of company units from centres which would in themselves suffice for the formation of companies. Therefore, if in a county in which they had two battalions they abolished one, thus taking 1,000 men instead of 2,000, they must recollect that they could not get that number by saying they would take such and such a unit from such and such a town or district, but they must have the units in the locality, otherwise they would not raise their rural battalions. He quite sympathised with the right hon. Gentleman, who was in earnest and in love with his own scheme. He was an ardent lover, and naturally he did not wish to see any imperfections in the lady of his affections, and, so far did the right hon. Gentleman go, that he was almost inclined to sacrifice a really efficient fighting force in order to get the symmetry he would like to see in the Territorial Force. Although the Secretary for War himself acknowledged that he did not think that he would raise a Territorial Artillery that would be as good as the Regular Artillery, yet it appeared that, for the sake of symmetry the right hon. Gentleman would prefer to run the risk of asking the Territorial Force to provide him with that extraordinary basis of service which he acknowledged in his own words he could not hope to get so good as it ought to be. There was another another subject upon which he had a rather strong feeling. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that at the present moment the recruiting was going on, he hoped, fairly satisfactorily for the Regular Army. But this was the point he wished to raise, and it was one which touched the feelings not only of the Regular Army but of the whole community, in regard to the men who served the country as soldiers or sailors. He wondered whether the right hon. Gentleman realised that the case he was about to explain actually existed, for it touched the popularity of the Army and the question of justice. Perhaps the House would bear with him while he put a curious case. He would take three brothers, A, B and C. The man A joined the Civil Service at the age of twenty. At the age of sixty, he retired on a pension which was forty-sixtieths of what he was receiving at the end of his term. His brother B joined the police service. He was in the police, say, for twelve years, and then he passed into the Civil Service. He was allowed to reckon the twelve years police service towards full pension, but he was also allowed to reckon four years for every three of his police service, so that he would be allowed to reckon fifteen years towards Civil Service pension. He then went on to the age of sixty, and before he reached that age he was absolutely able to claim his full pension by virtue of the recognition given to his police service. They now came to C, the soldier or sailor. He joined the Army, say, at the age of twenty, and served for twelve years. At the end of twelve years he went into the Civil Service. Perhaps some people would say that he might have served in the Army. But in many cases they were not allowed to serve in the Army to the end, because there was an arrangement by which under certain circumstances only 10 per cent. might go on, and it very frequently happened that a man who might wish to continue could not continue. He had given twelve years of service in the Army, and he joined the Civil Service, working up to sixty, in the same way as his brothers, but he was not allowed to reckon his twelve years service in the Army towards the Civil Service pension. Instead of forty-sixtieths he only got twenty-eight-sixtieths. That was a gross injustice. From every point of view, from the point of view of recruiting and of inducing men of the best type to join the Army, the soldier or sailor should have the same rates of pension as the policeman who entered the Civil Service. Then as to the reasons for this. The policeman was allowed the extra time on account of his services, which were considered to be onerous and, perhaps, even especially dangerous. But they had to remember that the policeman, if he stayed in the force, could get his pension at the end of twenty-four years. As to the soldier, surely no one would say that his service was less dangerous or onerous than that of the policeman. Out of his twelve years it was extremely probable that he had to spend some in India, or at all events in some foreign country. It was also extremely probable that he had spent a good many months of his service in extreme personal danger to life and limb. In the Army at the end of twenty-one years a soldier was entitled to pension, and he believed that the pension of both the policeman and the soldier was based on the fact that their service had some peculiar dangers, and that, therefore, the men ought to have their pension at a proportionately earlier period. Why, therefore, when the soldier or sailor joined the Civil Service, of course with a good character, should he be deprived of the opportunity of counting his years of loyal service in the Army or Navy towards the civil pension? Again, a boy joined the Army at the age of eighteen, and served on the frontiers of India, getting the distinguished service medal and other medals. He came back with the very best of characters and of certificates, and why should he at the age of sixty, after he having served twelve years in circumstances of special danger, and earned the gratitude of his country, be debarred from getting full pension? He believed that he had stated the case absolutely accurately, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman, if he acknowledged its justice as he thought he would, would not be stopped by any trifles of inexpediency, but would say that this was a matter to be considered on its merits. He was not asking that the soldier should get the extra years which were given to the policeman, though his service had exposed him to danger just as much, but that he should be at least allowed to count the twelve years he had actually served. These were the points which he wished to impress on the right hon. Gentleman, and he left it in his hands to give him sooner or later such an answer as would assure him that the strong case which he had made would receive his consideration.

Mr. MACLEAN (Bath) said with reference to the point raised by the hon. and gallant Gentleman who had just sat down as to pension on transfer of service, he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give it consideration, though it might not be possible to do anything without legislation to remedy the matter. From many of the speeches made on the other side of the House, and from some made on his own side, one would imagine that the main object of the country was to spend as much money as possible. If they were to carry out all the suggestions which were made across the floor of the House for an enormous extension of expenditure, the country would find itself in the position of the man with £600 a year, who, out of it spent £450 on insurances of various descriptions against burglary, loss of life and other risks, leaving himself with £150 to meet his social necessities. The real object of the finance of this country should be directed to social reform, and the amelioration of the condition of the people; and he found that the scheme of his right hon. friend was in general directed to that proposition, namely, as far as possible, to keep military expenditure in this country within reasonable limits. The main object of the country was the social betterment of its poorer people. He wished to add a remark upon the subject of canteens. At present he understood there were three systems under which the soldiers could be supplied at the canteens—the regimental system, the tenant system, and the mess and canteen co-operative society. As he understood, the regimental system had fallen largely into discredit, and it was only the tenant system and the co-operative society which were in competition for the supply of the soldiers in these canteens. All he desired to say on this point was that he hoped that his right hon. friend would see with regard to these competing agencies that there was a fair field and no favour. In reference to the co-operative society he was not making the slightest reflection on the *bona fides* of those managing it, but there were very large opportunities—he did not that those opportunities were made use of—for giving an unfair advantage to the co-operative society, managed by officers, as against the tenant system. What he did strongly plead for was that the field should be kept open in the interests of the soldiers themselves. The field should be absolutely clear, and let the best tenders be dealt with on the principles which obtained in the open market.

MR. MOONEY (Newry) said he wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman a question on a subject which was prominently before the House in the discussion of last year, viz. the policy of the War Office with respect to cordite and other explosives. Last year the right hon. Gentleman said that the policy of the War Office was to follow on the lines of the report of the Committee which he was about to appoint to inquire and report on the whole subject. That Committee was appointed, he understood, as the result of a statement which the Secretary of State made in that House. The right hon. Gentleman stated that, when he was about to appoint that Committee, the House was taken into the fullest confidence of the Government, and that he intended to appoint a Committee of the most scientific experts to advise and inquire on the matter. In the last few days questions had been put asking if the Report had been submitted to the War Office, and if so what were its terms. He understood the answer to be that it was not in the public interest to publish the Report. But in view of the fact that the right hon. Gentleman had said he would take the House into his confidence he ought to give some explanation of why he had changed his mind. He would ask further if it was the fact that while the Committee was sitting he had taken into the public service cordite which had previously been rejected on the ground that it was unsafe. If that was done in accordance with the Committee's Report they were entitled to know whether they had reported that the ingredients complained of had no injurious effect whatever. The right hon. Gentleman was not justified in sheltering himself behind the plea of public policy and refusing to give any information.

MR. HALDANE: The reason that has influenced me is this. There is litigation pending by Messrs. Kynoch against the War Office on which the Report materially bears, and it would be very wrong of us to publish any document which prejudges questions which might arise in the litigation. As soon as the litigation is out of the way the situation will be cleared. It will be a great convenience if we might take Vote A. by agreement of the House and then continue the discussion on Vote 1. That is the common practice, and if there is general agreement the discussion could be a perfectly open one, just as free as upon Vote A. I would appeal to my hon. friends to let us take Vote A. at

8.15 and then go on with the open discussion on Vote 1.

MR. ARTHUR LEE said they would have no objection to that course if they had the assent of the Chair to the discussion on Vote 1 being just as general as on Vote A.

*MR. CHAIRMAN: As I have been appealed to I will just say I will give my consent to any arrangement of the kind made by general consent.

MR. ARTHUR LEE said he supposed the general discussion would go on before the Amendments were called, otherwise they would be restricted to the particular subject on the Amendments.

*THE CHAIRMAN: May I just say with regard to that matter that if an Amendment is moved to-morrow for a reduction of the whole Vote it would still be possible to continue the open discussion, but if a reduction is moved on an item it would not be possible to continue the open discussion.

MR. MOONEY asked for an answer to his question whether it was a fact that the Government had taken into the public service explosives which had been previously rejected.

MR. HALDANE: Not that I know of, unless it was some that was specially investigated by the Committee and found to be safe after it had been subjected to severe tests.

MR. MOONEY asked if it was not a fact that the War Office having rejected 100 tons as being not fit for use, afterwards took into the public service 30 tons of the very cordite which they had previously refused.

MR. HALDANE: I know nothing about it. If the hon. Member will put down a Question I will look into it.

*MR. LUTTRELL (Devonshire, Tavistock) said he was very unwilling to put any opposition in the way of the arrangement come to by the Front Benches, but he was asked to move in the matter by a considerable number of supporters of the Government and it would be necessary for him to move a reduction of men. He moved it in no spirit of hostility to the Government of which he reckoned himself a loyal supporter, but their reasons for doing this were provided by the speeches and actions of the occupants of the Front Bench themselves. They had continually made speeches in favour of a reduction of the Vote—true, when they were in a different position—but the fact that they had gone to the Front Bench ought not to alter their principles. They had been influenced also by their policy. He was not blaming them but paying them a very high compliment indeed. It was because they had been at peace with the world and because there were no clouds on the horizon that they were able with confidence to ask the House to reduce the Army by 10,000 men. It was in no spirit of hostility to the Secretary of State that he moved this. He appreciated and valued his great ability and his remarkable energy and industry, but he would remind his right hon. friend that he was not only Secretary of State for War, but he was Secretary of State for Peace, and he hoped in reality more a Secretary of State for Peace than for War. He believed his persuasive powers were such that he might have induced the generals themselves to turn their attention to economy had he exercised those powers. He was inclined to think that the right. hon. Gentleman had studied efficiency somewhat to the neglect of economy, and he wished he would study economy and spell it with a very big E indeed. The number of men was the only test they could have of the cost of the Army. It was no use making small economies. If they wanted really to economise they must reduce the number of men. It was in excess of requirements and could with safety to the Empire be reduced to the extent he proposed. In 1895–6, just before preparations were being made for possible contingencies in South Africa, the Home Army numbered 116,153; to-day it had grown to 130,000 odd, an increase of nearly 14,000 men. In Africa we had then 4,888, and a temporary contingent of 1,066 men in West Africa; to-day we had 20,173, an increase of 14,219. In America we had then 5,928, which had been reduced now to 2,356, our troops having been withdrawn from Halifax and Barbadoes. In Asia, exclusive of India, we had 6,300 men; to-day we had 9,735, an increase of 3,405. In the Mediterranean the number had decreased from 14,451 to 11,479, but in Egypt the number had increased from 4,267 to 5,771. The difference between the total numbers we had in 1895–6 and to-day was no less than 26,609 increase. During the year 1895–6, we had in India 73,168 men, but to-day we had 76,155, which was a considerable increase. His contention was that the increase in India had been far too great, and it was the duty of the Government to bring the military expenditure in India back to what it was in 1895–96. The Cardwell system as now adopted necessitated keeping at home the same number of troops as were maintained abroad. That was the policy which the Secretary for War was pursuing, and in pursuance of that policy he was bringing four battalions of infantry and one regiment of cavalry from South Africa. That was not real economy, because when those troops came back they would not be disbanded. That could not be claimed as economy.

MR. HALDANE: It saves £170,000 a year.

*MR. LUTTRELL said that that was the only gain they got, and there was no real economy in it unless the establishment was reduced. Small savings like that were not real economy; that could not be secured unless they reduced the number of men. He agreed that the men should be properly trained and housed, but they had far too many of them. The so-called Cardwell system which the Government were following was practically that they should keep a battalion at home for every battalion abroad. He believed that Mr. Cardwell was a great economist and his main object was to run the Army for as little money as possible—to have as many men as possible trained to arms, but not under arms, and that was why he instituted the short service system. The Cardwell system had been fully explained by the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, who said—

> "The Cardwell system has the advantage that it reduces the question of the size of the Army to the function of a single variable. That variable is the number of troops which it is essential at any time to keep abroad in the colonies, in India, and the Crown possessions. When you have determined the size of this variable you at once determine the size and character of the Army which you will require to support it, and it gives you a clear principle according to which you can lop off what is unnecessary or build up what is essential."

They wanted the right hon. Gentleman to do a little lopping off, because the Army was too large both at home and abroad. They were told that they required 160,000 men for an expeditionary force which was called the striking force. Whom did they want to strike? Under the guidance of the right hon. Gentleman they had started a Territorial Army, which was going to cost a lot of money and cause a great deal of trouble, and naturally they supposed it was going to be of some use for defensive purposes. Surely under these circumstances they expected the Regular Army to be smaller. The Secretary for War had said there were seventy-four battalions at home, and sixty-six of them were required for the expeditionary force, and eight battalions would be left. His excuse for this large expeditionary force was that we were not keeping more at home than we had abroad. "If," he said, "there are seventy-four battalions at home, and sixty-six are required for the expeditionary force, there will be eight battalions surplus. Therefore, the expeditionary force is not eating up a single man whom you would not otherwise require to keep up." Why should they keep so many men abroad? He contended that there were far too many abroad. He thought he had said enough to prove that the number of troops maintained at home were far in excess of requirements. If he could prove that their requirements abroad did not necessitate so large a force as seventy-four battalions, then it followed that they did not require seventy-four battalions at home. Now his right hon. friend had stated that "the question of the size of the Army is not one the Minister for War can answer unaided. The answer must depend on the view of foreign policy taken by the Foreign

Secretary, the Secretary for India, and the Colonial Secretary, and it is one that must be determined by the Government as a whole." He would also give the opinions of other Ministers. The Prime Minister (the cause of whose absence they so deeply deplored) in 1903, said—

> "The hon. Member for Oldham has said that up to 1897 our Army was a good one and sufficient for our purposes. That is true. The idea was then that we should never contemplate anything more than an expeditionary force of 70,000 or 80,000 men; and that was more than accomplished with the machinery and material that we had. The question is, What has caused since then an increased demand on the Army? If the Army was strong enough in 1897, why should it need to be stronger now? If the expenditure of £18,000,000 were sufficient in 1897, why should we now require an expenditure of £30,000,000? . . . ."

Speaking on 11th March, 1903, five years ago that very day, the Foreign Secretary said—

> "If the Navy insures our safety at sea, and if the defence of the Indian frontier be safe, we then could have time to develop our military power for striking purposes. If that be so, and the 120,000 is not a definite number, I think there is a *prima facie* case at any rate for asking the Government to show whether the country would not be better off with a smaller expeditionary force of 80,000 or of 40,000 men, if they were prompt and ready, and a much larger and better equipped body of auxiliaries behind them on whom we could draw afterwards."

He thought a considerable reduction might be made in the Army abroad. In South Africa they were bringing back four battalions of infantry and one regiment of cavalry, whereas the increase in the number of troops in South Africa had been no less than 14,219 men. So that if the troops in South Africa alone were reduced by 10,000 they would still be over 4,000 in excess of the number there previous to the Boer War. Why should such a force be kept there? They prided themselves that they had given representative Government to South Africa and that there was now absolute peace there, and why under those circumstances should such a large force be kept there? There might also be a reduction of the forces maintained in Asia, Hong-Kong, and Egypt. We had entered into a Treaty with France, and there was less danger in Egypt now than at any previous time, and why should we keep such a large force in that country? The size of the British Army under the system to which he had referred was largely dependent on the number of men we kept in India. He thought we were keeping in India men vastly in excess of the number really required. Since 1895 there had been an increase from 73,000 to 76,000. He could not see why we required to keep 3,000 more now than in 1895. It seemed to him that the arguments were all in favour of keeping fewer. We had entered into a treaty with Russia which ought to make things very much easier for us. Questions relating to Persia, Afghanistan, and Tibet had been settled for many years to come. He asked the Secretary of State for War why we were keeping more men in India now than before. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that the British Army in India was kept there not for aggressive purposes, but to preserve internal order. Was it necessary to keep this large force for preserving internal order? Lord Lawrence did not find it necessary to keep more than 60,000 men there. In 1879 Lord Roberts was a member of a Commission which reported in favour of keeping 61,000. Only a few years ago we were content to leave India with 63,000, and that was at the time of the Boer War, and if ever we had a time of difficulty in India it was then. Why should we require 13,000 more to-day? He thought the number there could be reduced by 10,000 or 15,000 with absolute safety. At the time of the Mutiny, when we had only a small force in India, there were only 400 miles of railway, while to-day there were 30,000 miles. This made it far easier to do with a small force. He had said enough to prove that we did not require so large a force abroad as we had at the present time. The Army should be brought up to date; we were behind the times. He and his friends who shared his views did not think it necessary to keep up in peace time a war establishment, and they hoped that the policy which had been adopted by the Government, namely, the policy of pursuing the paths of peace, would be continued. He was convinced that if the Government would be courageous in following that policy it would be absolutely unnecessary to keep up the large force which we were at present maintaining. The country wanted peace, and he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to hold out some hope that the Estimates next year would show that the Government were studying economy as well as efficiency, and he would say that they should put economy before efficiency. He and his friends wanted to see the country properly defended, but they wanted to see the houses of the people at home properly furnished before battlements were were put on the walls.

*Mr. **BYLES** (Salford, N.) said he must join in the renewed expression of disappointment at the enormous demands made for the Regular Army in the Estimates now before the Committee. He hoped the Government would not try to abridge the discussion of this most important question. He had noticed the eagerness with which the chief Government whip had been watching the clock and conferring with the Chairman, and no doubt the Government desired to get the Vote before a quarter-past eight. If they did not get it to-night, they would probably get it early to-morrow, and nothing would be lost if the discussion did not close now. He believed they had now entered upon what was really the most important question which could possibly engage the attention of the representatives of the people in regard to our preparations for Imperial defence. The technical details which had been discussed that afternoon were all, no doubt, of importance, but they were beyond his ken, but the Committee had now come to the essential question in which the country was interested, namely, why did we want this big Army? They had never been told why the country wanted 160,000 men as an expeditionary force. A great portion of last session was occupied in trying to formulate measures for the construction of a Territorial Army. If the citizens of this country had to defend themselves against any marauders who might come here he would be the very first to help them in that defence, but he was not one of those who believed in what a Bishop in the other House called the menagerie theory, that neighbouring nations were waiting to devour us up when we lessened our armaments. If Germany were to put down her army and navy, should we desire to take a single acre of her territory? Why should not we believe the same of Germany? Why should we always suppose that Germany was waiting to swallow us up? Surely England was strong enough to go her own way without being influenced by the votes of the Reichstag. He was one of those who desired to promote international friendliness, and he believed that international friendliness was by far the strongest defence we could have. He wondered whether the Government quite realised the extent to which it was—he would not use the word alienating, but chilling the enthusiasm of its followers by the enormous proposals it made for both the Army and Navy. This was going on further within the Party than the War Minister really recognised. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman did not miss the significance of the division which took place in the House last week. It was with the greatest reluctance that he voted against the Government. It was a most thankless thing to do. He and his friends received all sorts of buffets and taunts, but they were not afraid of them. A colleague on leaving the House last night was positively dejected, disappointed, and despairing.

Mr. **HALDANE** rose in his place and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 186; Noes, 41. (Division List No. 38.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Acland-Hood,RtHn.Sir Alex.F.
Agnew, George William
Allen, Charles P. (Stroud)
Armitage, R.
Baker, Sir John (Portsmouth)
Balfour, Robert (Lanark)
Baring,Godfrey(Isle of Wight)
Barker, Sohn
Barlow, Percy (Bedford)
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Barry,Redmond J.(Tyrone,N.)
Beale, W. P.
Bell, Richard
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn,W.(T'w'rHamlets,S.Geo.)
Berridge, T. H. D.
Bethell,Sir J.H(Essex, Romf'rd
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Boulton, A. C. F.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.

Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, Rt. Hon. John
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.
Cave, George
Cavendish, Rt. Hn. Victor C. W.
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Chance, Frederick William
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Cleland, J. W.
Collins, Stephen (Lambeth)
Compton-Rickett, Sir J.
Corbett, CH(Sussex, E Grinst'd)
Cox, Harold
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Craig, Herbert J. (Tynemouth)
Crooks, William
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, Ellis William (Eifion)
Davies, W. Howell (Bristol, S.)
Dewar, Sir J. A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness)
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Edwards, Sir Francis (Radnor)
Elibank, Master of
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacy
Faber, G. H. (Boston)
Fenwick, Charles
Findlay, Alexander
Fletcher, J. S.
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Glendinning, R. G.
Goddard, Sir Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Hamilton, Marquess of
Hardy, George A. (Suffolk)
Harmsworth, Cecil B. (Worc'r)
Harrison-Broadley, H. B.
Haslam, James (Derbyshire)
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Henderson, J. M. (Aberdeen, W.)
Herbert, Col. Sir Ivor (Mon., S.)
Hobart, Sir Robert
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hunt, Rowland
Hyde, Clarendon
Jackson, R. S.
Jardine, Sir J.
Jenkins, J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Jones, William (Carnarvonshire)
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Laidlaw, Robert
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leese, Sir Joseph F. (Accrington)
Lever, A. Levy (Essex, Harwich)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. David
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Laren, H. D. (Stafford, W.)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks, G. Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Menzies, Walter
Micklem, Nathaniel
Middlebrook, William
Morgan, G. Hay (Cornwall)
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morse, L. L.
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Napier, T. B.
Newnes, F. (Notts, Bassetlaw)
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, W. H. M. (Suffolk, Eye
Philipps, Col. Ivor (S'thampton)
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh, Central)
Radford, G. H.
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards, Thomas (W. Monm'th
Richards, T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Ridsdale, E. A.
Robertson, Sir G. Scott (Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Robson, Sir William Snowdon
Rose, Charles Day
Rowlands, J.
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Sears, J. E.
Seaverns, J. H.
Silcock, Thomas Ball
Simon, John Allsebrook
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Smeaton, Donald Mackenzie
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs, N.W.)
Stanley, Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.
Stewart-Smith, D. (Kendal)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stuart, James (Sunderland)
Summerbell, T.
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas, David Alfred (Merthyr)
Tillett, Louis John
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Valentia, Viscount
Wadsworth, J.
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph
Ward, John (Stoke upon Trent)
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Wason, Rt Hn. E. (Clackmannan
Wason, John Cathcart (Orkney)
Waterlow, D. S.
Watt, Henry A.
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, J. H. (Middlesbrough)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Alden, Percy
Baker, Joseph A. (Finsbury, E.)
Byles, William Pollard
Castlereagh, Viscount
Clynes, J. R.
Coates, E. Feetham (Lewisham)
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Collings Rt. Hn. J. (Birmingh'm
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Cremer, Sir William Randal
Curran, Peter Francis
Dalrymple, Viscount
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Fell, Arthur
Gill, A. H.
Gordon, J.
Guinness, Walter Edward
Higham, John Sharp
Hills, J. W.
Holt, Richard Durning
Houston, Robert Paterson
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Jones, Leif (Appleby)
Jowett, F. W.
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Lamb, Edmund G. (Leominster)
Lupton, Arnold
Macpherson, J. T.
Moore, William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Grady, J.
Pirie, Duncan V.
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Rutherford, W. W. (Liverpool)

Salter, Arthur Clavell
Seddon, J.
Smith, F.E. (Liverpool, Walton)
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Vivian, Henry
Walsh, Stephen

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Murray Macdonald and Mr. Luttrell.

On the Question being put—

MR. BYLES: There is an Amendment moved.

MR. LUTTRELL: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman——

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order. If the hon. Member has any point of order to raise, he must put it to me after I have put the Question.

Question put, and agreed to.

The House resumed, Mr. SPEAKER in the Chair—

And, it being a quarter-past Eight of the Clock, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put, pursuant to Standing Order No. 4.

MR. LUTTRELL: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I wished in Committee to move a reduction of the Vote for men in the Army——

*MR. SPEAKER: I do not know of anything which has occurred in Committee.

DUBLIN METROPOLITAN POLICE.

MR. MEAGHER (Kilkenny, N.), in moving, "That this House is of opinion that the system whereby the maximum amount sanctioned by law at a time when the valuation of the city of Dublin was comparatively low still continues to be levied is unjustifiable, in view of the fact that the valuation of the city has greatly increased, and that the number of police has not appreciably increased; that the crimeless condition of the city does not warrant this heavy expenditure; and that the control of this police force should be vested in the local authorities, as is the case in cities in Great Britain," said that the cost of the upkeep of the Dublin Metropolitan Police Force was quite unnecessarily large and should be borne by an Army Vote and not by the contributions of the ratepayers of Dublin. In 1836 an Act was passed to make more effective provision for the police of Dublin and other places within certain boundaries. The cost of the police in that area in 1836 was £40,511, and when the Act was passed it was considered that the rate for the maintenance of the police force should not exceed a total amount of £40,511. But he found that the cost charged on the rates had increased in 1870 to £99,000, and in 1905 it amounted to £160,950, or an increase of £61,950. Comparing the amount of crime and the amount of expenditure on the police, he found that the number of indictable offences in 1870 was 5,186 and in 1905 3,235. The summary convictions in 1870 numbered 47,310, and in 1905, 29,916, or a diminution of crime to the number of 19,345 cases. Notwithstanding that, the increase in the charge on the rates during the period 1870 to 1905 was £61,950. He wished to draw the attention of the House to how Dublin was situated, contrasted with other cities in the so-called United Kingdom. The population of Dublin was 390,187, and that of Sheffield was 409,071, but in Dublin the police numbered 1,426, and in Sheffield 550. In Glasgow the population was 840,910, or more than double that of Dublin, and the police force only numbered 1,519. In Dublin they had 8d. in the £ police charge—the highest in the United Kingdom. They had 327 of the population for every policeman. In Sheffield it was 4½d. in the £, and 794 people for every policeman. In Glasgow it was 3½d. in the £, and 523 people for every policeman. More startling still, in Bolton they had 3d. in the £, and 950 people to every policeman. Were they to infer that the population of Dublin were all lions, and the population of Bolton all lambs, or was it the fact that one policeman in Bolton was as good as three in Dublin. [A Voice: The other way about.] He should think so, as was demonstrated in South Africa when the British ranks swerved before the Boers and the Dublin Fusiliers went forward and showed them how to do their work. It was a monstrous thing, and he was sure Members of the House would not find in any part of the world an instance to compare with the city of Dublin in this matter. If they walked the streets of Dublin they would find two burly policemen standing against the street corners, with two or three between them. He wished to know what they were there for. So far as he could see they were there for nothing but to obstruct the public thoroughfare. Let them go to the Castle Yard. He was there a few times for the purpose of seeing that great edifice of English tryanny and oppression. He walked round the Castle, and if one was a good judge of human nature he would see that the policemen were doing nothing. [AN HON. MEMBER: Except minding the jewels.] He would not be associated with the disappearance of the jewels. He was not responsible for their disappearance, nor were the Dublin police credited with their safekeeping. The Dublin police appeared always to be sleeping. They always seemed to be conspicuous by their absence when any purse-snatching or pocket-picking was going on. When all was right they came on the scene and took out their books. In Sheffield, Bristol, Glasgow, Nottingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Bradford, Huddersfield, and Birmingham, the police were members of the fire brigade and were inspectors under the Contagious Diseases Act and inspectors of workshops. In Dublin they were not. They were lounging round the lower Castle Yard or in some Department where they could sleep their time away, and the unfortunate ratepayers were compelled to pay 8d. in the £, or 8s. 4d. for every man, woman, and child of the population. It was too much to expect this thing could continue. Year after year they were making a demand for the redress of that awful grievance. Honeyed words were not good enough for them. They had too much of honeyed words in the House. He preferred a reduction of 8d. in the £. His Majesty's Fleet could carry off honeyed words. How were the Dublin Police constituted? There were on the active list two commissioners, and on the retired list two commissioners; on the active list seven superintendents, and on the retired list, nine; on the active list, twenty-four inspectors, and on the retired list, forty-three. The inspectors retired at the age of fifty-three on a pension of £260 a year. It was as plain as a pike-staff what was increasing the police rates year after year. He had brought with him a letter which showed an awful state of things with regard to the Dublin Police, but he did not intend to read it because it was anonymous. [A laugh.] If the hon. Member desired him to read it he would do so. The hon. Member referred to several cases, including one mentioned in the anonymous letter, of misappropriation of money by police officers, which, he said, had been dealt with in an unsatisfactory manner, and it was little surprising that huge sums were expended year after year when the police took sums intended for the payment of their comrades in the force. Some time ago a circular was issued by some superior officer of the force, giving the name and rank of every constable, with the particulars of the cases in which he had been engaged for the last twelve weeks or the last twelve months, and that was only a corollary to the action of a sergeant who issued a mandate that each constable should afford five cases a week. This meant that they should do something for the purpose of getting credit for their industry. In this sense they had too much crime in Ireland, and he appealed with confidence to the Chief Secretary to deal with this matter. Let no hon. Member be mistaken, however, as to his attitude towards the right hon. Gentleman; but for the underlying current behind the scenes, he believed he would be a good friend to Ireland. He hoped they would have something more than honeyed words from the right hon. Gentleman. They had unfortunately had too much of them to rely upon them in the future. When the hon. Member for College Green moved last year to reduce the Vote, the Chief Secretary made some very honeyed remarks. He said he would hesitate to express an opinion of his own as to whether Dublin was over-policed, but he was disposed to think there was a larger body of police there than was necessary to maintain peace and order in that great city. He was glad to notice that everybody who had spoken had paid a high tribute to the general character and integrity of the Dublin Police. The right hon. Gentleman agreed that it was the duty of the Corporation of Dublin to make reports as to the necessity of reducing the cost of the force, and he was disposed to think the Government could safely and wisely do something in that direction. He wished to know from the right hon. Gentleman what had been done from that day to this. What had been done to reduce the enormous cost of the Dublin Metropolitan Police? He noticed that, later on, the right hon. Gentleman said that so far as the Treasury was concerned the view was that they should be approached with a view to fixing the amount of their grant. His hon. friend the Member for College Green asked if the Government would assist the Corporation of Dublin in finding out in what proportion the money was paid away. He wanted information as to how reductions should be made. The right hon. Gentleman, in replying, said that the hon. Member's request was absolutely reasonable; but no definite conclusion could be arrived at as to how a reduction of such a force of men could be effected without a complete knowledge of all the circumstances. The right hon. Gentleman was now in the harvest of his power to do justice to Ireland. He was sorry to have to admit that the spring-time of his administration was attended with very unsatisfactory results. The seed sown by him on that occasion was blown away; and he hoped and trusted that his efforts to redress the many grievances under which Ireland suffered would be attended in the future with very much better results. He appealed to him to grapple with this question in a comprehensive manner. There was at present an element of suspicion underlying the whole thing, and, if the Government did not take the matter in hand in a very short time, the people of Dublin would be very dissatisfied. He pressed the right hon. Gentleman to make some such encouraging move to redress this awful grievance as he yesterday made in regard to the law of contempt of Court in Ireland. It was one of the most crying grievances that could be considered, and he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would not hesitate to grapple with it in a comprehensive spirit which would do justice to his administration and to the people of Ireland, who were already handicapped by excessive rates. He begged to move.

*MR. J. P. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green), in seconding, said that he rose with some diffidence to call attention again to this pressing grievance. He dissociated himself from some of the remarks used by his hon. friend in reference to the manner in which the Dublin Metropolitan Police conducted their operations in the city. They were the creatures of circumstances, and, if there were too many of them, and they hung round corners in couples, it was not their fault. They were a disciplined body and were bound to obey orders. He thought he echoed the sentiments of the citizens of Dublin when he said they were proud of the force as a body of men as respectable, as sober, and as well conducted as any force in the United Kingdom. This grievance had at all times met with sympathy from the Treasury Bench, but the time had arrived when something more than honeyed words should be given and some redress vouchsafed. He did not speak as the representative of one section of the community of Dublin; he voiced the sentiments of all sections. Unionists and Nationalists were one and all agreed that the imposition of 8d. in the £ was unwarranted and could not be justified. He would, of course, be met by the answer that the number of police in Dublin was necessary for Imperial purposes; but they did not want an Imperial Force for the maintenance of law and order in Dublin; and, if an Imperial Force was required, it was the duty of the Imperial Exchequer to pay for it. He believed a far less number of men would be competent to keep the peace of the city. When he last brought forward the question, a paper in Dublin, whilst sympathising with them in every way, said they would not be parties to the reduction of the force. He did not know why the paper took that line. All he could say was that the number of police in Birmingham, Sheffield, and Belfast was less than in Dublin. Dublin was the most law-abiding city, and therefore, the number of its police should be far less. The question had become a burning one in Dublin, and if the Chief

Secretary did not want more trouble —he did not say it with the slightest intention to threaten—he would advise him to see if he could not redress the grievance. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, when Chief Secretary, admitted that there was a great grievance and that something should be done to remedy it, but nothing had been done. He had filled a responsible position in Dublin for the last two years, and he knew that, if the question was not dealt with, there would be a strike against levying the rate. He was not in favour of any such thing. He thought it would be a suicidal policy on the part of the corporation, for, if they declined to levy the rate, at the end of the year they would be some £38,000 or £40,000 short in their budget, and the Government would be able to deduct that amount from the Local Taxation Charges. That would mean that there would be no money to pay the men who did the corporation work, and the state of the labour market in Dublin would be aggravated by throwing out of employment that large army of men. It had, however, been moved in the corporation not to levy for the Police Rate, and the motion was only defeated by three votes. That minority might, when the question came up again, be turned into a majority. That three votes might be turned from a majority into a minority in the course of a month. As a member of the Dublin Corporation he could not think with equanimity of the position of his unfortunate people if, at the end of the year, there was no money to carry out necessary sanitary work in connection with the corporation. It would be of no use for the Chief Secretary to say, as he said last year, that he agreed that the impost was too heavy and that the police were too many. Was that any answer to the corporation? They were not responsible for the rate. They had not the control of the police and could not reduce a single man of them. That was the Chief Secretary's duty. It was on him that the responsibility lay, and he would have to solve the problem. In no other town of the United Kingdom was there anything approximately near what they had to contend with in Dublin. He knew the Chief Secretary meant well to their country, and he would be the last to harass him in his work. He desired that his term of office should be peaceful, and that nothing should arise which would be the means of creating strife or discontent and give him an uneasy time of it. According to the London Police Act 9d. was the maximum, but they had never attempted to come near it. Eightpence was the maximum for Dublin when the valuation was only £645,000. To-day it had trebled; a revaluation was taking place and a further increase was expected; they had the consolation of knowing that as the valuation went up, so did the eightpences. The number of men employed was only sixty-four more than in 1850, and yet the sum had increased to its present enormous figure. What was the cause of this? When getting up a meeting of the representatives of Rathmines, Kingstown, Blackrock, and the City he had endeavoured through the town clerk to ascertain why this enormous sum was needed and how it was spent. The answer they got from the Castle was that they could look at the Estimates in that House. But they got very little information from the Votes. The money was largely spent on the pensioning of officers, of whom there were more than there were on the active list. Dublin had four police magistrates, while Manchester had two, and Leeds and Liverpool but one. It was not even in increased wages to the men that the money went, because their position had in no way been altered. He regretted that the police were not under the control of the local authority. If they were they would be a more efficient body, would do the duty for which they were paid, and would be very much reduced in numbers, because they would not be required. He did not blame the men. They were not responsible for it and they had to do as they were told. He had spoken to several of them, and they all admitted that a terrible grievance was placed on the citizens of Dublin. Where the money went God only knew. It would take somebody with more influence than he had to find out, for the ramifications of Dublin Castle were such that nobody could get very much information there with reference to anything: they had had evidence of that in the last couple of months. He sympathised with the right hon. Gentleman, who had to go and be associated with the individuals there. He was only sorry that when the Government took office they did not cut off Dublin Castle altogether. That would be the best day's work they had ever done, and they would have some prosperity in the country. If these men were to be kept for the purposes of Dublin Castle let the Castle pay for them. It was hard on the corporation that no redress should be given them, and that Ministers, while admitting the grievance, should let it go on from year to year. He hoped this would be the last time they would have to bring before the House this scandalous imposition. He knew he was speaking to sympathetic ears, and that they had the feeling of Members above the gangway with them in this protest. He spoke as much for the Unionist as for the Nationalist members of the corporation. He appealed to the Chief Secretary not to let the matter go on any longer; it would save him from the troubles which he anticipated were ahead of him. It was acknowledged on all sides that they had a grievance, and they asked the Government to make an honest and determined effort to remove it.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House is of opinion that the system whereby the maximum amount sanctioned by law at a time when the valuation of the City of Dublin was comparatively low still continues to be levied is unjustifiable, in view of the fact that the valuation of the city has greatly increased, and that the number of police has not appreciably increased; that the crimeless condition of the city does not warrant this heavy expenditure; and that the control of this police force should be vested in the local authorities, as is the case in cities in Great Britain."—(*Mr. Meagher.*)

MR. T. HARRINGTON (Dublin, Harbour), who was indistinctly heard, was understood to say that they had brought before the House a condition of things which could not be found in any other portion of the United Kingdom. There was no other town that paid a higher police rate than 5d., and in some it was as low as 2½d. In Dublin it had been 8d. ever since it was first established fifty years ago. They were not asking for a change in the law or in the government of the police. These things must come under different circumstances, and on a different occasion. What they asked was that the citizens of Dublin should not be required to pay a rate of 8d. in the £, especially when the revaluation was about to take place and the valuation might be increased by 25 per cent. The police did their duty well and intelligently and they were proud of them as a body. They were not asking for a reduction of police. Of course 500 would be quite enough. There were no grounds whatsoever upon which such an expenditure could be justified. If the corporation refused to levy the rate the Lord-Lieutenant could step in and stop the money out of other funds due to the corporation. That was the position of affairs of which he appealed to the Chief Secretary to do something to relieve them. It was a condition of things which would be a disgrace to any city. Why should Dublin pay double the amount paid by all the principal cities and towns in the United Kingdom in the shape of a police rate? He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to address them in some practical form that evening. He knew the last answer they got when a similar appeal was made to the Treasury. A more monstrous condition of things could not exist, and if the Chief Secretary could not do anything immediately he could at least inform them whether he intended to seek some means of reducing this burden. The present rate was made fifty or sixty years ago and it still continued, and every time attempts were made to improve the city and enhance its value they were obliged to pay additional rates.

MR. GORDON (Londonderry, S.) said that so far as the question of police rating in Dublin was concerned he did not profess to know anything about the rights and wrongs of the case. The Royal Irish Constabulary were paid for out of the Imperial revenues, and the city of Dublin was the only place in Ireland where there was a direct tax upon the people for the support of the police force. He did not think that Dublin benefited to such an extent from the police force as compared with other parts of Ireland as to justify this rate of 8d. in the £. That rate seemed to him to be too much in proportion to other districts in Ireland. He quite agreed that there was a very strong feeling in Dublin and in the townships contained in the metropolitan area that they were suffering a considerable hardship and grievance in having to pay that rate. Whether that was right or wrong he thought that those who had control of matters of that kind ought to make an effort to satisfy the mass of the people on the point, and to give an account of how the money contributed by the ratepayers was expended. The question was whether the authorities were right in imposing a rate of 8d. in the £ at present, when that was the rate enforced fifty years ago for a smaller population and on a smaller valuation. If the authorities were right, he thought the citizens of Dublin were sensible enough to grin and bear it. If, on the other hand, they were wrong, then the people of Dublin should not be placed under an exaction which was unreasonable and unfair. With that part of the Motion he was in agreement, and if the Resolution was pressed to a division he would support it if the second part dealing with the control of the police was omitted.

Mr. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.) said that they complained clearly and definitely of two things. In the first place they complained that the cost was exorbitant in proportion to the police necessities of the city of Dublin; and, secondly, they contended that the police should be brought under the control of the city authorities. He might say, however, that no reduction in the cost of the Dublin police would be satisfactory to the Nationalist Party unless it was accompanied by a reform which would bring the police force under the control of the elected representatives of the city. The average salaries of the officers and men in the Dublin Police Force worked out at between £120 and £125 per annum. That compared favourably not only with salaries earned by national and secondary teachers in Ireland, but also with the earnings of some members of the learned profession in the city of Dublin. They had to pay through the nose for the police force. At the age of fifty-three an inspector in the Dublin Police was able to retire upon an allowance of £266 13s. 4d. per annum. The police rate was fixed by Act of Parliament, passed sixty years ago. It laid down what the rate was to be, quite irrespective of any increase in the valuation. That was a matter with regard to the cost of the force. Then with regard to control, he did not know whether any Member of the House entirely realised what it meant. Some three or four years ago when the late Government was in office, his hon. friend, the late Lord Mayor of Dublin, attended an ordinary public political meeting in his capacity as Lord Mayor, and also as an Irish representative in this House. On that occasion the police were able to be ordered out by the Inspector-General to baton down the supporters of his hon. friend. So long as politics did not come into the matter, the average member of the Dublin Police was really a credit to our common Christianity; he not only added to the gaiety but to the beauty of the world. He knew no more ornamental figure than a colossal, blue-uniformed member of the Dublin Police. If Socrates were alive to-day, he would probably join the Dublin police. He and his friends definitely demanded that Dublin should be raised to the status of any other city, and that it should have some control over its police force. The citizens and ratepayers had attempted to protest against the levy of the police rate. The corporation some years ago declined to collect the police rate, and the Exchequer contribution was intercepted and handed over for the maintenance of the police force. Their protest was, therefore, absolutely ineffective. This question had been discussed twice since the present Government came into office, and the Chief Secretary had spoken with considerable sympathy upon it. What had the right hon. Gentleman been able to do? The Irish Members had asked for a reform of the law, and they had been told that the business of the session was too crowded, and that the reform could not be carried out. They wanted Dublin well policed. At present it was, perhaps, the most efficiently policed city in the kingdom.

There was a mystery, no doubt, about the disappearance of the Insignia of the Order of St. Patrick, but setting that aside, Dublin was hopelessly over-policed. The figures were really striking. The average cost to the ratepayers of Dublin was about four times as great as the cost of the London police to the ratepayers of the City of London. The London police had to deal with an international population. Here there was a professional criminal class, and a considerable number of refugees. In Dublin there were not people of that class to be kept in check. Dublin was free from these excrescences except when pickpockets from this country paid occasional visits when exhibitions were held, and when the King came to Ireland. The valuation of the city increased and crime decreased, but the police rate remained absolutely fixed. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman would be able to point to any practical solution of the difficulty. If it was not blasphemy to use the words, he very much feared that the only cure for the evil was Gladstonian Home Rule.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. BIRRELL, Bristol, N.): When I had to speak to the House on this subject about a year ago, I had not then what I now enjoy, personal acquaintance with the members of the Metropolitan Dublin Police Force. I am, therefore, able to join in the general concurrence of opinion as to the admirable character of that body of men. They are agreeable in their manners and especially devoted to the safe protection of the Chief Secretary for Ireland for the time being, and I express my recognition for all they have done on my behalf. The only question, or at all events the first question, we have to consider now is whether there are not far too many of them—in other words, whether Dublin is not very much over-policed. Certainly the figures which are within the reach of everybody would indicate that unless Dublin is very much over-policed it is indeed a city full of crime and dissension. Take Liverpool, with a population of over 704,000 people, of whom one-seventh at least belong to the Irish nation. There you have a seaport city, never, so far as I know, remarkable for its quietude or for its disposition to obey the law beyond that which is seemly in all citizens. It has a police force of 1,428. Dublin, with a population of 392,797 has a police force of 1,246. In Liverpool there is one policeman for 493 citizens, while in Dublin each of these gentlemen to whom I have referred has as small a number as 315 assigned to his care. Take Manchester, with a population of 606,824. It has one policeman for 520 of the population. All these things, I think, point to the fact that there is room for inquiry as to whether Dublin is not very much over-policed, and I cannot but believe these figures. I will not trouble the House with the particulars of Bristol, Sheffield, Leeds, and Cardiff, but the House may take it from me that the figures are equally striking. Therefore, I certainly think there is ground for inquiry as to whether or not Dublin is not very much over-policed. There we have to consider the cost of maintaining this body, and we have been told with perfect truth that for many years the maximum rate the law permits of 8d. in the £ has been charged as police tax in Dublin. Dublin has a great many out-townships stretching a long way into the country, upon which this very heavy charge of 8d. undoubtedly falls. No doubt it is true that a new valuation of Dublin and all parts now within the Metropolis is in course of manufacture, and I daresay it may be that when we get that new valuation this tax of 8d. may fall to 6d.

MR. T. HARRINGTON: May I remind the right hon. Gentleman that that is fixed by statute?

MR. BIRRELL: No. Only the maximum.

MR. T. HARRINGTON: Yes. But they have never taken anything less.

MR. BIRRELL: I believe that antiquarian research would show that it has been less than 8d. That is far in excess of what is levied in any of the great towns in England, and even on the new assessment the tax would still be largely in excess of other cities in England. In Liverpool this tax amounts to 5d., in Cardiff to something between 2d. and

3d., in Manchester to a little over 4d., in Bristol to 4·50d., in Sheffield to 4·32d., in Leeds to 4·56d. At present the tax in Dublin is, as I have said, 8d., and even if it were reduced on a new assessment, it would be very largely in excess of other cities. I have a representative of the Treasury at my side—and I desire to play fair with everybody—and I ask him what is the contribution towards the Metropolitan Dublin Police from the Imperial Exchequer. I do not deny that 8d. appears to be a very heavy tax; but Heaven only knows, or rather arithmetic would only tell, what the tax would be in Dublin were it not for the contribution of the Imperial Exchequer. Instead of 8d. it would be 2s. 2d. In the present state of thing the cost of those 1,426 fine, large, stately policemen in whom we are all so interested, not paid for by the ratepayers of Dublin, but received from the Imperial Exchequer, is equal to a rate of between 1s. 6d. and 1s. 7d.

Mr. MEAGHER said he did not think it amounted to that; but it did not matter whether it cost the Imperial Exchequer a penny or a million, when the citizens of Dublin had to pay a rate of 8d. in the £.

Mr. BIRRELL: I listened to the hon. Gentleman's admirable speech with composure and without interruption, and I am not going into the merits of the case as he presented it. I am perfectly disposed to believe that Dublin is over-policed, I concede that it is very costly and extravagant in its management. I am only saying that, as a matter of fact, although the ratepayers of Dublin do pay the extravagant sum of 8d. in the £, there is this contribution from the Treasury which amounts to shillings compared with the pence contributed by the City of Dublin. It should be borne in mind, therefore, that heavy as the charge is on the ratepayers of Dublin, the charge on the Treasury is beyond all comparison with what it is in any other city. Whilst in other cities the Treasury does not contribute more than one-half towards the cost of the police, in the case of Dublin they contribute two-thirds. I quite agree that if Dublin is over-policed, and if you can reduce the number of police, you will reduce the cost. I also quite agree that all the reduction should not go into the hands of the Treasury, but that it should be shared with the ratepayers of Dublin, taking the average of several years. I am not in any way or for one moment surprised at the attitude of hon. Gentlemen opposite. My hon. friend who spoke last insisted a little upon the latter part of the Resolution which says that: "The control of this police force should be vested in the local authority as in the case in cities in Great Britain." He said that it was of the utmost importance that Dublin should have the control of its own police as well as its metropolitan rights. The hon. Gentleman probably does not think very much of the Government of which Dublin is the seat, and that it could do very well without it. I do not quarrel with him for entertaining that opinion, but if he wants Dublin to be treated like other cities in Great Britain, apart from the Metropolitan District of London, he must be prepared to pay half the cost of the police. That is what the other cities have to pay which do not claim to be metropolitan cities of the Empire. They pay half the cost of the police, and the Treasury pays the other half. The entire cost of the force is £151,430 a year. About one-third of that is paid by the ratepayers of Dublin, and the other two-thirds are paid by the Imperial Exchequer. If that expenditure can be reduced, I am quite sure, speaking on behalf of the Treasury, that they would not be in the least desirous to lay claim to and appropriate the whole of the advantage to themselves, but are perfectly willing that the proceeds should be shared between the citizens of Dublin and the Exchequer. I have been told to use no honeyed words. I have not got any honey about me. [An Irish Member: You have money.] I wish I had money; any money I could lay hold of would be at the disposal of Ireland as a whole without distinction of creed or class. I am quite prepared, if the hon. Gentleman opposite think it desirable, to appoint a Vice-Regal Commission to inquire into the facts relative to the police in Dublin and its management—as to whether Dublin is over-policed or not, because there are two opinions on that subject. There are some people who would look with disfavour on the reduction of this fine force; but you cannot have economy without reduction. As the right hon. the Secretary for War would say, it is always very difficult to reduce your force, whether at Woolwich or at any other place, and if you are compelled to do so you are accused of making life hardly worth living, and making the necessities of life harder to obtain. I believe that Dublin is over-policed, and that great economy can be accomplished in that way. I cannot say that we have withheld expenditure on the Dublin police force, and if hon. Gentlemen care to consult the Civil Service Estimates at page 331, they will see there very full information as to the expenditure of money on extra pay for the police force. I have no doubt that economies can be made, and that reduction can be made with perfect safety in the police force; and I am satisfied that the economies would be fairly divided between the Treasury, as representing the Imperial Exchequer, and the ratepayers of Dublin and Rathmines. I therefore go beyond what I did last year, having had greater opportunities during the last twelve months of inquiring into the case. I am willing there should be an inquiry into the numbers of the Dublin police force and their cost, including pensions, in order to see what practical economies can be effected. I do not think that I can honestly go further than that. The first part of the Motion is not open to very much objection; but I cannot accede to the last part: "That the control of this police force should be vested in the local authority as in the case of cities in Great Britain." I feel that Dublin is at present entitled to a larger contribution from the Treasury than other cities in Great Britain, on the ground that it is at present one of our metropolitan cities, and the seat of Government—of its kind. [NATIONALIST cheers.] I am glad to receive the support of hon. Gentlemen opposite, but I do not think that the citizens of Dublin are entitled to a larger share from the Imperial Exchequer, assuming that its metropolitan character were to be taken away from it altogether. I would ask hon. Gentlemen to stand on their metropolitan rights, and to lay claim to a larger contribution from the Treasury than one-half of the cost, which would be all that they would have if Dublin were treated as an ordinary town. I think they would be well advised if they accepted an inquiry into the police force in Dublin with a view of discovering if that force can be considerably reduced and whether large economies can be effected so that this tax of 8d. may be materially and substantially reduced.

MR. JOHN REDMOND said that he had been a long time in the House and his experience was that they should always desire to obtain some practical results from a discussion of this kind. He was not much of a believer in Commissions. They had had Commissions innumerable on every Irish subject during the last twenty-five years. Most of those Commissions, it might be said, had led to nothing, but still he thought that the appointment of a Vice-Regal Commission in this matter was some sort of an advance, and if it was properly constituted and its reference was sufficiently wide some good might come of it. They were dealing with a grievance which was admitted, and the right hon. Gentleman had said that it was an intolerable grievance to all sections of the citizens of Dublin that they should be called upon to pay 8d. in the £ by way of police tax, whereas there was no other town in the United Kingdom which paid more than 5d. and the majority only paid 3d. The right hon. Gentleman had pointed out that there were two questions concerning this case. One was the number of the police, and he thought that no one who knew anything about Dublin would deny that the number was excessive. He was sure that any proper inquiry would lead to a report to that effect, and apparently, therefore, the Commission might have the good result of promoting if not of effecting immediately the reduction of the number. The next question was the excessive cost of the police in Dublin, and there could be no doubt about that, as it was a remarkable thing that the 1,200 policemen in the City of Dublin cost more than 1,200 policemen in London or any city in this country. He had the figures, and it was quite true that, quite apart from what the citizens of Dublin paid, the gross cost of each policeman in Dublin was far more than that of each policeman in London or any city in this country. That was the cause of what the right hon. Gentleman had stated, namely, that the contribution from the Exchequer towards the police in Dublin was larger than its contribution to the police of cities in this country. Why should the policeman in Dublin cost more than in London or elsewhere? It was the same old story; the same cause that ran through the whole of the Government of Ireland in every Department from top to bottom and made it more expensive than the Government of England, Scotland or Wales. What was true of other Departments was true of the police. He saw no reason why this should be so and why an impartial Commission should not report that the number of police and the cost per constable were excessive. If these two things were found there was no reason why the total cost and the cost to the ratepayer should not be diminished. That being so, while he and his colleagues would prefer that immediate steps should be taken to remedy this grievance, they recognised that this Commission got them somewhat forwarder, and therefore he would be inclined to accept this proposal of the right hon. Gentleman. With regard to the control of the police, there was a great deal to be said, and no doubt if they were to insist upon taking the opinion of the House on their full case with reference to the police they would stand to every syllable of the Resolution and divide the House upon it. But there was something in what the Chief Secretary had said that this question of the control of the Dublin police was mixed up with great political and constitutional questions, and he would not be in favour of refusing this inquiry simply because they were not able to get a satisfactory answer on the question of control. Of course, he was not satisfied; he considered it an intolerable thing that this grievance had gone on unredressed for fifty years, and that they had come to this House for the last quarter of a century with a grievance admitted and nothing done. While he was not satisfied, under all circumstances he thought that for the sake of getting some practical advance his hon. friend would be well advised in withdrawing his Motion and asking the Chief Secretary to appoint a Vice-Regal Commission such as he had indicated. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not only appoint a competent and impartial body but would enter into some consultation with the Irish Members in order that the reference to the Commission might be sufficiently wide to take in all the questions which arose in reference to the excessive cost of the police and the excessive burden on the taxpayers of Dublin.

Mr. WALTER LONG (Dublin, S.): I rise primarily to congratulate the Chief Secretary on the way his path is smoothed by the hon. Gentlemen below the gangway.

Mr. BIRRELL: Surely I am entitled to some assistance.

Mr. WALTER LONG: I allude to the way in which the hon. Gentleman has acknowledged the very small favour he had got to-night.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: I got nothing from you.

Mr. WALTER LONG: If it had come from us it would have been received in a different way altogether. What did the right hon. Gentleman tell hon. Members below the gangway? He told them that it is very unlikely that this inquiry will result in any very material decrease in the cost of the police to the citizens of Dublin, because the cost of the police is borne now between the Treasury and the local ratepayer, as to one-third by the local ratepayer and as to two-thirds by the State. The hon. Gentleman who has just spoken has said that the police in Dublin are under this system more costly than the police anywhere else, and he says that that is his experience throughout the government of Ireland. But we cannot on this Motion discuss the general question of the expenditure on Irish government. With regard to the Dublin Metropolitan Police, I of course raise no objection to the inquiry, and as a Member for the county which contains Dublin, I shall be extremely glad if those of my constituents who are in the metropolitan area derive something from the inquiry. But I think we ought to know what is exactly its scope. The Chief Secretary has said that there ought to be a further inquiry into the actual cost of the police themselves, and to that obviously there can be no objection on our part, because, if it can be shown that it costs more to keep a policeman to do the same duty in Dublin than in any other part of the United Kingdom, obviously there is a case for consideration, although I hope it will not be assumed that the change will necessarily be one which will injure the police force itself. I confess I was rather surprised and sorry to hear the right hon. Gentleman, who is a distinguished Liverpudlian, choose Liverpool as the town for his comparison and say that Liverpool was not remarkable for its law-abiding character.

MR. BIRRELL: It is a lively place.

MR. WALTER LONG: It may be, but I think it is most remarkable for its law-abiding character, and as one who once had the privilege of representing a portion of it, I could not allow a remark of that sort to pass unchallenged. But the right hon. Gentleman forgets that there are occasions in Dublin when large numbers of police are called for, not by lawlessness or disorder, but by excitement of popular opinion. The other day a force of police was called to intervene in the Mansion House itself during the consideration of an ordinary Bill. These are causes which lead to the withdrawal of the police from their ordinary duties. I do not say it is any imputation on Irishmen, but I hope it will not be assumed from what has fallen from the Chief Secretary that a case is made out for a material reduction of the force, which might, if it were embarked upon, be a serious danger to the ordinary peace and quiet of the city of Dublin. Subject to those limitations, I have no objections to offer to the course the Chief Secretary intends to pursue, because I understand that while he makes the proposal of an inquiry in answer to the first part of the Resolution, he absolutely refuses to accept the latter part, which proposes to transfer the control of the police from the Irish Government to the local authority. On previous occasions distinguished Members of the party below the gangway have expressed the view—Mr. Sexton himself expressed it during the debate on the first Home Rule Bill—that such a change ought not to be embarked upon and that it would be undesirable, and therefore I hear with profound satisfaction the Chief Secretary's declaration that he is opposed to that part of the Resolution.

MR. T. M. HEALY (Louth, N.) said that the Motion was one largely in the interests of the constituents of the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, but probably he could hardly point out his constituency on the map. So far from there being any disorder in Dublin comparable with what existed in many English cities, he ventured to say that for something like thirty or forty years there had not been fired there rifle shots such as were heard only last year in Belfast, where something like 1,200 or 1,500 men were required to keep the peace. That condition of affairs only existed in a certain loyal city in the North of Ireland, which in the last five years had never made one 6d. contribution to the Imperial Exchequer, and now only paid 3½d. in the £ instead of the 8d. they were compelled to pay in Dublin. That 3½d. was only exacted from them by a Conservative administration after they had continually pointed out that Belfast was in the enjoyment of three-fourths of something like 1,100 men without a contribution of 6d. from the ratepayers. There was an additional contribution made in Dublin that had not been mentioned. He referred to the half-sovereign exacted from every publican under an old Act. Until 1888 every pawnbroker in Dublin had to contribute £95 16s. 8d. to the upkeep of the city. Furthermore, large contributions came from the Fines Fund of the city in aid of the Treasury, and, most exasperating of all, every time they paid 6d. or 1s. to a carman for his car fare they were making a contribution to the Imperial Exchequer, because the whole of the licence duties of the eleven or twelve hundred carmen in

Dublin went in aid of the police. The tram company of the city thus actually paid £3,000 or £4,000 a year for the upkeep of the police. Did that exist in Belfast or any other part of the United Kingdom? He challenged any man to deny that a woman, whatever her rank, could walk through the city at any hour of the day or night without insult. So far as the maintenance of peace and order was concerned he ventured to say there was not a city to compare with Dublin in the United Kingdom, and certainly not in that very loyal portion of Ulster about which they were in the habit of hearing so much. He thought they might make this complaint about the Chief Secretary: he said it to one of the right hon. Gentleman's predecessors in office, and would say it to him: "You do not seem to be the Chief Secretary for Ireland; you seem to be the Chief Secretary for England, because every time the Treasury makes a demand upon our officials, you instantly shrink into your dens and say 'Oh, we must obey the Treasury.'" What they wanted was an Irish Secretary. They wanted some man who would stand up for their country and tell the British Treasury: "Your conduct is unfair; I will not be a party to it." If they had someone who would do that, men who had, not an English conscience but an Irish conscience, and would say: "We will not be any party to your exactions," they would very soon have a change in the conduct of the Treasury towards Ireland. Upon that he always took his stand on the declaration of Lord Salisbury in the House of Lords, which ought to be rubbed in again and again and again. Lord Salisbury speaking as Prime Minister, regarding the Boer War, placed the whole liability for the misconduct and folly of that campaign on the shoulders of the British Treasury. This body, which was at one time simply regarded as a body that tried to save them from exaction, was now, next to the Press of England, their greatest curse. They had to complain that no consideration was ever given to any of the demands they put forward. As regarded this question of the Dublin Police, while he shared cordially in what had been said as to their general good conduct, they were entitled to ask the Government to put them on the basis of Belfast, which enjoyed a force of 560 men, and received a Treasury contribution amounting to half the cost. Why should not Dublin be put on the same footing? What had Belfast, the city of riots and disorder, so far as the month of July, at all events, was concerned, done to entitle it to a contribution from the Treasury greater than Dublin received? He sincerely trusted that if the Commission, which the right hon. Gentleman spoke of, issued, it would take into consideration the subject of Belfast, the contribution which Belfast made to the Imperial Treasury, the annual cost to the country of the drafts for the Royal Irish Constabulary going to Belfast in July and August, and whether Belfast should not be compelled to pay a contribution in the same way as Roscommon had to do when cattle-driving or any other matter of that kind was in force. The whole condition of the police force ought to be taken into account. He would like very much to see the Commission extended beyond the Dublin area to the police force as a whole. He believed the amount paid to officers as compared with the amount paid to the men was excessive, and that much discontent arose from that fact. If the Government extended the inquiry in this way such incidents as arose in Belfast recently out of the discontent there would disappear, and the police throughout the country would find that so far from there being any desire on their part to see them unjustly treated they were more in favour of seeing pay and promotion, which was at present largely given to officers, fairly and equitably distributed amongst the rank and file.

MR. MOORE (Armagh, N.) said he would not have intervened had it not seemed to him that in the speech they had just heard there had been a certain amount of somewhat gratuitous challenge and offence to a part of the country which it was not necessary to name and which had only been referred to, not so much to point an argument or adorn a tale as to do what the hon. Member had so frequently done before, to seize the opportunity of dragging his coat across the path of those of his countrymen who hailed from the northern portion of Ireland. Whatever their faults might be, he did not know that they ever refused a challenge of that sort, and less than ever on that occasion did he feel disposed to do so. But before they talked of war they ought to recognise how thoroughly in every department, and on every point, the olive branches of peace had been exchanged between the Chief Secretary and hon. Gentlemen below the gangway. Night after night minatory threats were made as to what would happen to the right hon. Gentleman should he attempt to put off what were called unconditional demands, as he had done that night, with honeyed words. They were told of the wonderful and sudden and calamitous end that would happen to the right hon. Gentleman if he did not yield on the spot to their demands in respect of the repeal of the Crimes Act, of contempt of Court, or of evidence in the case of persons held to find sureties of the peace for good behaviour. The right hon. Gentleman took these threats at their real value. It was not their face value. At present they enjoyed rather a debased currency, because the right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that no matter what the threats might be, Gentlemen below the gangway, in spite of unconditional refusal, would immediately troop into the division lobby behind him. They had seen that time after time and would probably see it until a certain measure was introduced dealing with higher education in Ireland, for the sake of which the insults and grievances under which hon. Members suffered would be meekly swallowed and pocketed. One matter had struck him very much. When the hon. Member for the Harbour Division said it was not really the object of those who thought with him to transfer the present government of the Metropolitan Police and his attention was drawn to the fact that the resolution did not carry out that view, he said that that was a matter of form. The hon. Member absolutely declined to change the present government of the Dublin police and vest it in the Corporation. He knew his own Corporation. Then they had the hon. Member for East Tyrone, whose constituency was a very long way from Dublin. He was quite willing in the name of his constituents that the control of the police should be put under the Dublin Corporation. Then came the hon. Member for North Louth, who was not going to trust the Dublin Corporation with the control of the police. He wanted to treat them as they were treated in Belfast, and to merge them to all intents and purposes in the Royal Irish Constabulary. They did not often find such diversity of opinion amongst hon. Members below the gangway. Whoever had the control of the Metropolitan police in Dublin it certainly ought not to be the Corporation of Dublin, and that was the reason why they objected to this Motion. The hon. and learned Member for North Louth had referred to the fact that there was unfortunately a rifle shot in Belfast last year. He might point out that for ten years there had not been one before. [Cries of "Oh, oh!"] He challenged any hon. Member from Ireland to contradict his statement. If there had been a rifle shot in Belfast it had occurred in the Nationalist quarter, and in an affray between the Nationalists and the police. In Dublin they had a minority whose misfortune it was that they were Unionists, but they never heard of the Dublin minority being brought into conflict with the police. This debate had taken place not in the interests of the police at all. He was glad to note the great change in the feelings of hon. Members below the gangway towards the police, for they were now professing an intense love for the police authorities. This Motion was also claimed to be put forward in the interests of the ratepayers of Dublin. What was the actual position? No less than two-thirds of the rates for the Metropolitan area of Dublin were paid by the Unionists of the City of Dublin. Surely they were the people who ought to have a voice in this matter and whose opinion ought to carry weight. The late Lord Mayor of Dublin had put the case clearly before the House on behalf of the employees of the Corporation.

MR. NANNETTI said he spoke on behalf of the Unionists as well as the Nationalists. Upon this question he represented the Unionists of Rathmines and Dalkey, and spoke on behalf of the ratepayers who had joined with the Corporation of Dublin in protesting against this police tax.

Mr. MOORE said that one of the arguments of the hon. Member was that the ratepayers for whom he professed to speak would be driven to strike against the rate, the immediate effect of which would be that the scavengers and others in the employ of the Corporation would be out of work, and he made a very strong point of that. Now the right hon. Gentleman opposite knew perfectly well that the Unionist ratepayers, who paid two-thirds of the rates, had not the slightest intention of striking against the rate.

Mr. NANNETTI said that what he stated was that the Corporation of Dublin had the power of levying and collecting this police rate, and they might be disposed not to levy the rate at all. In that case he said the people employed by the Corporation might be thrown out of employment.

Mr. MOORE said the Corporation were powerless in the matter, because if they refused to levy the rate the money could be deducted from other funds. The proposer of this Resolution had said that if this tax was continued there would probably be an anti-rate war, that the ratepayers would suffer so much that eventually they would refuse to pay their rates, and that was the pious aspiration of the hon. Member who had moved the Resolution. As the right hon. Gentleman might rely upon two-thirds of the ratepayers of Dublin refusing to enter upon a war of that sort, he could sleep peaceably in his bed. He was a ratepayer in Dublin himself, and any ratepayer who was now paying the ordinary respectable amount of 8d. in the £ would prefer that that rate should continue in perpetuity rather than the metropolitan police should be transferred to the kindly care and control of the Dublin Corporation. The hon. Member for East Tyrone had said that the Dublin police were all very well until politics were introduced amongst them. If the control of the police was transferred to the Dublin Corporation they all knew perfectly well that there would not be a man admitted to that force unless he was nominated by a publican, or an out-and-out Fenian, or a sworn member of the United Irish League. He had read that day a letter in the *Freeman's Journal*, written by one of the leaders of the numerous sections into which hon. Members below the gangway were divided, Mr. Arthur Griffith, a Nationalist. What did he say about his own Corporation? This was not the opinion of a bigoted Orangeman, but a bird of the same brood and the leader of the Sinn Fein Party. [A Nationalist Member: He is not an Irishman.] He did not know his pedigree, but he was the imported leader of one of the Irish sections. Mr. Griffith wrote complaining of the expenditure each year of thousands of pounds in cheques to English lawyers, to Dublin Corporation officials, and to Members of the Dublin Corporation, under the heading of expenses in London. It was admitted that the name of the Corporation of Dublin was a byword among municipalities. It was pretended that for the good of the country and for the protection of property this fine force should be handed over to the control of such a body, in other words, placed under the heel of an Irish Tammany. He would protest against that being done as long as he had words to do so in this House. The hon. and learned Member for North Louth had compared Dublin and Belfast. The affairs of Belfast Corporation were managed by men who were trusted and respected among their fellows. There was nothing to conceal or to be ashamed of in Belfast municipal life. He objected to the Dublin police force being handed over to the publicans and sinners who composed the Dublin Corporation.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) said he could assure the hon. and learned Member that if he desired to bring to their feet Ulster Members, and especially those who came from Belfast, he had only to speak of that City as he had done in that debate. He was glad to say that he was ready at any time to allow the City of Belfast to be placed in competition not only with Dublin, but with any other city in the three kingdoms; and he was quite certain that if an inquiry were held in matters municipal, social, or economic, Belfast would come out with flying colours. The hon. and learned Member for North Louth, in making one or two comparisons between Belfast and Dublin, had said, for instance, that a lady might walk through Dublin at any hour of the night without molestation. He would tell the hon. Member that a lady might do the same in Belfast. As to the Belfast riots he would only say that, as the hon. Member was aware, those riots were entirely due to persons of his own political persuasion. That fact was known by everybody, and Nationalist Members dared not deny it. As to 12th July celebrations which had been referred to, he would say that nobody resented more than Orangemen that extra police were drafted into Belfast, and no people had more endeavoured to impress upon the authorities that these extra police were absolutely unnecessary. The hon. and learned Member for North Louth knew perfectly well that for ten or twelve years past Belfast had been absolutely peaceful on 12th July.

*MR. SPEAKER: There is nothing whatever in the Motion about Belfast or 12th July. I must ask the hon. Member to confine himself to the Motion.

MR. CHARLES CRAIG said that he was aware of that, and he would not have got up to make these few remarks had it not been for the insulting observations which had been made about Belfast. The hon. and learned Member for North Louth had ended his speech by saying that Dublin should be put on the same basis as Belfast. That was rather inconsistent with the earlier part of his speech, in which he could say nothing too bad for Belfast. That the 12th of July celebrations had passed off absolutely peacefully for several years had been acknowledged.

MR. MEAGHER asked leave to withdraw the Motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

*MR. JESSE COLLINGS (Birmingham, Bordesley), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said that it had passed its Second Reading with the unanimous consent of the House a few years ago. The object of the measure was, instead of having so much literary teaching in rural schools, to provide for the teaching of agricultural and horticultural subjects, and of Nature study. While these subjects might be optional in urban schools, they would be compulsory in schools in rural districts, and where possible school gardens for practical instruction in fruit culture, flower growing, and the like should be provided. Unless this was done in elementary schools the teaching in the higher and secondary schools was practically useless. If the children reached the age of fifteen on book-learning only, it was too late to get them to take up agriculture. Children trained in these pursuits very early acquired a liking for them, and that continued with them in after life. At the last meeting of the Dairy Farmers' Association he saw a girl of about thirteen milking cows as well as he had ever seen it done in his life. He moved that the Bill be read a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London) said the right hon. Gentleman need not be afraid; he was not going to prevent his Bill going through. He only wanted to ask him one or two questions. A subsection of Clause 2 said that a special grant not exceeding 75 per cent. of the cost should be made by the local education authority of these schools. He agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that the object of the Bill in rural districts was excellent; but he asked whether this clause, which contemplated increased expenditure, meant that all the subjects at present taught in the schools were to be in addition to what was provided for in this Bill? For, if so, that would cause a largely increased expenditure. He hoped that on the Committee Stage the right hon. Gentleman would endeavour to make such alterations in the Bill as would cover the object of it, but would not impose increased expenditure on the locality.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed to a Standing Committee.

SMALL HOLDINGS BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

SIR F. BANBURY thought that they had had enough of Agricultural Bills at ten minutes before eleven o'clock, and that when they came to another Bill by the right hon. Gentleman, this time dealing with Small Holdings, some explanation of it ought to have been made. He knew something about the Bill, although he had not yet thoroughly looked into it, and he contended that it was absolutely contrary to the Small Holdings Act passed last session.

***MR. JESSE COLLINGS**: No, not at all; it only amends the Act of 1892.

SIR F. BANBURY said that that only showed the difficulty in which they were placed when a Bill was brought in without any explanation. After reading the Bill he contended that it was contrary to the measure passed last year, the only principle of which was that it did not include purchase, while this Bill did.

MR. JESSE COLLINGS dissented.

SIR F. BANBURY said the difficulty was to know what the Bill was about.

MR. TREVELYAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Elland) said he did not understand what the nature of the Bill was, but he gathered that it was intended to alter the Small Holdings Act of 1892. He thought that it was rather a serious matter after the House had decided only last year to deal with the Small Holding question in a certain way, after having gone into the whole matter at great length, that the promoters of this Bill should have introduced it without some very clear explanation of what alterations in the law they proposed. The right hon. Gentleman was acting in a very curious way to the House. When a Bill was brought in it was generally explained, and the right hon. Gentleman could not expect the House, which had been taken by surprise, because no one expected this Bill to come on that night, to give a Second Reading to a measure which would very materially alter the Small Holdings Act passed last year. They all knew the right hon. Gentleman's anxiety to get small holdings by means of purchase, but there were a great many Members in the House who were not so anxious to develop small holdings on those lines. Indeed, last year's Act was based on a different principle, that the land should be held by the community, from whom the tenant should rent it. He did not say that the two systems were incompatible, but they did not know to what extent this Bill would cut across the principle of last year's Act.

And, it being Eleven of the Clock, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed upon Wednesday, 25th March.

TRUSTS BILL.

Read a second time.

Bill committed to a Select Committee.—(*Mr. Rendell.*)

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES).

Postponed Proceeding resumed.

Resolution to be reported To-morrow; Committee also report Progress; to sit again To-morrow.

POISONS AND PHARMACY BILL [LORDS].

Lords Message [5th March], "That it is desirable that the Poisons and Pharmacy Bill [Lords] be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament," considered.

Resolved, That this House doth agree with the Lords in the said Resolution.

Message to the Lords to acquaint them therewith.—(*Mr. Whiteley.*)

MR. WHITELEY (Yorkshire, W.R., Pudsey) in moving the Adjournment of the House, gave notice that he would to-morrow move the suspension of the Eleven o'Clock Rule.

Adjourned at five minutes after Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 12th March, 1908.]

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House, That the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with ;—Madras Railway Company (Annuities).

Also the Certificate that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have not been complied with :—Argentine North Eastern Railway [H.L.]

The same was ordered to lie on the Table.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.

Report from, that the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Alliance and other Assurance and Insurance Companies Bill [H.L.]; Leith Burgh Bill [H.L.]; and the West London Barnes, and Richmond Tramways Bill [H.L.]; ought to be dispensed with, and the Bills allowed to proceed.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Camborne Water Bill; ought to be dispensed with.

That the Standing Orders not complied with in respect of the Croydon and Southern District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; and the London and Windsor Motor Roads, Tramroads, and Tramways Bill [H.L.]; ought not to be dispensed with.

Read, and agreed to.

Great Western Railway Bill [H.L.]; Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the opposition thereto having been withdrawn; read, and ordered to lie on the Table. The orders made on the 19th and 26th of February last discharged, and Bill committed.

Huddersfield Water Bill [H.L.]; Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899;—Report from the Committee of Selection, that the following Lords be proposed to the House as the panel of Lords to Act as Commissioners under the Act, viz.:—E. Mansfield, L. Kintore, (E. Kintore); agreed to; and the said Lords appointed accordingly.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PROBATION OF OFFENDERS.

Memorandum issued by the Home Office relative to the administration of the Probation of Offenders Act 1907, containing the rules made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department under section 7 of the Act.

EXPLOSIVES (EXPLOSION OF CARTRIDGES ON REGISTERED PREMISES.)

Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the circumstances attending an explosion of cartridges which occurred on the registered premises of Messrs. F. Dyke and Company, at 5, St. George's Avenue, Aldermanbury, E. C., on 1st January 1908.

Presented [by command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

POISONS AND PHARMACY BILL [H.L.].

Message from the Commons, That they concur in the Resolution of this House communicated to them on Thursday last, that it is desirable that the Poisons and Pharmacy Bill [H.L.] be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament as desired by this House.

NEW BILL.

EDUCATION (SCHOOL ATTENDANCE) BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to raise the minimum age of exemption from attendance at School to thirteen; was presented by the Lord Stanley of Alderley; read 1ª, and to be printed (No 27.)

THE STRENGTH OF THE ARMY.

*VISCOUNT MIDLETON rose to call attention to the strength of the Army at home; and to move for any Minute of the Army Council approving the further reduction in the numbers of the Regular

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Artillery, and the Report for 1907 of the late Inspector-General of the Forces, so far as it affects "the training and efficiency of the troops under the control of the Home Government, and the readiness and fitness of the Army for war."

The noble Viscount said: My Lords, after the discussions which your Lordships have heard in the course of this year on the present state of the various forces of the Crown I should have hesitated to come before you again or in any way to re-traverse the ground which has already been so admirably trodden by the noble Duke behind me (the Duke of Bedford) on behalf of the Militia and by many noble Lords on behalf of the Volunteers; but I have a genuine fear, for which I think I can show good reason, that the attention of the public and of His Majesty's Government is, by the great interest shown in the organisation of the Territorial Forces, being deflected to the Auxiliary Forces from the most important part of our Forces, the Regular Army. I do not know that it is sufficiently realised that the Regular Army has more need for advocates than the Territorial Army. From time immemorial the tongues of officers have been tied. There is no officer on full pay who, as a rule, will get up in this House or in the other House of Parliament and speak on the condition of the Army; equally officers to a large extent are prevented by their position from taking part in campaigns in the Press, or other methods of directing public attention to the subject, and, in that respect, they are in an absolutely different position from officers of the Auxiliary Forces.

From my own experience extending over many years in another place I know that it has fallen to the Secretary of State, and very often to the Secretary of State alone, to maintain the necessity for expenditure on the Army, and to resist the large demands made upon him on behalf of the Auxiliary Forces. Looking at the position to-day, instead of having the Secretary of State engaged on that mission, we have him in nearly all of his occasional utterances in the country drawing the public mind away from the Regular Army, his references to which are an oasis, and not always a brilliant oasis, in the desert of references to the Territorial Forces, about which he speaks with trumpet sounds of certainty, but with regard to which I think perhaps a more chastened tone would, at this early stage of its existence, be more justifiable. Let it be understood that I do not propose to trespass for one moment upon your attention with regard to any portion of the Forces except the Regular Army. I can say for myself, and for every noble Lord sitting on these benches, that we will, as far as our power and capacity lie, either in our respective counties or outside, do our very best to make the Territorial Forces a success; but when, at the invitation of the Secretary of State, we are up on the scaffolding trying to do our best to erect an edifice, we have a right to complain that the props of the scaffolding are being cut away—I mean the Regular Army—on which the whole edifice must depend. I am not using too strong language, as I think I shall be able to show. I am not going back upon the past. I am not going to speak of any other schemes than Mr. Haldane's, and I am not going to trouble your Lordships with a number of figures.

I assert broadly that, whereas a great reduction of expenditure with a minimum reduction of force was promised us two years ago, what we have got has been a great reduction of the strength of the Army and a minimum reduction of expenditure. The Secretary of State specifically calls attention, in his Memorandum, to the fact that the Regular Army is only 6,000 stronger than in 1898, before the war. In fact, the Memorandum is full of apologies that the Army is not even weaker than it was before the war. How much has there been of increase in the expenditure? While there is a gain of 6,000 men, the expenditure is £7,000,000 more than in 1898. This document is remarkable for other things which are not contained in it. Mr. Haldane takes credit to himself for having reduced the Estimates by £2,300,000 since his predecessor left office. There is no mention in the Memorandum of this fact, that in the last year of Mr. Arnold-Forster's period of office £1,200,000 was being spent on the re-armament of the Artillery, a service which has come to an end after four or five years of heavy expenditure. Deducting the £1,200,000 due to the completion of the armament of Artillery, the saving is, therefore, roughly £1,000,000.

And what have we lost for that million? I take the figures as they appeared unchallenged the other day in a letter of the late Secretary of State. We have lost, in establishment, between 1905 and 1908, 423 Regular officers, 2,400 sergeants, and 33,500 rank and file. The Reserve, which alone enables the Army to mobilise, will be decreased by 17,000 men in 1909 and by 10,000 more in 1910. We have lost a whole Army corps and gained a million of money! I go back to 1898, because that is the pivot of Mr. Haldane's remarks. Why was the Army raised in numbers in that year? It was not raised in a panic. It was not raised from any idea that war was at the time expected, because in 1897, when we began, we were not even within sight of the South African war. It certainly was not raised in a hurry, because it had been under discussion for many years, and for many months by the then Government. It was raised when my noble friend Lord Lansdowne took the office of Secretary of State for War, and it was raised then because for years, as I can myself testify, the pressure of every soldier of experience had been brought to bear on successive Governments to prove that without more battalions you were not able to provide adequate drafts, that the strength of a battalion at 720 did not enable it to provide drafts and to mobilise, that therefore the strength of the battalions should be raised to 800, that our Artillery was weaker than that of any Army in Europe, and that we were greatly deficient in officers and had no proper reserve of stores.

My noble friend Lord Lansdowne took the view that we were bound to provide the number of men and the number of units which our military advisers said were necessary to complete the policy of the Cabinet. I think, even on financial grounds, that was wise. It is obvious that we are not striving to have an Army which will compete with Continental Armies; but the richest nation in Europe ought surely to have the same proportion of picked troops in its Army as much poorer nations with much larger Armies succeed in having. That is the reason why I shall direct your Lordships' attention to the case of the Artillery. What did Lord Lansdowne do? He added fifteen battalions to the Army. Nine of them have been disbanded by Mr. Haldane, and more are threatened. He raised the strength of the battalions at home from 720 to 800 to enable them to provide drafts and to mobilise. They have been reduced by the present Secretary of State to 720. He raised between fifty and sixty batteries of Artillery. Thirty-three of these are to be reduced into training depôts, and 2,400 more Artillerymen are to be discharged. In regard to officers, he raised the establishment by no fewer than 1,000. A reduction of nearly 500 has been effected by the present Secretary of State. He raised £10,000,000 worth of stores. It is very difficult to make out from the Estimates whether the stores taken for the year are in every case equivalent to the expenditure of the year; but discussions have taken place, especially last year, in another place, which were by no means reassuring as to whether the stores laid in by the late Administration have not been heavily drawn upon and not replaced, especially in the matter of clothing.

And what is the condition of the Army at the present moment? The Paper which the Government were good enough to place on the Table of the House on my Motion a month ago is now in the hands of the public, and I venture to say that a more disquieting document has never been laid on the Table of Parliament as to the present strength of the Home Army. I know I shall be told that the condition of the Army at home is due to the large efflux of men to the Reserve under the three years system. That has something to do with it, but by no means all. In the first place, your Lordships are aware that all the men from eight battalions which have been disbanded have been distributed among other battalions, and therefore in the last year 6,400 men have become available to swell the total of the remaining battalions. Four or five battalions have been brought home from the Colonies, and they also go to strengthen the Home Army. In regard to the Colonies, I will not diverge to say anything as to these reductions in garrisons, except this, that I venture to warn the Government that the garrisons both of Malta and Gibraltar have been brought down to a remarkable extent, and if we are to calculate on having seventy-four battalions at home in future, and that calculation is based on the present garrisons in the Mediterranean, to say nothing of South Africa, I think it more probable that in the next two or three years the balance of battalions will be disturbed than kept as at present. But I will not labour that point.

I have made a careful study of the White Paper. The strength of the Home battalion ought to be 720; in the White Paper the average strength is at present 580. To mobilise the battalions of the Regular Army it has always been held that you ought to have 500 soldiers with the colours and then bring in 500 Reservists. The strength of these battalions, after taking off men under 20 years of age or under one year's service, though not both, because many are included in both columns—after deducting the least number the strength of these battalions for mobilisation is 330 a piece, and from that number you have to take away the sick and those temporarily unable to go abroad, which will bring the figure down to nearly 300. You must bring 700 Reservists into a battalion of that strength, and I ask what is the state of a battalion which may be engaged in active operation in a few days which contains only 300 men with the colours and 700 brought in, most of whom will have been away from the colours some years?

Take the total force. The Secretary of State talked last year of 28,000 men being required with the colours and 48,000 Reservists when mobilisation occurred; but at the present moment the number that could be produced is only 22,000 men with the colours and we require 48,000 Reservists. That is a most astonishing condition of things for a force, the fighting capacity of which, according to the Secretary of State, has been increased by 50 per cent. Then let us look at individual battalions. There is no secret about them. The Durham Light Infantry, one of the best regiments in the Service, if paraded to-day for foreign service would stand at seventy-six strong. The 60th and the Rifle Brigade could each only make up one battalion from the two at home. I am informed, though I have not been able to verify this absolutely, that when the German Emperor was in London and troops were required to line the streets, one of the First Brigades at Aldershot, the first Brigade to go abroad on active service, sent up every man it could, and the whole brigade of four battalions was only 982 strong. I say that that requires some explanation from His Majesty's Government.

What I believe has greatly affected the position has been the disbandment of popular regiments. I hear that officers in the Northumberland Fusiliers belonging to the disbanded battalion have been ordered to join the Somerset Light Infantry; but you cannot remove men in this way as you can officers. I was struck the other day by the remark of a Member of the Cabinet to the effect that all they had done was to disband useless battalions. Of one of the battalions reduced and denounced as a useless battalion, a Report on the Army Rifle Meeting last year in Ireland stated—

> "The team of the 4th Battalion Royal Warwickshire Regiment, soon to be disbanded, were rightly honoured as they came up, time after time, to receive the cups which their splendid efficiency had gained for them. Of the twelve trophies put up for competition among dismounted troops of all arms, this fine battalion has won no fewer than seven."

That battalion was disbanded a few months afterwards. I saw myself two battalions in the finest condition in South Africa; they were sent home to be disbanded. It cannot be said that that is an encouragement to recruiting. Mr. Haldane recently stated in another place that the class of recruits was so improved, owing to the increased pay and better conditions of service established by the last Government, that the military authorities could pick and choose among them. If that be so, I cannot help wishing that the picking and choosing had not been carried so far as to reduce these fine battalions to skeletons.

The Army at home was, twelve years ago, compared by Lord Wolseley to "squeezed lemons." That appellation describes every battalion in the list now lying upon this Table. The Army at home is absolutely melting away under the influence of these restrictions; and if the present Secretary of State for War were to cast up his account with the British public with regard to the British Infantry at this moment, he would be justified in doing it in the terms of the Irish veterinary surgeon, who sent in a bill "for curing your pony till he died." We have been told by Mr. Haldane that we should require 5,000 extra officers in case of mobilisation. It seems an extraordinary way of meeting that situation, to make a reduction of 500 trained officers. I know there is an elaborate scheme by which young men from the Universities and public schools are to be employed as a Reserve of officers, after having obtained a certain certificate from the Territorial Army. I hope that certificate is going to be a high one. Before I left Eton I was fortunate enough to obtain a certificate that I was fit to command a battalion in the field; and all I say is that, even if that battalion had been only of the strength of the Durham Light Infantry, I would have been very sorry for it.

The case of the Infantry is not the worst. I do not speak in any way as a military critic. I am only repeating what I have heard under the stress of twelve years service in the War Office. I have always heard it said that if you have the *cadres* and the officers, you can improvise regiments of Infantry with comparative quickness. But Artillery cannot be improvised. What is the state of our Artillery? We have ninety-nine batteries of Artillery and howitzers at home. Their general strength is about 100, but when mobilised they require 183 men. So that beyond Reservists men will have to be filched from the lower batteries to fill up the higher sent abroad. I cannot help feeling the fallacy put forward by the Secretary of State, who said he came into the *damnosa hereditas* of ninety-nine batteries of Artillery, of which he could only mobilise forty-two. The statement is disingenuous, for the batteries had just been created and had not had time to pass Reservists through. Since then the Reserve has risen by 4,000 or 5,000 men and is still growing.

The idea is that sixty-six batteries are to be sent abroad in proper strength; thirty-three batteries will remain, whose strength is to be reduced by 2,400 men —or about fifty-five per battery. This deficiency will be made up by boys under twenty and Special Reservists, with less than eight months training. The only Regular batteries available against the picked Artillery of any European Power for the protection of England against invasion would thus be batteries manned one-fifth by Regulars and four-fifths by partially-trained men and boys. I do not wish to go into the vexed question of invasion, but the Secretary of State for War last night in another place, when asked what would happen when the sixty-six batteries had gone abroad, made this astonishing reply—

> "Why should there be anything left? Why shall we require them? We shall not send them abroad if there is any danger of invasion."

We had a force of fifty-seven batteries of artillery in South Africa, and will any noble Lord say that during the whole of the time those batteries were out of the country we were free from the danger of invasion? There is no time when it is more necessary for the Government to pull its resources together than when the whole of the Army is abroad.

What is military opinion on this subject? I have over and over again heard Lord Wolseley give his opinion on partially-trained Artillery. It is his view, and I believe the view of the noble and gallant Field Marshal, who I hope will speak in this debate, that partially-trained Artillery cannot stand before Regular Artillery. Take the battle of Tsusima, which military critics are citing with regard to this effect of accurate shooting and training of Artillery. One could not fail to observe the terrible effect which even a slight difference of training made on the Russian ships; they found themselves struck time after time while their own shots went just wide enough to make the difference. A little while ago Captain Vincent, at the United Service Institution, after fifteen months with the Japanese Army, stated—

> "Partially-trained batteries, like partially-trained battleships, are only a danger to their own side."

That is a strong pronouncement, and Sir Ian Hamilton, who was in the chair, and who was himself in Manchuria the whole time, agreed that such batteries are a danger to their own side "if they are expected to hold their own, gun for gun, against Regular Artillery." He added that three or four of these partially trained batteries might be pitted against one trained battery, and hold their own.

Have we come to this in this country that, when we have sent our expeditionary force abroad, we shall only have remaining Artillery which, unless it is three or four times as numerous as that of the enemy, will be incapable of holding its own? Can it not be realised what the danger is if we put such Artillery against the picked Artillery of the greatest Powers in the world? In words which I think I have heard from Lord Wolseley, the result would be either a shambles or a *sauve qui peut.* What I venture to ask the noble Earl the Under-Secretary of State for War is, Who is responible for the advice to get rid of these 2,400 Artillery and to employ partially-trained batteries after the expeditionary force has gone? I wish to press that question. I have had some experience of military advice at the War Office. The question of Volunteer Artillery was brought up over and over again, and I have heard officers describe its use as a serious waste of public money. I myself pressed the War Office Council when the noble and gallant Field Marshal on the cross benches was Commander-in-Chief, in the interest of economy, as to whether the last thirty or forty batteries could possibly be put on a lower establishment, and the whole of my military advisers told me that it was impossible.

Not long after, the question arose of substituting a long service for the three years colour service. The three years colour service was maintained because of the Reserve which it was going to create. That has been done away with. I remember also that in the time of my successor, Mr. Arnold-Forster, the question arose whether fifteen months service would be sufficient to train infantry, and great difficulties were put forward by the military advisers against that period being adopted; but to-day we are told that six months service or eight months with the two trainings will be enough for the Artillery. I am not asking for any secrets to be divulged. The condition of our Artillery is known to every Artillery officer in this country; it is known to every foreign military *attache* in London, and it is perfectly well known to the German General Staff. It is equally well known to, and is often made the subject of comment and sometimes of ridicule, by every military critic in Europe.

I ask, who advised the Secretary of State? On what military advice does he rely? There is one officer on the present Army Council who was on the Army Council which advised me—I mean Sir W. Nicholson. He was, I think, not there when this step was resolved upon two years ago. There is no officer of greater experience and knowledge in the Army. I would ask the noble Earl, does Sir W. Nicholson think the Regular Artillery is capable of a reduction by 2,400 men? Does Sir W. Nicholson consider that batteries made up as these last thirty-three batteries are to be made up are fit to be pitted against the best batteries of a Continental Power? I think I have a right to ask that question. I should like to inquire the opinion also of another officer who is a member of the Defence Committee. General Sir John French is an officer who is recognised by everyone as capable of taking the highest command in war. I know this subject must have come before the Defence Committee. Is he in favour of the reduction? If these two officers — the Chief of the General Staff and the Commander-in-Chief at Aldershot—are not in favour of the reduction, I would ask whether it is to be regarded as having been made simply in the interests of economy.

With regard to the infantry, I cannot help thinking, also, that we have some right to know the opinion of the Inspector-General. The Secretary of State said a few nights ago in the House of Commons that the expeditionary force would contain 61,000 men serving with the colours. A few moments afterwards, I think through a slip, he spoke of 68,000 men serving with the colours. But I will take the lower figure. I cannot, putting the best face upon it, make out that more than 35,000 men serving with the colours could go into the expeditionary force. But the Secretary of State wants 61,000. I wish to know whether the Inspector-General of the Forces, who reviewed all these battalions last year, is satisfied with the condition of the expeditionary force. The duties of the Inspector-General were laid down by rules at the War Office four years ago. He is to report to the Army Council upon the training and efficiency of the troops under the control of the Home Government, and generally on the readiness and fitness of the Army for war.

The famous triumvirate on whose report the office of Inspector-General was created went a good deal further than this. They said that he was to be the eyes and ears of the Army Council. They represented him as being to the Army Council and to the public what the auditor of a company is to the shareholders. He has nothing to do with policy; he deals simply with facts—to see whether the securities are there, which the directors have had in their charge. I ask, Are there at Aldershot and elsewhere the securities which the Army Council have tried to persuade the country are in their charge? Have the practical results of the policy of the Army Council been such as to satisfy the Inspector-General? I will not labour that point, but I will just say one word with regard to the possible remedy.

It is not our businesss on this side of the House to suggest remedies, but I do most earnestly commend to the consideration of the War Office the re-adoption, to a limited extent, of some system of short service. I do not ask them to disturb their own conclusions in a single particular. I merely ask that these batteries and battalions at home which have had their establishments reduced should have added, say, in the case of battalions, 100 men, and in the case of batteries fifty men each—men of whom you ask a higher standard of age, education, and physique, and who for that higher standard may have the privilege of joining for three years and going for nine years to the Reserve. This would, no doubt, entail an additional 10,000 men, at an expenditure of less than half a million of money; but you would get efficiency, and I press the proposal on the Government very earnestly.

Before I sit down I should like to make an appeal to the noble Earl to enter into the policy which I have endeavoured to put before him in a broad-minded spirit, and not to content himself with reading to us a large number of details. His expositions of late seem hardly to have that individual strength or force to which we were accustomed when he was in a position of greater freedom. He has confined himself to typewritten documents. I remember him first at Oxford. He was then a fluent and adventurous public speaker, and when I have heard him at other times he has never lacked fire and force. I hope that he will return to those more generous methods in dealing with these questions, which are put forward with no desire to elicit merely figures, but to elicit some expression of policy in the direction we are aiming. I can assure your Lordships that I have no partisan or personal bias whatever in regard to the suggestions I have brought before the Government. But I resent deeply the continued reiteration by the Secretary of State of the fallacy that he has strengthened the Artillery by largely reducing the number of Regulars in it. I think the noble Earl ought to explain what is meant by the statement that fifty per cent. has been added to our military strength when we cannot mobilise our best battalions.

I think, also, that the noble Earl ought to realise that the first statement of this Government when they took office was that they found the Army in a fine condition of efficiency, but needing better organisation. I say that that fine condition of efficiency has been frittered away in the process of improving the organisation. The Government found battalions which could be mobilised, and they have reduced them into a position in which they cannot be mobilised. They found an Army ready for war, but, if they proceed with further reductions and do not take steps to keep up the Reserves—which under their present system must be further considerably reduced — in a few years the Army will have become an Army to which peace will be a necessity. It is with a firm conviction that the present condition of the Army is a serious national danger that I ask the earnest attention of your Lordships to this matter.

Moved, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty for any Minute of the Army Council approving the further reduction in the numbers of the Regular Artillery, and the Report for 1907 of the late Inspector-General of the Forces so far as it affects "the training and efficiency of the troops under the control of the Home Goverment, and the readiness and fitness of the Army for war."—(*Viscount Midleton.*)

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of PORTSMOUTH): My Lords, I was amused at the somewhat good-natured banter of my noble friend opposite, who complained that it was my misfortune, in dealing with military matters, to have to avail myself very largely of notes. I confess that, representing a highly technical Department like the War Office, I have felt it my duty to rely upon notes for details; and I am afraid that this afternoon I shall be obliged, if I am to place your Lordships in full posession of the facts, to enter very largely into matters of detail.

Before dealing with the two points raised by the noble Lord, I must, as a matter of courtesy, reply to the two personal questions he has addressed to me and of which he gave me notice in a private letter. He intimated that he would press me to speak specifically as to whether General Sir W. Nicholson, who was a member of the Army Council when the resolution to reduce the Artillery was arrived at, approved of that reduction. As a matter of fact, Sir W. Nicholson became a member of the Army Council on December 17 or 18, and I think Mr. Haldane was appointed Secretary of State about a week before that. Having received the letter from the noble Lord, I felt it my duty to see Sir W. Nicholson myself, and he wished me to state to the House, should the question be raised by the noble Lord, that he, as a member of the Army Council at the time when this subject was considered, accepted the fullest responsibility for the decision arrived at. As a matter of fact, there was no minute dealing with the matter. There was considerable discussion at various meetings of the Council, and it was dealt with as a part of the whole scheme.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON: Would the noble Earl give us the terms of the decision? I presume a matter which had been frequently discussed at the Army Council would be made the subject of a resolution.

The EARL of PORTSMOUTH: There is no formal resolution on the subject. Then the noble Lord asks me a question as to the opinion of General Sir John French. Now, I have the highest possible respect for the opinion of Sir John French on any question connected with the Army. I recognise his distinguished position; I know the immense service he has rendered; but when the noble Lord presses the opinion of Sir John French upon me, not as a private individual, not as a gallant soldier, but as a member of the Defence Committee, then I must protest against the doctrine that seems to underlie the statement the noble Lord has made. I remind the noble Lord that the Army Council is a body responsible for the efficiency of the Army, and if any member of the Army Council upon a matter of importance, such as this in relation to the Artillery, finds himself unable to concur with the Secretary of State, it is recognised by all the members of the Council that it would be the duty of that member to resign his position on the Council.

With regard to the Defence Committee, I would remind my noble friend of a discussion that took place in the House of Commons on May 11, 1905, and I will give your Lordships the view of the constitutional functions and position of the Committee of Defence as laid down by an authority of weight—Mr. Balfour. Mr. Balfour stated "that it was not a new Executive Department. It is not an Executive but a Consultative Committee, and," said Mr. Balfour—

> "If the Committee were to be treated as a Court of Appeal—and some hon. Gentlemen had endeavoured to say as much—against the decisions come to in their own Departments either by the First Lord of the Admiralty or the Secretary for War, in the first place, the Committee would be hopelessly overburdened, and, in the second place, the efficiency of the Departments, which it is supposed to supervise would be destroyed, and the responsibility of the Ministers at the head of them would be absolutely shattered. It is not for us to advise, much less to determine, what type of battleship, or armoured cruiser, or field gun shall be adopted, or what military organisation or naval distribution shall be accepted by the Government, by the House, and by the country."

The present Prime Minister at a later stage of the debate on that occasion said—

> "We are now told that the Committee of Imperial Defence has nothing to do with the organisation of the Army; that the Prime Minister and the Cabinet are, of course, supreme in such matters, and that the Committee are only brought into play as a sort of Court of Appeal where the two Departments are involved. . . . . I am considerably relieved of some constitutional qualms which I have had about the functions of the Committee by hearing that account of their work."

I do not happen to know—the noble Viscount, perhaps, does—what the opinions of Sir John French are on these matters, but with all due respect to Sir John French and his opinions, I must decline to be a party to having his name and authority brought into the question.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON: I thought I traced in the noble Earl's remarks an insinuation or suggestion that I had been in communication with Sir John French on this matter. I may say that I have not communicated with either Sir W. Nicholson or Sir John French, and I do not think either of them had the least idea that I should mention their names or ask for their opinions.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I knew, as a matter of fact, that the noble Viscount had not been in communication with Sir W. Nicholson, and I did not wish to imply that he had communicated with Sir John French. I now come to the question of Artillery. I know there has been a considerable amount of apprehension in this House and elsewhere that we were tampering in some mysterious, underhand way with the Field Artillery. We have been accused of attempting to weaken it. As regards this, I would remind your Lordships that on July 24, 1906, I gave an undertaking that we would not reduce any Regular Artillery men until we had an adequate number of trained Militiamen (or Special Reservists) to take their place. That undertaking I repeated in reply to a question put to me by the noble Marquess (Lord Lansdowne) on July 2 last year. And I now assert most emphatically that we have acted up to that undertaking both in the spirit and the letter. We have not abolished a single man in the Artillery. In point of fact, the total British and Indian establishments show a slight increase. I will give a few figures to prove this. The total establishment of the Royal Horse and Field Artillery (British and Indian combined) was 29,879 on April 1, 1906; it was 29,938 on April 1, 1907, and the corresponding establishment taken in Estimates for the year beginning April 1, 1908, is a total of 30,159.

To return now to the state of the Artillery at home. Of the 99 batteries of Field Artillery at home we found that only 42 could be mobilised, owing to the deficiency that existed to complete the ammunition columns. That is to say, we could only mobilise the Artillery requisite for four divisions. Under our proposals we hope to be in a position, by training Special Reservists for the ammunition column work, to mobilise the Artillery required for our expeditionary force of six divisions. It is true we have reduced the establishment in 33 batteries at home from 117 men to 52 for training purposes, but we have not abolished the men displaced in these batteries. The 2,400 effectives corresponding to the change in establishments we still retain.

If my noble friend will look at pages 14 and 15 of the Army Estimates for 1908–9 he will see an item under the Field Artillery "Excess numbers temporarily retained"—2,404. These we will retain until the newly organised training batteries give us the much larger number of trained Special Reservists for ammunition column work and work of a similar character. To make our position clear in this important matter I may recapitulate what I stated in your Lordship's house on the 24th July, 1906, to be a settled policy. At present we have got a number of artillerymen all trained on the same high standard under the old system. If we had to mobilise to-day under the old system, we should be forced to employ on less important work of ammunition columns men just as highly trained as those who would actually tend the guns. I do not think your Lordships are aware of the great change that is necessary owing to the new gun. The old 15-pounder necessitated a total of 305 rounds per gun to be carried by the ammunition columns. The new 18-pounder necessitates 508; besides that, the ammunition is heavier.

The highly trained artilleryman is an expensive soldier, and if, as we propose, we can get at the cost of a single artilleryman, six or seven trained Special Reservists equally efficient for what he is called upon to do, we shall be in a position of being able, without extra cost, to have sufficient high-class gunners to be distributed amongst all our batteries in adequate numbers and a sufficient number of less highly trained men for less important work. The result will be that in each battery we shall have an adequate proportion of the highly trained gunners *plus* a number of men not so highly trained perhaps in the first instance, but quite capable of performing the duties assigned to them. So that, instead of having, as at present, only men for forty-two batteries all equally trained though allotted different duties, we shall be able to man adequately and efficiently the sixty-six batteries required for the Expeditionary Force for which we already have the guns.

So much for the artillery. I should like now to refer to the infantry. We fully appreciate the present serious position of the infantry battalions at home, but we must emphatically decline any responsibility for their present state. We have taken steps to remedy the existing state of affairs, which is the result of a policy inaugurated not one or two, but several years ago. Even as far back as the summer of 1905 the noble Lord's successor at the War Office realised what was to happen during the ensuing three or four years. I do not intend to indulge in any unnecessary party recriminations in this matter, and I fully appreciate my noble friend's attitude in this respect; but if we wish to analyse the causes of the present weakness we cannot overlook the history of the last ten years.

I should like to explain as briefly as I can the conditions which all authorities are agreed upon as essential to the sound position of infantry battalions under the linked battalions, or, as it is often called, the Cardwell system. In the first place, assuming the even distribution of the linked battalions as between home and abroad, the home battalion has in peace to train recruits (after a short stay at the depot) and to supply annual drafts of men of the prescribed age and physical standard for the corresponding battalion abroad. In the next place, notwithstanding this annual drain of mature soldiers, the home battalion should still have a considerable residue of mature men to stiffen it when the Reservists are called up to join it on mobilisation. How is the home battalion enabled to accomplish this? Our aim should be that the term of colour service should be sufficiently long to secure that the men sent out in the annual drafts shall be able to spend an appreciable period (usually four years) on foreign service. Otherwise they must be replaced every year or every two years. Secondly, the annual intake of recruits should not be subject to violent fluctuations, so that men in the various periods or categories of service may be numerically as nearly equal as possible. Thirdly, the number of recruits taken annually should be such that when the men in any special category of service are drawn upon for the annual draft, there should still be a residue over to keep the home battalion in a sound condition as regards mature men. Finally, my Lords, you must have continuity; you must have established such a condition of things as shall go on steadily year after year, as any dislocation has not only an immediate effect, but an effect often extending over a considerable period of years. Your Lordships will, therefore, appreciate the paramount importance of a definite and settled policy free from sudden changes in a matter of this kind.

Now it cannot be maintained that the conditions which I have just outlined have been allowed free and undisturbed play during the past ten years. When the noble Marquess, Lord Lansdowne, was at the War Office in 1898–1899 such conditions did generally obtain, and the state of the home battalions before the South African War was generally satisfactory. The period of service with the colours was seven years, sufficiently long to admit of men serving in India or Colonial stations for the normal period of four years. The individuals in the battalions were evenly distributed in the various age categories of service. The recruiting was normal. The result was that when the South African War broke out the home battalions on the whole did possess a considerable amount of seasoned men to enable them, when the Reservists were called up, to take the field as efficient battalions.

In 1900 the noble Marquess left the War Office, and was succeeded by the noble Lord opposite. In 1902, as the troops returned from South Africa, and the Army came back to peace conditions, the noble Lord began his experiment. The period of colour service was reduced from seven to three years, and the foundations of the draft difficulty thereby laid. I am aware it was contemplated that sufficient men would be induced to extend their colour service, but this anticipation was not fulfilled. My noble friend himself, speaking on Army Estimates on the 4th March, 1902, admitted that he was making a great experiment, for he said—

> "I am going to ask the House to take a great plunge as regards both terms of service and the pay of the Army."

The shorter period of colour service necessitated voluntary extensions and a bigger annual intake of recruits. The noble Lord hoped to persuade the young men to extend their colour service by various inducements. Experience, however, has shown that these inducements did not take account of what I may call human nature. For three years the common soldier had got the benefit of good food, clothing, &c. At the age of from 21 to 25 or 26 he found the opportunities and freedom of civil life (with his sixpence a day for nine years thrown in) much more attractive than the inducements to prolong his service with the colours. He preferred to take his chance in civil life with sixpence a day rather than to remain with the colours for 1s. 6d. a day.

My noble friend, in the speech to which I have referred, anticipated that 50,000 recruits of all arms would be forthcoming annually, and that the extensions under the improved conditions would be 50 per cent. Now, as a matter of fact, during the year October, 1903, to October, 1904, a year when his terms of service were in full swing, the total number of recruits was only 42,000, and the average extensions in the infantry never exceeded 30 per cent. I may here remark that in the opinion of the experts 70 per cent. extensions would have been necessary in the infantry, which was the important arm, to provide the drafts imperatively demanded by India and the Colonies, and also to provide a sufficient residue of seasoned men after these drafts had been drawn off.

I should like, while on this subject, to call your Lordships' attention to the effect the three years system has had on the Indian drafts. In the first place, as the necessary number of men did not extend, our home battalions have had to be stripped year after year of every available man over 20 years of age to supply the Indian drafts. Our home battalions have thus been left depleted of seasoned men. Even with this emasculation of the home battalions we have been obliged to let India go short year after year. For instance, in addition to next year's draft of 6,700 men, which would be about the normal, we shall have to provide at least 550 more to make up the shortage consequent on our inability to supply the full quota during the trooping season just ended. Then, again, we have been compelled to have recourse during the last few years to the most undesirable and expensive expedient of giving lump sum bounties to men in India to extend their service there.

These evil effects began to be felt in 1905, and have become gradually more marked until they reached their lowest point during the past year. We look forward to an improvement next year, but that is due to the fact that the three years system was definitely abandoned in November, 1904, and its effects have now exhausted themselves. We estimate the demand next year, including last year's deficit, to be about 7,600, and henceforward we expect a steady improvement. My noble friend has, therefore, called your Lordships' attention in the Return which I laid on the Table to the strength of the home Army at a time when the effects of his terms of enlistment have just reached the climax and before the sounder system which we have substituted has had time to produce results. Furthermore, he has done this at the time of the year when under any system, sound or unsound, the home battalions are of necessity weakest in the matter of seasoned men—*i.e.*, at the end of the trooping season, when they have just thrown off their annual drafts.

I have no desire to trouble your Lordships with unnecessary and complicated statistics, but the draft figures for the past three or four years and our efforts to supply India's needs are very instructive. But before I give them I would like to remind your Lordships of another result of the three years system as regards the Indian drafts. Not only have we been obliged to adopt such "heroic" remedies as the bounty, but to prevent excessive shortage we have been obliged to send out three years men who had no intention of extending and who, therefore, had only spent a year or two in India when we have been forced to bring them back again for discharge on completion of their term. All this tended to swell the annual drafts far beyond the normal, and to increase the cost of transport, which, even in normal circumstances is considerable. This extra cost could not be charged to India, and the Imperial Exchequer has had to bear the brunt of it. Your Lordships will be interested to learn, in connection with this transport question, that the total extra cost involved in maintaining the Army in India in consequence of the three years enlistments has been £68,000 extra transport charges and £32,000 in bounties, making a total of £100,000, of which Army Funds have had to bear £80,000 and India £20,000.

I now come to the draft figures themselves. In 1896-7 we sent to India as drafts pure and simple, 7,288 men, in 1897–8 we sent 8,590, and in 1898–9 we sent 7,402, so that the average of these three years would be about 7,760 per annum. This indicates the normal drain on the home battalions at a period when the old condition of seven years colour service obtained. If we now take the period during which the effect of the three years system was felt we find some very interesting figures. In 1905–6 we sent out 8,953 men, in 1906–7 9,975 men, in 1907–8 8,586 men. The average of these three years would be about 9,000, as against the average of the earlier period of 7,760. That is a difference of 1,200 men. But that is not all. We began the year 1903–4 with a surplus of about 350 men in India, and have ended the present season, 1907–8, with a deficit of 550. That makes an additional 900 men on the wrong side. I think these figures amply prove the upsetting effects of the three years system.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON: Does my noble friend entirely ignore the fact that he has taken as one of his years of comparison in regard to the number of drafts to India the first year of the war, 1898–9.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I have not taken that.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON: If he has not taken that year, then I withdraw. He has also entirely forgotten that throughout the war we had to offer bounties to men in India to extend their services. Therefore, those men, as well as the three years men, have had to be relieved.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: This, then, being the situation as we found it, I will briefly indicate the steps we have taken to improve it. We have reverted to the seven years system, which experience has shown to be the soundest as far as the Indian and Colonial drafts are concerned. The conditions of the home battalions when the noble Marquess was at the War Office is the best proof of this. We have reverted to the establishment of 720 rank and file, which stood the test of several years from 1892–3 onwards. I have not overlooked the fact that the noble Marquess, in order to strengthen the Reserve, raised the establishment to 800, enlisting 100 out of the 800 on a short service basis of three years. But we are dealing now with the question of drafts, not with the question of the Regular Reserve. I am aware it is often argued that an establishment of 750 rank and file is not large enough to meet the exigencies of the situation. My answer to that is this. Our figure of 720 is not necessarily final, and when we have got the recruiting into a normal condition again, we can, should the necessity arise, increase the establishment.

But as regards this figure of 720, there is one important factor to aid it now which was absent under the old conditions. I refer to the extraordinary decrease in the annual wastage. The policy initiated in 1902 by my noble friend of increasing the pay of the Army has been attended with excellent results in this respect, and I wish to congratulate him upon it. The two millions a year extra expenditure incurred in recent years on the pay of the Army have been well spent. We have developed that policy of generous treatment by laying down in November last that the 3d. messing allowance was to be given to every man on enlistment, instead of his having to wait until he had completed six months service. This general increase of emoluments during the recent years has been attended with very important results. The class of recruits we are now getting shows a marked improvement, and this fact, together with the generally improved conditions of the soldier's life, have resulted in considerably lessening the wastage. The number of men invalided has fallen from 4,973 in 1903–4 to 2,894 in 1906–7. The number of troops rejected as unlikely to become efficient soldiers has fallen from 1,373 in 1903–4 to 928 in 1906–7. And in the third category of wastage—discharges for misconduct—it has fallen from 3,656 in 1903–4 to 2,119. This gives a total decrease from 10,002 to 5,937, or practically 4,000 less. This decrease of wastage to the extent of 40 per cent. has a very important effect on the establishment we fix.

I may also remind your Lordships of another important fact in this connection. Lord Lansdowne before he left the War Office was apparently so convinced of the soundness of the system to which we have reverted that he actually began, for Reserve-producing purposes, an experiment of increasing the establishment to a total of 800, but of enlisting 100 of that number for a short period of service. The remaining 700, plus any voluntary extensions, were to supply the drafts. From this I think I am justified in inferring that the noble Marquess and his advisers were of opinion that the draft difficulties could be practically met, in normal conditions, by an establishment of 700, plus some extensions of short service men, because only that portion of the higher establishment of 800 would be effective for drafting purposes.

Before I sit down I should like to make some reference to the specific requests of the noble Viscount. There is no such Minute in existence as is referred to in the Motion, and, therefore, it will be impossible for us to comply with his request. As regards his further request for the production of the Report of the late Inspector-General of the Forces, I am afraid that, with every respect to my noble friend, and with every desire to place your Lordships in possession of the fullest information, I cannot comply with that request either. The Inspector-General is the eyes and ears of the Army Council, and their confidential agent. He gives us Reports of the most confidential character in relation to all questions connected with the Army, including individual regiments and even individual officers. If it were once accepted as a precedent that the Reports of the Inspector-General were not to be considered as strictly confidential, I am bound to say their value would be enormously diminished. It is essential that the Inspector-General should feel with absolute confidence that his Reports are entirely confidential documents, and exclusively at the disposal of the Army Council. The view of the Army Council is that their responsibility is complete and full, jointly and severally.

*EARL ROBERTS: My Lords, I do not propose to trouble you with any remarks about the Army generally, as that subject has been gone into very fully by the noble Viscount who brought forward the Motion. My intention is to confine myself, on this occasion, to the artillery, so far as that branch of the service is to form part of the Territorial Army. As regards the strength of the Artillery, my noble friend has drawn attention to the fact that it has been reduced during the last twelve months by no less than sixteen officers and 2,676 men, and, unless I am mistaken, further reductions are contemplated. Up to the present the reductions have only been carried out in the Garrison Artillery, and no one could reasonably object to such reductions if they had been made, because it was considered that, after providing for the artillery of the striking force, a larger number of artillerymen would be left in this country than would be needed for its defence. But this is not the contention. The reductions are not supposed to be made for this reason, for a far larger number of artillerymen are to be recruited than have been disbanded, no less a number than will admit of 196 batteries of horse, field, howitzer, heavy, and mountain being raised for the Territorial Army.

But what I want to draw your Lordships' attention specially to is the fact that, after the departure of the striking force, the only Regular Artillery left in this country would be eight horse and thirty-three field batteries; but only the eight horse artillery batteries—and there is no knowing how soon these might be required to replace a wastage in the striking force—would be available for home defence, as it is laid down that all the Regular Field Artillery are to be used for training purposes. This seems to be a most extraordinary waste of good material, and the idea of using these thirty-three batteries for such a purpose must be given up, for I cannot believe that the country will be satisfied with a sham artillery. We should then have forty-one Regular batteries for home defence, and it would be incomparably better to have this smaller number of thoroughly efficient Regular batteries than the larger number of untrained inefficient batteries. I feel sure that every artillery officer of experience, if asked, would endorse my opinion.

But I go further, my Lords, and say emphatically that the 196 Territorial batteries, by reason of their unsatisfactory composition, their want of proper organisation, and their lack of anything approaching to sufficient training and gun practice, would not, in spite of their numbers, be of the slightest use in the field; and not only would they not be of the slightest use, but they would be a positive danger. My Lords, in making this statement, I am deeply sensible that I am taking a serious responsibility upon myself, a responsibility I most certainly would not venture to take were it not clear to me that the safety of this country depends upon the Territorial Army, for in time of trouble the Regular Army would, in all probability, be abroad; the Navy would be doing its legitimate work of seeking out the enemy's fleets, protecting our widely scattered commerce, and ensuring the safe delivery of our food supplies; it is essential, therefore, that that Army should be in all respects as efficient as it is possible for a citizen Army to become.

I feel it is due to the House, as well as to the right hon. Gentleman whose genius has created the Territorial Army, that I should explain to your Lordships the reasons for the statement I have made. Let me preface my remarks by saying that I am a firm believer in the vital importance of our having a Territorial Army, or, as I should prefer to call it, a National Army, and I have no hesitation in saying that this country owes a deep debt of gratitude to Mr. Haldane for all that he has done, and is still doing, in spite of the great difficulties, he has had to contend with, to provide us with such an Army. The right hon. Gentleman has laid the foundation of a National Army, the framework of which is quite admirable, but it is for the country to see that that framework is filled in with thoroughly serviceable material, properly organised to take the field. I will now explain why I consider that the proposed artillery portion of the Territorial Army can never be made sufficiently trustworthy for the duty it may be called upon to perform.

In the first place, I am satisfied that, if ever this country is invaded, it is almost certain to be done by surprise. This points to the supreme importance of the home defence Army being in a thorough state of preparedness. Now, the eight Horse Artillery and thirty-three Field Artillery batteries can and certainly ought always to be ready to move off at a couple of hours' notice, not perhaps complete in all respects, but sufficiently prepared to take the field; whereas the Territorial batteries could not possibly be moved without a delay of several days, and then, as I have said, they would be useless on account of the inexperience and insufficient training of the officers and men. I will go into details about this presently, but let me revert to the question of surprise, because, after all, the value of the Territorial Army depends upon whether it can always be in such a condition as will enable it to deal effectively with a surprise invasion. A little more than a year ago I drew the special attention of this House to certain facts brought forward by my noble and gallant friend Lord Lovat, which showed in the clearest possible terms that an invasion of this country by surprise is a danger we have to reckon with and must be prepared for.

The noble Lord who represents the War Office in this House pooh-poohed my suggestion that an invasion would be made at the time when we were least prepared for it. He expressed his astonishment at such a thing being thought possible between nations apparently on friendly terms; if I remember rightly, he said that such action would be brigandage. My Lords, this action may be called by any name which appears to the noble Lord to be appropriate, but of this we may be certain, that no fear of the action being so designated will ever deter any nation, coveting the possessions of another nation, from quietly making all necessary preparations to gain her object on the first favourable opportunity. This has frequently happened in the past, and it would surely be very optimistically foolish of us to flatter ourselves that it will not happen in the future. I conclude, whether your Lordships agree with me or not as to the possibility of surprise, that you admit an invasion in some form or another is possible, or where would be the need for a Territorial Army? And as no one in this House or anywhere else can say whether the warning we may receive will be long or short, we surely cannot run the risk of deferring to train the Territorial Army until some kind of warning is given. Dangerous as this would be in any branch of the Army, it would be especially dangerous as regards artillery, and it is because I believe that, under no circumstances, could the Territorial Army batteries be given sufficient training to take their part in the defence of the country, that I venture to assert they would be not only useless, but dangerous.

Let us see what is to be the composition of the batteries of the Territorial Army, how it is intended to organise them, and what amount of training is to be given to them. As regards practice, where and how this is to be carried on is not laid down in the Army Orders of the 24th of last month, but evidently a ridiculously small amount of time is to be devoted to this important part of artillery instruction. There is to be one adjutant for every horse artillery or heavy battery and for every brigade of field or mountain artillery; one sergeant-major for every brigade of field or mountain artillery; and one sergeant-instructor—or two in all—for every section in each battery, whether horse, field, heavy, or mountain. In other words, every battery of horse and heavy artillery will have one adjutant and two sergeant-instructors, and every brigade of field or mountain artillery, consisting of three batteries, will have one adjutant, one sergeant-major, and six sergeant-instructors.

The training as a unit will be eight to eighteen days a year, the individual training, forty-five drills recruit training and twenty drills annually in subsequent years—a drill being one hour's actual training and a day's training not less than six hours' work. Those eight to eighteen days a year are to include practice, so that the only training the unit would have of any practical value to artillery would be (leaveing out Sundays) seven to sixteen days annually. The horses are to be hired, which means that the batteries will only exist on paper, except for one week or fortnight in every year. I mention this fact, my Lords, not because I think that an invader would be deterred from carrying out his object if it happened to be arranged to come off during the artillery training, but to show your Lordships the absurdly small amount of training the batteries are to receive.

A limited amount of training has been already tried, I say limited in comparison to what is considered necessary for Regular batteries, but still a vast deal more than the Territorial Army batteries will receive, and the result was far from satisfactory. For several years past a brigade (three batteries) of Lancashire Militia Field Artillery has been trained for two or three months each summer on Salisbury Plain. It had the advantage of the following Regular Army staff:—One adjutant, one sergeant-major, three battery sergeant-majors, three battery quartermaster-sergeants, one farrier, three shoeing and carriage smiths, three saddlers, three wheelers, nine corporals, nine bombadiers, 41 gunners, 27 drivers, and six trumpeters—total, 119 per brigade. Until last year the lieutenant-colonel was a Regular officer, as were the three battery commanders until 1906. The result of this experiment was, the senior artillery officer reported he thought that the batteries justified their existence if considered as Reserve to Regular batteries, from which they differed in (1) incomplete training and insufficient practice, (2) the high order of discipline essential in a battery. He added that they would, in a reasonable time after mobilization, be fitted for employment in the field, provided that the commanding officer, the adjutant, and the permanent staff were always retained. His report, in fact, was to the effect that it would be a dangerous delusion to imagine that Militia or Volunteer batteries could be produced fit on mobilisation to be able to cope successfully with the highly-trained batteries of a Continental army.

My own view is that it would be hopeless to expect the Territorial Artillery, with the few hours (I may almost say) of training to be given to it as a unit, ever to be fit for service, but that, given a high class recruit, as in the Honourable Artillery Company, and not less than five to six months consecutive hard training under experienced officers and non-commissioned officers the first year, gunnery could be taught, and also possibly riding and even driving (though the latter would be a great difficulty), but all ranks would inevitably fail in the application of minor tactics, such as in the selection and occupation of a position. Nothing requires more constant practice than this kind of work in the field, for a battery badly brought up to a position exposes itself to annihilation in the course of a few seconds, before it has had time to fire a single shot. You will realise, my Lords, that this is no exaggeration when I tell you that a quick-firing battery, manned by trained officers and men, can fire sixty rounds in a minute.

From what I have heard, artillery appears to be the weak arm in the splendid national army of the Swiss, yet it has a fair amount of training; the men can ride and drive well, and look after their horses, but, for want of practice as a unit in the field, neither officers nor men have a sufficient knowledge of minor tactics. It was because the Boers realised that it was impossible to trust to insufficiently trained mobile artillery that they never utilised their guns in the form of a battery, or even as a section of a battery. They worked them, heavy or light, singly as guns of position, and in such a way that, from their intimate knowledge of the ground, they could get them away quickly when the time for retirement came. Later on in the war, when they had lost the services of the State Artillery, which was chiefly manned by Hollanders, their own want of artillery training forced them to realise the futility of attempting to work their guns themselves, and consequently they abandoned or destroyed them all.

Believe me, my Lords, to trust to amateur artillerists would be to court disaster. Guns cannot be treated as men, who, to a certain extent, in quantity may make up for quality. Under the most favourable conditions guns are more or less of an encumbrance to a mobile army in the field, and especially would this be the case in a close country like England; it is essential, therefore, that the Artillery with the Territorial Army should be of the best, however few its numbers. If we are not to have the best, it would be infinitely better to have no artillery at all, and to spend the money thus saved in establishing a well-organised mobile force of mounted riflemen, such as the Boers used with signal success during the latter part of the war in South Africa.

My Lords, I always feel, when speaking on military matters in your Lordship's House, that I am labouring under a serious disadvantage from the fact that I am a soldier. For some reason, which I confess is difficult for me to understand, the soldier, no matter how great his experience may be, always seems to be distrusted when he ventures to give an opinion upon the subject which he has made his life's study. When the enemy is actually in the field the soldier is generally given a free hand, because he alone is supposed to understand the work and to be able to bring it to a satisfactory conclusion. But when preparations are on foot for the conduct of a war for which he has to bear all the responsibility, the soldier is the last person to be consulted.

In all other professions the opinion of the expert is sought for and acted upon when a crisis arises; not so with regard to the Army. This may be accounted for by the idea that the soldier is always wanting to go to war, whether war is justifiable or not, and is always imagining that someone else is wanting to do the same, against whom he must protect himself. This feeling is exemplified in a quotation given by my noble friend Lord Cromer in his most interesting book "Modern Egypt," from a letter of the late Lord Salisbury, who wrote—

> "If they (the soldiers) were allowed full scope, they would insist upon the importance of garrisoning the Moon in order to protect us from Mars."

Well, my Lords, so far as I myself am concerned whatever undue military ardour I may be credited with, it must, I think, be acknowledged that at my time of life and after all I have seen of war, I may be acquitted of any undue ardour, and that the one and sixty years that have passed since I had the honour of first putting on uniform as a Sandhurst cadet may have brought to me some measure of sound judgment with regard to the exigencies of war. My one desire is to use my experience for the benefit of my own country, and my hope is that I may be able to persuade the people of this country to insist on its being sufficiently garisoned to protect it from the invader. I have no axe to grind, and if I persist in telling you things which some of you may not believe, or which others, perhaps, may not wish to hear, it is because I venture to think I know what I am talking about, and because I desire to save the country from a disaster which will inevitably befall it, if it refuses to be warned by what has happened in the past to nations very similarly situated, and neglects to take the most ordinary preautions for the future.

*EARL CROMER: Referring to the passage which my noble and gallant friend has just quoted, I should like to say that Lord Salisbury did not at all mean that the advice of soldiers should not be listened to in making preparations for war, but was alluding to the advice of soldiers in political matters which might lead up to war. That is quite a different thing.

EARL ROBERTS: I quite recognise that.

*THE DUKE OF BEDFORD: My Lords, the Return which His Majesty's Government has laid upon the Table of the House at the request of the noble Viscount, Lord Midleton, shows the ineffective condition of the Regular Army at home. The most serious revelation is the state of the Artillery. But the noble Viscount has himself dealt with that question. I propose, therefore, to confine my remarks to that branch of the service with which I am to some extent familiar, that is the Infantry. An examination of the Return shows that there are now something over 20,000 Infantry soldiers fit for the field at home, a number barely sufficient to furnish without mobilisation the Infantry required by two Divisions. But we are told the Infantry for six Divisions can be mobilised by means of the Reserve. It is to this Reserve that I beg to call your Lordships' attention. The Infantry Reserve is there 135,000 strong, and the most valuable military asset which is left to us. That Reserve is due entirely to the policy pursued by Lord Midleton when he was at the War Office, and when the noble and gallant Field-Marshal was Commander-in-Chief. His Majesty's Government have inherited that Reserve from their predecessors. I propose to show to your Lordships that this Reserve must soon vanish, and I challenge His Majesty's Government to show how, under the conditions which they have now established, it can be replaced.

After the South African War the most urgent question was to refill the depleted Army Reserve. To accomplish that object the late Government placed the whole Infantry of the Army on a three years basis of colour service from 1902 to 1906. Hence in due course a much more rapid transfer to the Reserve took place. We must remember that the late Government added fourteen Line and two Guards battalions to the Infantry of the Army. The present Government reduced eight battalions of the Line and one of the Guards after those battalions had been in existence from seven to eight years. This reduction was no doubt made because the Government found that they had more serving soldiers than they required. These nine battalions have been disbanded, but the men passed through them to the Reserve are still in the Reserve. These men cannot be replaced as they become time expired, because the *cadres* which created them are no longer in existence. In a few years the Reservists created by the disbanded battalions must disappear from the Reserve, also the large number of Reservists, due to the whole of the Infantry having been put on the three years basis of colour service, will pass out of the Reserve. The establishment of every Home Battalion has been reduced from 800 to 720, which means that there will be a smaller Reserve-creating unit, and a bigger shortage of men with the colours to be made up from the Reserve on mobilisation, an extra and immediate call on the Reserve amounting to upwards of 8,000 men due to the reduction of eighty men per battalion on the home and Colonial list. Thus a special and large outflow from the Reserve is soon due, and not only is there no special intake to balance it, but the normal intake in future must be less than it ever has been in the past.

The question I should like to ask the Government is this. When the last Reservists created by the three years basis of colour service have passed out of the Reserve, when those created by the nine disbanded battalions have become time-expired, when the period of colour service is seven years instead of three, when the Reserve-creating battalions stand at 720 instead of 800, what will be the condition of the Reserve? And further, how do the Governnment then propose to mobilise the Infantry of the expeditionary force when some 8,000 additional men are required on mobilisation to make up for the reduced battalion establishments, and at a moment when all the Indian drafts have been sent abroad?

All the factors I have just mentioned tend to deplete the Reserve by drying up the source of supply. They are all coming into operation and are cumulative in their action. A Return was published by the Government last session making a calculation by which it was shown that with a diminished number of *cadres*, and with a reduced establishment in each *cadre*, and with a longer period of colour service, the Reserve of the Regular Army would be increased—a seeming impossibility which has not yet been explained Further, in dealing with the numbers of the Reserve, the Government have hitherto based their calculations on establishment instead of on the strength. That is to say, the value of a battalion as a Reserve-creating *cadre* is always reckoned at its full establishment, when very likely it has been more than 100 men short of its proper establishment. The number of the Reserve depends in no way upon the establishment, but solely upon strength. Again, every recruit enlisted is calculated as passing into the Reserve. No allowance is made for men who die, desert, are invalided, or discharged before completing their colour service, or extend their colour service and do not pass into the Reserve. My experience is that only one recruit out of every five reaches the Reserve.

In the Army Order of 23rd December last the statement is made that combatant units, which come into action on the outset of a campaign, should on mobilisation consist in due proportion of Regular soldiers and Regular Reservists. It is an elementary maxim in all military organisation not to swamp the serving soldiers of the battalion first for service by too large an influx of Reservists who must be more or less rusty. But what does the Government consider as the due proportion of serving soldiers to Regular Reservists? Lord Wolseley in his time has described the home battalions as "squeezed lemons." This Return shows the accuracy of that description to-day in a truly alarming manner. The height of the "squeezed lemon" season is just after the Indian drafts have been sent abroad. After the departure of the last of the Indian drafts, that would not be till April, there are fewest Line soldiers in a battalion at home of twenty years of age and fit for foreign service. The Return asked for by Lord Midleton is dated 1st February, but since that date two transports have sailed to India and two to the Colonies, reducing by some thousands the number of men over twenty years of age now at home. I do not know if there are yet more transports to go abroad. After sending out the last of the Indian and Colonial drafts if there is an average of anything like 300 serving soldiers of twenty years of age and fit for foreign service in the home battalions it is the very outside number.

To complete the battalion to war strength, that is up to 1,000 men, 700 Reservists must be added to each battalion on mobilisation. Now, do the military advisers of the Government assure them that that is a due proportion of Regular soldiers and Regular Reservists? How long do their military advisers tell them that battalions thus composed will require before they are fit to go into action with any chance of success against the trained troops of a military Power? Now these are the battalions of the expeditionary force. They will be very good battalions, but you must give them time, and time is the most valuable present you can make your enemy on the outbreak of hostilities. I understand it is the intention to reinforce these battalions in the field solely by a system of drafts derived from the Special Reserve. If reliance is placed upon drafts only, then the system can only be worked successfully by coming to an arrangement with the enemy never to put more than a certain proportion of any one unit out of action at any one moment.

Assume that a battalion—and these things happen in war—goes into action 1,000 strong with a full complement of officers, and comes out with 300 men and five or six officers, then the Government propose to dip into the general drafting pool, that is the Special Reserve, for 700 or 800 depot-trained boys, who have never seen the Regular Army and are strangers to each other, being collected from many different depots, and unknown to the regiment to which they are to be drafted. They will go out under officers they have never seen, provided from the Government does not know where—the matter is still under consideration—and be added to the renmant of the regular regiment with the result that the unit will be useless for any military purpose, and must be struck off the strength of the field force. The unit cannot be replaced, because no system of expansion of the Regular Army by organised units is contemplated by the Government.

It is obvious that as the Regular Army and its reserves becomes more and more reduced in numbers, and the establishment has now been reduced by 21,000 men, it is increasingly important to be able to place the whole of the remainder in the actual theatre of war, and as near the fighting front as possible. That can only be accomplished by freeing the Army both at home and abroad from all garrison duties, and duties pertaining to troops of the second line. The Government must relegate a considerable part of the reduced first line troops to second line duties, because they have decided to abolish the Militia, which has never failed to give embodied service at home and abroad, freeing the Regular Army for first line duties in the field. The abolition of the Militia is certain. The creation of the Territorial Army, or rather of anything which legitimately could be called an Army, is doubtful. I am only concerned with the Territorial Army in so far as it may affect the fighting efficiency of the Regular Army.

We are informed in the Memorandum which accompanies the Army Estimates that the use of the Territorial Army is not only to free the Regular Army from all home duties—nothing is said about foreign service duties—but also to enable the Navy to act with greater freedom at a distance from these shores. Because apparently the Government trust that the Territorial Army will be so awe-inspiring that no Continental invaders will attempt to approach our shores save in such overwhelming numbers that the very size of their flotilla would be an impediment to their advent, and a hindrance to their landing. Such is the view expressed in the Memorandum which accompanies the Army Estimates as to the value of the Territorial Army, which, by the way, does not yet exist. But the all-important point is that that view should be shared by all possible Continental invaders. Are the Government really prepared to give us a distinct assurance that such will be the case? We know perfectly well that the special contingent and the Territorial Army do not exist. They are but a phantom force invoked as an *ignis fatuus* to lure away the inquirer from his search after the true state of the Regular Army. I most strongly support the Motion of the noble Viscount for Papers giving further information as to the state of the Regular Army at home.

LORD RIBBLESDALE: My Lords, I can promise that I shall occupy the time of the House for but a very few moments, and the remarks I have to make will have reference to what was said by the noble Viscount as to the Inspector-General's Reports, and the reply of my noble friend the Under-Secretary of State for War. I think the whole House must feel that there is a very wide divergence in the views of the noble Viscount, who spoke from large practical experience of War Office affairs, and of the noble Earl as to the nature of those Reports. After quoting Paragraph 10 of Section 3 of the Esher Report as to the Inspector-General being the eyes and ears of the Army Council, the noble Viscount said that at that time it was commonly understood that the Inspector-General was to act as a sort of auditor and accountant, who was to keep the public informed as to the solvency of our military resources. Nothing could be more different from that than the reply which was given by the noble Earl the Under-Secretary. Whereas the noble Viscount said the public was to be informed as to the condition of these securities, the noble Earl below me told us that the public was not to be informed, and, practically, that the information of the Inspector-General was for the Army Council, and should only reach the country in such doses as the Secretary of

State for War sees fit to lay before Parliament. Whatever the practice is now, I would like to know what really was the spirit and intention of the Government by whom the Inspector-General was appointed, and what in their opinion he was to do, and not to do. Though I can understand that my noble friend can give no promise that the Reports of the Inspector-General should be laid on the Table, yet at this particular time and in relation to the Army, at all events, I hope there will be some reassuring statement as to the Report of the Inspector-General on our military resources.

*THE EARL OF ERROLL: My Lords, I should like to say one or two words in support of the Motion of the noble Viscount. I will not say anything as to the analysis of the Paper which has been placed before your Lordships. I think the noble Earl the Under-Secretary accepted all the criticisms of the noble Viscount, as well as the responsibility for the state of those battalions. But, my Lords, I cannot help thinking that "the man in the street," when he opens his newspaper to-morrow morning, will read with surprise, not to say with some alarm, that only four battalions of the sixty-nine at home are up to strength, and I think he will begin to consider whether, after all, a voluntary system is suitable to the needs of the country.

We have been told that for mobilisation at home we should only be able to get about 30,000 men. To mobilise at all we should want 53,000 horses, and I should like to know from the Government whether these horses will be forthcoming. The noble and gallant Field-Marshal who spoke from the cross benches told us that invasion, if it came, would be sudden. Therefore, I should like to ask whether these horses could be produced at a moment's notice. If not, I do not believe that it would be possible to mobilise this force under a very long period. We should have to fall back, I suppose, on the Territorial Army and take their horses, and I do not think they would be very pleased with that.

I do not think the public really quite realise the extent to which the Regular Forces have been reduced since the present Government have been in power. Their attention has been so much riveted of late on the Territorial Army that they have quite failed to grasp the extent to which the Regular fighting strength of the country has been weakened. Since 1905 some 26,000 efficient fighting men, with the Reserves they would have produced, have been taken from the Army. Three thousand of these were trained gunners. These figures are serious enough; but I understand that further reductions are to be made in the battalions being brought home from South Africa. The nine battalions which have been reduced were admittedly in a highly efficient state. The reduction of these men has, as far as I know, never been justified on any military grounds whatever; it has been justified merely on grounds of economy and in pursuance of election pledges. There has been nothing at all scientific in these reductions. Mr. Haldane said himself that he had not been able to work out what the requirements of the country were. The grounds upon which these reductions have taken place are political, not military; and in the interests of the Liberal Party, not of the country.

Economy at the expense of efficiency is the falsest economy, and means pouring out money like water when the crisis arrives. I had hoped that the noble Earl the Under-Secretary would have given us the opinion of some members of the Army Council upon these reductions. I am bound to say that outside the magic circle of the War Office I do not believe there is a single soldier of standing who would acquiesce in them. It has been claimed that these reductions will be compensated by increased efficiency. I grant that the formation of brigades and divisions is, to a certain extent, an improvement; but I think it is an odd way of improving your efficiency to reduce efficient men and replace them by those who are less efficient or by none at all. I cannot see how the reduction of 500 officers can in any way add to the efficiency of these forces.

Nothing practical has been done to add a single officer to the Army. Certain nebulous negotiations have been going on with schools and Universities. Youths when they leave these seats of learning will, I believe, be given captains' certificates, but they will have had no experience of military affairs or of leading men, and will add very little, I think, to the military strength of the country. The shortage of officers is due to the fact that the terms offered are not "good enough." The pay of the men has increased enormously during the last few years, but the pay of officers has remained unchanged for the past 100 years. I was told this morning by a friend of mine that two young relatives of his had gone into a Line regiment, and that their pay would be £90 a year, out of which they had to expend £60 on their kits. I do not think the wonder is that we are short of officers in these circumstances; the wonder is that we can get any officers at all. If the country wants officers it ought to pay them a living wage; otherwise, the officers will not be forthcoming, and the results will be disastrous.

If the Territorial Army is to be kept up in stores, equipment, and ammunition, I think the sum that has already been voted will be insufficient, and what I am afraid of is that when this is found out, further reductions will be made in the Regulars. One of the Government's supporters in the House of Commons said the other night that he thought further reductions were possible, and they must look for considerable reductions in the Regulars if they were to provide money for the complete equipment of the Territorial Army. Now, Auxiliaries, as I prefer to call them, cannot take the place of Regulars, and it is idle to pretend they can. I consider that it is dangerous to exalt Auxiliaries at the expense of the Regulars. It shows a great want of any sense of proportion, and it deceives the public by making the strength of the Army appear much greater than it really is.

I am not speaking in any spirit of hostility to the Territorial Army. I quite recognise, on the contrary, that it is our duty to do everything we can to make it a success; but what I object to is the starving of the Regulars for the Territorial Army. Savings by reduction of the establishment, or by depletion of stores and ammunition, are effected at the cost of efficiency. Before the war £5,500,000 were spent on military stores; now there is less than £2,000,000. I would press for assurances from the Member of the Government who will speak later that the stores and ammunition are adequate to the wants of the country. I notice that the Vote for small arm ammunition has been very much increased this year, and that the reason is that there is no surplus of ammunition in hand. I think this is a question of vital importance to the country, and one upon which, I hope, we shall have some information.

The withdrawal of troops from South Africa and the Mediterranean leaves India without reinforcements nearer than home. This concentration at home means reinforcing from the furthest point, and at a time when the Navy will not guarantee the convoy of transports until after a successful campaign has been won. Owing to the reductions in the Mediterranean garrisons it will no longer be possible for us to send eight seasoned battalions up to the Soudan, as we did in 1898. I know it is claimed by His Majesty's Government that the Reserve is very much larger than it has ever been before, but I venture to say that the old Reserve was better than the one we have now. I thank your Lordships for the patience with which you have listened to me, and I think I have shown that the state of the Army is very serious and disquieting, and that the country is in a much weaker military position than it was this time three years ago.

*VISCOUNT HARDINGE: My Lords, I think most of your Lordships will agree that we are greatly indebted to Lord Midleton for having brought forward this Motion to-night, for, no matter what our political opinions on other matters may be, we are deeply conscious of the fact that upon the statesmanlike solution of national defence depends the security and well-being of this country. For this reason free discussion in this House, at any rate, is certainly most essential, for by this means alone can the country be made aware of the real military changes that the Secretary of State for War has brought forward since the present Government have been in office. For a false step or injudicious action may result in such disastrous consequences that it is the imperative duty of each and every one of us to prevent the possibilities of such consequences arising. It is, I believe, with this object that the noble Viscount has opened this discussion, and thereby enabled the public to understand more fully than they do at present what effect these changes have had, or are likely to have, upon the Army of this country as a fighting force. The present Secretary of State for War recognised in his first speech in the House of Commons that none of his predecessors had taken over the Army in so good a condition, either as regarded quantity or quality, and that he was convinced in the belief of a continuity of policy, but the policy he has adopted is a reversal of that of his predecessor. The policy of the late Government was that the Army should be maintained at an adequate strength, should be thoroughly organised for war, and should be capable of great expansion. By the universal opinion of military experts this is only possible by provision for increased power of expansion in time of war; an increased number of trained officers and men, an increase in the *personnel* of the artillery, more especially its reserve, and the creation of a striking force capable of taking the field on an emergency prior to general mobilisation. The scheme of the present Secretary for War satisfies none of these requirements. In a small Army like ours the preservation of units is of primary importance with a view to expansion in time of war; but Mr. Haldane has destroyed eight battalions of the Line with their reserves, one battalion of the Guards, with the promised destruction of another, with their reserves, the Regular artillery to the extent of 5,000 men with their reserves, and the promise of a reduction of 3,000 additional trained men of the artillery with their reserves, 35 battalions of the Militia, and the conversion of the remaining battalions into Line depots, and of the artillery Militia into a force as yet not decided upon. Such a reduction as this fully justified the noble Marquess the Leader of the Opposition in the statement he made in your Lordships' House on 26th June last, that—

> "The amputations to which the Government have resorted will have a very serious effect in weakening the fighting efficiency of the Regular Army, for it seems to me that the policy must be one which tends to diminish the strength of the Army Reserve."

It will be remembered that in 1905 the late Secretary of State for War, Mr. Arnold-Forster, submitted to Parliament the proposal that the Militia should form the Territorial Short Service Infantry of the Regular Army. This proposal was generally denounced on the plea that it was nothing more nor less than the transformation of the Militia into sham Regulars. The present Secretary of State for War and his supporters joined in the cry. In spite of this fact, Mr. Haldane has adopted the principle of the proposal referred to, and has declared it as essential to the welfare of the Army; but with this difference, that under the present scheme the Militia as a force is virtually dead, for it becomes nothing more nor less than a recruiting depot for the Army. This fact, I must confess, I did not realise until the noble Earl the Under-Secretary for War stated last month, in answer to a question put by Lord Raglan, that during the non-training period the battalion did not exist as such. When the present Government came in office two alternatives existed for the Militia—reform or destruction. When the Secretary of State in the House of Commons stated that—

> "He would see that the Militia were not bled white,"

the force fondly believed that this indicated that he was in favour of reform. It is now evident, however, that this force is confronted with the other alternative, and is sentenced to death. By this step the Army is deprived in time of war of a potential reserve, the value of which has been proved on many occasions in the past. I would like, therefore, to ask the Under-Secretary for War whether the reduction and changes of the forces to which I have referred are founded by the Government on the belief that we are justified in placing our reliance in time of war upon untrained troops and officers, and in discarding highly-trained officers and men in order to obtain money for the Territorial Army which is to be brought into existence by the County Associations. If such is the case, then I believe that there is some truth in the words of a military writer, who said that—

> "In accepting the new scheme we are deliberately neglecting the teaching of every war that has been fought since the world began, and are declaring in unmistakable terms that every nation which has fought and expects to fight for its life is making a tremendous error. We are assuming that we alone have learnt the secret that without preparation, without sacrifice, without training, and without leading we can safely commit the fortunes of the nation to the stern arbitrament of battle, confident in the efficacy of good intentions, amiable speeches, and half-measures to work a miracle in our favour—a miracle which has never been vouchsafed to any other people in the world."

I commend those words to His Majesty's Government, and I hope they will ponder before destroying the Militia, that constitutional force which has done great service for the country in the past.

LORD WENLOCK: My Lords, I hope it will not be long before His Majesty's Government give a reply to the remarks which have fallen from the noble and gallant Field-Marshal on the cross benches. I do not think that since the discussions on the Army have taken place we have heard a more solemn and more serious utterance than that which the noble and gallant Earl has made to-night on this subject. I am bound to say, anxious as I am to promote the success of the new scheme, that I cannot help thinking there is a great deal of truth in what he has said. As chairman of one of the County Associations entrusted with the organisation and equipment of a portion of this new force, I can fully endorse what the noble and gallant Earl said as to the difficulty of raising field artillery. We are having great difficulty with the men for the new force. We are to ask them on 1st April to change their old occupations and take up new ones, and the only way in which we can get field artillery is by turning to the old garrison artillery and explaining what is to become of them, that they will become field artillery and be taught to ride and use guns in the field. Naturally, in that case they will say: "Let us have the guns and we will proceed." But we understand that one gun per brigade is all that we are to have. The result is that the men are getting so disappointed that they are dwindling away in numbers every day, and I am told that by the time the guns are ready in my part of the country there will not be any men to man them. Therefore, I think this is a matter which the Government should very seriously consider, and I trust that they will not delay in making an answer to the statement of the noble and gallant Earl. A Volunteer artillery force would, in my opinion, end in a ridiculous failure.

***LORD HAVERSHAM**: My Lords, I rise to correct a misapprehension in the mind of the noble Viscount who initiated this discussion. He said there had been dangerous reductions in the Mediterranean garrisons, and that we should not be able to draw upon that Reserve in case of another war. It is the fact that there have been considerable reductions in the garrisons at Malta and Gibraltar, but they have been in a great measure compensated for by the very large increase of 2,500 men in the Egyptian garrison. The upshot of the whole thing is this, that whereas under the late Government the whole strength of the Mediterranean garrison was, roughly, 18,000, it is now, roughly, 17,000. That is the only change that has taken place.

The reduction in the Guards has been referred to by Viscount Hardinge, but at the time that reduction was made these extra battalions of the Guards wer not fulfilling the duties for which they were called into existence. They were formed in order that they might constitute part of the Mediterranean garrison. But they were never used in that way. As there was not sufficient barrack accommodation for them in London and elsewhere, a great number of the Guards were put down permanently at Aldershot, and the service became unpopular. It was impossible to get the requisite number of men, and the commanding officer of the Grenadiers stated that there were not enough officers to go round. That was the reason for the reduction in the Guards, and it has been viewed as a very sensible one. I know that there are officers very high up in the Guards who are glad that the reduction has taken place.

With regard to the Northumberland Fusiliers, the noble Viscount, Lord Midleton, knows very well that these battalions were reduced because they were brought into existence for the war. They were exceptional cases in which two-battalion regiments were made up to four; and they were accordingly reduced, but I take it that it is pretty certain the men and officers would be employed in the other battalions. I think it must be very satisfactory to the military authorities to have seen the enormous growth of the Reserve. In September, 1906, the Reserve amounted to 110,000 men; the number has since been augmented to 135,000, and in the Estimates it is further increased to 142,000. That is an enormous increase, and I think it will be satisfactory to the noble Duke who spoke to-night that a great number of the men have been enlisted for periods which will take them on into the Reserve until 1911–12. There is another solution which might be adopted, by means of which we should be relieved of danger when the great depletion of the Reserve takes place. Men might be invited to join Section D, and give four more years service in the Reserve. When attacks are made on the present system, I think we should look with pleasure to the growth of the Reserve, which is the best reservoir of our strength.

Moved, "That the debate be adjourned until Monday."—(*Lord Lucas.*)

VISCOUNT MIDLETON: On the Motion for adjournment, might I ask whether, on the resumption of the debate, the Government will be able, in addition to other matters, to give figures showing the present strength of the Artillery Reserve?

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: I cannot give an absolute pledge, but I will inquire.

VISCOUNT MIDLETON: I should hope that the figures would be available.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: Perhaps the noble Viscount will put a Question on the Paper that I may know exactly what he wants.

On Question agreed to, debate adjourned accordingly.

House adjourned at half-past Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 12*th March*, 1908.

The House met at a quarter before Three of the Clock.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Derby Gas Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

Rochdale Corporation Bill; Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Board Bill.—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PETITIONS.

LAND VALUES (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Darvel, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSED PREMISES (EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN).

Petition from Cardiff, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

LICENSING BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Higher Broughton; and, Manchester; to lie upon the Table.

MORAY FIRTH (ILLEGAL TRAWLING).

Petition from Hopeman, for prevention; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petitions in favour: From Eldon; Leigh-on-Sea; Westcliffe-on-Sea; Weston-super-Mare; and, Wigan; to lie upon the Table.

WOMEN'S ENFRANCHISEMENT BILL.

Petition from Leeds, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

PROBATION OF OFFENDERS ACT, 1907.

Copy presented, of Memorandum issued by the Home Office relative to the Administration of the Probation of Offenders Act, 1907, containing the Rules made by the Secretary of State for the Home Department under Section 7 of the Act [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EXPLOSIONS (EXPLOSION OF CARTRIDGES ON REGISTERED PREMISES).

Copy presented, of Report to the Secretary of State for the Home Department on the circumstances attending an Explosion of Cartridges which occurred on the Registered Premises of Messrs. F. Dyke and Company, at 5, St. George's Avenue, Aldermanbury, E.C., on 1st January, 1908 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY (DOCKYARD EXPENSE ACCOUNTS, 1906–7).

Annual Accounts presented, for 1906–7, of Shipbuilding and Dockyard Transactions, etc., with Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 88.]

WINES IMPORTED.

Return ordered, "showing the alcoholic strength, degree by degree, of Wines imported to this country during the year 1907 in cask from the various countries of Europe, Madeira, Australia, and other countries (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 81, of Session 1907)."—(*Sir Frederick Banbury.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES

Stolen Postal Orders in Ireland.

MR. J. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that three postal orders forwarded on 15th May by Mr. Patrick White, of Greencastle, County Down, were stolen in course of post; whether he is aware that two of them have since been cashed through the Newry branch of the Provincial Bank; and whether, as the person negotiating a postal order cannot legally acquire a better title to it than that of the person from whom he received it, he will call upon the Provincial Bank to make good the loss sustained by the sender, especially in view of the negligence of the bank in not keeping any record of the circumstances under which the postal orders were cashed.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I have no power to call upon the Provincial Bank of Ireland to make good the loss sustained by Mr. Patrick White, as the hon. Member suggests. The Post Office (Money Orders) Act, 1880, provides that a banker who shall have received payment for a postal order shall not incur liability to anyone except his principal by reason of having received such payment.

Post Office and Lottery Literature.

MR. BOTTOMLEY (Hackney, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that in reply to a recent complaint relating to the transmission of lottery literature through the post, the person complaining was informed that in the ordinary course packets containing lottery literature are stopped, but it is not the practice to interfere with the transmission of such packets when the circulars relate to drawings promoted for religious or charitable objects; whether such letter correctly represents the practice of the Department; and whether such practice has his official sanction.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) It is the practice of the Post Office to stop packets which are observed while in course of transmission to contain lottery circulars, except in cases where the authorities responsible for the execution of the law regard the drawings as permissible.

Loss of the 'Pernambuco."

MR. HAVELOCK WILSON (Middlesbrough): To ask the President of the

Board of Trade whether his attention has been called to the Report of the Court of Inquiry held with regard to the loss of the steamer "Pernambuco"; whether he is aware that the captain of the vessel was in default for not using the lead more frequently; and whether he will cause inquiries to be made as to whether the vessel had a sufficient number of men in each watch to use the lead more often.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) The Board of Trade have not yet received the Report of the inquiry into the loss of the steamer "Pernambuco"; when it reaches them the point which my hon. friend raises in regard to the casualty shall receive consideration.

Uganda Railway.

Mr. TILLETT (Norwich): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the total amount spent on the construction and equipment of the Uganda Railway; and whether all works connected with the railway are now completed.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The total sum issued out of the Consolidated Fund for the construction and equipment of the Uganda Railway is £5,502,592. Of this sum about £5,300,000 in round numbers has been expended, leaving a balance of some £200,000, which is being expended on capital works connected with the railway.

Tea Garden Labour Commission.

Mr. REES (Montgomery Boroughs): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he will lay or place in the Library the Resolution of the Government of India giving effect to his orders upon the Report of the Tea Garden Labour Commission.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I will see that a copy of the Resolution is placed in the Library.

Indian Budget.

Mr. REES: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can now state the approximate date on which the Indian Budget will be taken.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The Indian Financial Statement will be presented at Calcutta on the 20th instant, and discussed a week later. It will be presented to Parliament as soon as it is received in this country, *i.e.*, early in May, and the usual discussion will take place as soon thereafter as the state of public business permits, I hope at an early date.

Indian Imperial Legislative Council.

Mr. REES: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the reform proposals now under consideration contemplate the nomination of an European non-official, in order to represent the European community of Southern India.

Mr. REES: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the reform proposals now under consideration contemplate the representation of the planting and manufacturing interests of Northern India by the appointment to the Imperial Legislative Council of nominees of the Indian Tea and Behar Planters Associations, and of nominees of the Bengal and Upper India Chambers of Commerce.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) I may, perhaps, answer this Question and the one next following it together. The Government of India have not yet submitted their detailed proposals in definite form, and I am not aware what suggestions they may contain. All the points raised by the hon. Member will no doubt receive due consideration.

Indian Penal Code.

Mr. J. M. ROBERTSON (Northumberland, Tyneside): To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state how many Indian newspapers, in English and vernacular, have been prosecuted under the sedition clauses of the Indian Penal Code since the beginning of 1907; whether the editors, managers, and printers convicted have been treated as political prisoners; if not, what is the nature of their imprisonment; whether the Government of India has in contemplation the adoption of a more stringent control of native newspapers by means of a proposed emendation of the law relating to registration; and, if so, whether an opportunity will be given to this House to discuss the proposed measure before it is passed into law.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) Seventeen newspapers have been prosecuted since the beginning of 1907. Indian law distinguishes only simple imprisonment and rigorous imprisonment, that is, with hard labour. Of the thirteen persons sentenced, twelve were sentenced to rigorous imprisonment and one to simple imprisonment. I am not aware that any amendment of the law relating to registration of newspapers is likely to be proposed.

Indian Native Rulers and Famine Precautions.

MR. REES: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether, during the present season of scarcity in India, steps are being taken to enforce the liability of ruling chiefs whose territories are affected to give relief to their own subjects; and whether the necessary steps are taken to distinguish between the subjects of such chiefs who take refuge on British relief works, in order that the responsibility for failure may be clearly brought home to the ruling chiefs in such cases, and not be attributed to the British administration.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) From the Reports I have received I have every reason to believe that the ruling chiefs of states affected by the droughts are duly mindful of their obligations towards their subjects and have made the necessary arrangements for their relief. The question of immigration from native states into British territory was fully considered by the Famine Commission of 1901, and suitable rules for the guidance of district officers acting in communication with political officers in native states have been incorporated into the Provincial Famine Relief Codes.

Indian Relief System.

MR. REES: To ask the Secretary of State for India what is the percentage of persons in receipt of relief in India, as compared with the last ascertained percentage in the like case for England and Wales; whether a practical system of relieving distress arising from crop failure has been elaborated in India, and whether famine reports or other documents show, or whether any evidence is available to show, that the existing system stands in need of experimental legislation.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) Struck on the whole population of India the ratio is now about one-half of 1 per cent. The ratio of paupers on outdoor relief in England and Wales was stated to be a little over 1½ per cent. in 1907. As I explained in the Answer made by me to a similar Question on 18th February, the extent of the relief given in distressed districts where the Famine Relief Code is being applied is much in excess of the above figure. The Answer to the latter part of the Question is in the negative.

Indian Imperial Cadet Corps.

SIR BERKELEY SHEFFIELD (Lincolnshire, Brigg): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether any decision has been come to as to the ultimate positions that the members of the Imperial Cadet Corps are to fulfil; are they to be appointed permanently to a regiment; and, if so, what are their prospects.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The Government of India have not yet submitted a definite scheme for the employment of officers commissioned from the Imperial Cadet Corps.

Wolverhampton Telegraphists' Pay.

MR. T. F. RICHARDS (Wolverhampton, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the maximum wage paid in the Wolverhampton telegraph department is 8*s.* per week less than prevails in the City of Birmingham, which is only distant 12 miles; and, seeing that the rent and cost of living are so much alike, whether he can see his way clear to raise the Wolverhampton office up to a level with the Birmingham one.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) The classification of Wolverhampton is at present in suspense. Its final plan will be decided on the lines recommended by the Select Committee, that is to say, on the volume of work done, and the cost of living as ascertained by the Board of Trade. The units of work at Wolverhampton are only 656 as compared to 7,422 at Birmingham, and the Report so far received from the Board of Trade in regard to the cost of living shows that the cost of living at Wolverhampton is low and considerably lower than that of Birmingham. The cost of living is ascertained by the Board of Trade in accordance with the recommendation of the Committee, and I receive and accept their results.

Vaccination of Post Office Officials.

MR. T. F. RICHARDS: To ask the Postmaster-General whether there is now any need for requesting the employees in his Department, as a condition of service, to be vaccinated; and, seeing that much money is spent in this operation and suffering entailed, he will take the necessary steps to allow each employee to choose for himself equally with others not engaged by the Government.

(*Answered by Mr. Sydney Buxton.*) I am not prepared to make any alteration of the rule in the direction suggested by the hon. Member.

Case of Mrs. Bridget Murphy, of Ardpatrick.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that Mrs. Bridget Murphy, of Lower Sunville, Ardpatrick, County Limerick, on a Friday about the middle of December last, was arrested without a warrant on the open field by the head constable of the Kilfinane police station, was lodged during that night in the police station, and on the following day, although the ordinary petty sessions court, with four magistrates in attendance, was held in the courthouse, Captain Fitzpatrick, R.M., tried Mrs. Bridget Murphy in camera in the police station, and had her sent on to Cork Gaol on the following day; will be say by whose orders the arrest and trial were carried out; was there any informality in the committal or warrant; why was Bridget Murphy in the gaol obliged to put on the dress of a convict; why, after a few days, was she again given back her own clothes; why, before a week, was she liberated, although her sentence was for a month's imprisonment; and can he say whether Mrs. Bridget Murphy and the other tenants, who up to twenty years ago lived on the untenanted lands of Lower Sunville, will be restored to those untenanted lands, now that the owner, Colonel Lowe, is selling to his tenants.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am informed that the facts are substantially as stated in the Question. Mrs. Murphy was arrested in a field by the police for cattle-driving late on the evening of 13th December last. She was taken before the resident magistrate on the following morning, and was by him ordered to find sureties to keep the peace or to be imprisoned for one month. She failed to give the necessary bail and was committed to prison. On 20th December the Lord-Lieutenant, in the exercise of his prerogative, ordered the woman's release. It would be contrary to practice to state the reasons which influence His Excellency's action in such cases. The question whether the warrant of committal was informal is one of law, and I must decline to express any opinion in the matter. It is the fact that Mrs. Murphy was required to wear prison clothes upon being lodged in gaol, but, when the facts came to the knowledge of the General Prisons Board two days later, they at once directed that her ordinary clothes should be given to her. The Estates Commissioners inform me that no application for reinstatement has been received from Mrs. Murphy. The Commissioners approached Colonel Lowe as to the sale of his property, and he replied that he was himself negotiating with his tenants with a view to selling to them direct.

Cavan Evicted Tenants.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say whether special instructions have been issued to the inspectors dealing with evicted tenants in County Cavan to secure the payment of arrears due at the time of eviction as a condition of reinstatement by the evicted tenants or his representative; and will he say whether any steps have been taken in County Cavan to put The Evicted Tenants (Ireland) Act, 1907, into force, and in how many cases.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners inform me that no such special instructions as are referred to in the Question have been issued to inspectors, and that the compulsory provisions of the Evicted Tenants Act of 1907 have not been put in force in any case in County Cavan up to the present.

Royal University, Ireland.

CAPTAIN CRAIG (Down, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can say how many students entered for examination in the Royal University in 1907, and how many passed; and if the teachers in the Jesuit College, Stephen's Green, have, as fellows of the Royal University, the privilege of both preparing and examining their own students for passes and degrees.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) I am informed that the number of students who entered for the examinations of the Royal University in 1907 was 4,115, and the number that passed was 2,412. The students are examined by the respective boards of examiners in the different subjects. Several of the Professors at University College, Stephen's Green, are amongst the examiners, as are also several of the professors in each of the Queen's Colleges and in Magee College. No examiner has the privilege of examining particular students. The examiners of each division of every subject examine all the candidates in that division, and at honour examinations the marks to be given must be agreed upon by at least two examiners.

Enniskillen Labourers' Cottage Scheme.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he will say whether the Enniskillen (No. 2) Rural District Council have yet presented their scheme to the Local Government Board for an inquiry under the Labourers (Ireland) Act, 1906; if not, will he say what is the cause of the delay; and will he have representation made to the proper authorities, with a view to securing that the Labourers Acts be put into operation without further delay in this district.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The district council in question have not yet presented their scheme under the Labourers Act. The delay is due to the council and their officers. The Local Government Board have already addressed the council on the subject, and have intimated that, owing to the neglect of the clerk to discharge the duties devolving upon him, he should be required to resign his office.

Strabane Labourers' Cottages.

MR. C. MACVEIGH (Donegal, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether the attention of the Local Government Board has been called to the class of cottages that the No. 2 Division of the Strabane Union, County Tyrone, are trying to force upon the labourers by proposing to build them in blocks of six or nine houses, and none of these on the plots of land selected by the committee of the district council; whether he is aware that labourers refuse to take these cottages on account of their general inconvenience and the difficulty of getting to the place they propose to build them, and that the sanitary arrangements will interfere with the domestic water supply; and whether he will take immediate steps to have inquiry made into the whole matter before the ratepayers' money is squandered.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The plans of the labourers' cottages referred to in the Question were prepared on the lines of the Local Government Board's model plans, and, in the opinion of the Board, are suitable. Each cottage will contain three bedrooms in addition to the kitchen or living-room. As regards the erection of the cottages in ranges of six or nine, it was arranged at the inquiry that instead of taking a number of scattered plots, against the wishes of the persons interested in the land, and thereby running the risk of having all or some of the plots rejected, one field or large plot of from four to eight acres should be acquired; and the parties consented to this modification as being less injurious to their interests. The Local Government Board have no information as to the alleged refusal of the labourers to take the cottages, but it is open to them to put ther objections before the rural district council. The Board see no reason for intervening. If labourers should only be willing to accept sites which they themselves select, the council might consider that they would be justified in not proceeding with the schemes.

Kingston Estate County Cork.

MR. WILLIAM ABRAHAM (Cork County, N.E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to an inquiry held by the Estates Commissioners at their offices in Dublin last November, into complaints made by certain tenants on the Kingston estate, County Cork, to the effect that they were compelled to sign purchase agreements under duress, having been served with writs and processes of ejectment by the landlord; whether the Commissioners having fully investigated the matter and heard the evidence on both sides, have, during last week, informed the agent of the estate that they would only sanction the purchase agreements entered into by the remainder of the tenants, but would constitute the holdings of the complaining tenants a separate estate, and would make no advances thereon for a period of four months, and that meanwhile these tenants could move in court to have the agreements set aside, on account of undue influences and exorbitant prices; and if he will explain why it is that the Estates Commissioners, having ample powers to decide the question of duress, have not done so, but would apparently oblige these tenants to seek a decision in a court of law at considerable expense.

(*Answered by Mr. Birrell.*) The Estates Commissioners held an inquiry into the allegations of duress made by some of the tenants on the Kingston estate and decided on adopting the course mentioned in the Question. The Commissioners considered that they had not sufficient materials before them to decide the questions raised, which, in their opinion should, if the purchasers desire to test them, be disposed of by the ordinary legal tribunals.

Army Commission—Eye-sight Regulations.

MR. RAPHAEL (Derbyshire, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War, if he will consider the advisability, considering the dearth of officers, of relaxing the rules and regulations with regard to the refusal to grant commissions in the Army to candidates who are short-sighted or who suffer from astigmatism; and whether this is the only country which deprives itself of the service of eligible candidates by reason of their wearing glasses.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The use of glasses is not prohibited. Candidates who have only one-fourth normal vision in each eye are accepted if the visual defect can be corrected by glasses up to a standard of "fairly good" vision (*i.e.*, normal in one eye and half normal in the other), and, if the vision of one eye is normal, one-sixth of normal vision in the other eye may be accepted, subject to correction by glasses up to one-half of normal. The question of reducing the standard still further has recently been under consideration, and it was decided that it was not expedient to do so.

Indian Mutiny Medals.

MR. WATT (Glasgow, College): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether every Indian Mutiny veteran over seventy years of age and in possession of the medal is in receipt of 1s. a day in respect of that service.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Every Indian Mutiny veteran who is over seventy years of age and has been awarded the medal is eligible for a pension of 1s. a day, provided that he is in necessitous circumstances and was not discharged for ignominy or as a worthless and incorrigible character. It is just possible that there may be a few men who are eligible and have not made any application for the pension.

New Bayonet Tenders.

MR. ABEL SMITH (Hertfordshire, Hertford): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether an order for the new pattern bayonet has been sent to the Small Arms Factory, Enfield; when the manufacture of them will begin; and how many of these bayonets will be made at the Small Arms Factory, and how many by private firms.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) An order for the new pattern bayonet has been sent to the Small Arms Factory, Enfield, and manufacture has commenced. Tenders are due from the private firms in a few days, and the orders to be given to them will then be dealt with. The allocation of orders for manufacture during next financial year is under consideration.

New Attestation Form.

MR. PIKE PEASE (Darlington); To ask the Secretary of State for War when the new attestation form for the Territorial Army will be published.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) A copy has been laid on the Table, and copies have been sent to the Vote Office for the convenience of Members. It is hoped that the general supply will be distributed early next week.

Disbandment of Volunteer Companies.

MR. PIKE PEASE: To ask the Secretary of State for War when he will be in a position to make the final announcement as to the disbandment of Volunteer corps or companies under the new Territorial Scheme.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The announcement of what Volunteer corps are to be disbanded will be contained in a special Army Order which will shortly be issued.

Netheravon Yeomanry School.

VISCOUNT HELMSLEY (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the school for Yeomanry officers at Netheravon has been abolished; and, if so, on what grounds.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) In September, 1907, it was decided to discontinue the attendance of junior Yeomanry officers of the Cavalry School, Netheravon, and to allow them to qualify for promotion by attachment for one month to a regular cavalry regiment where they have opportunities of learning their duty with troops which they could not do at the cavalry school. Refresher courses for senior Yeomanry officers are still held at the cavalry school.

Training Regulations for the Territorial Army.

MR. GRETTON (Rutland): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will place in the Vote Office, for the use of Members, copies of the pamphlet containing the training regulations for the Territorial Army, and also copies of the new attestation form when issued.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Copies were sent to the Vote Office yesterday.

Staff College Students.

MR. HICKS BEACH (Gloucestershire, Tewkesbury): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether it has been decided to increase the number of students at the Staff College; and, if so, when will this increase take effect.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The matter is under consideration.

4th Battalion West Kent Regiment.

MR. W. T. WILSON (Lancashire, Westhoughton): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that an order has been issued through the Kent County Association to certain companies of Volunteers belonging to the 4th Battalion Royal West Kent Regiment to the effect that no man employed in the Royal Dockyard at Chatham shall belong to the Territorial Army; whether such order was issued with his approval; and, if so, will the order apply to the men employed in all Government Departments.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) I am not aware of the order referred to. The regulations which are now applicable to Volunteers employed in departments under the Army Council will not in any way be altered in regard to men o the Territorial Force.

St. Patrick's Day—Army Ordnance Department.

MR. T. HARRINGTON (Dublin Harbour): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether arrangements will be made to have St. Patrick's Day observed as a public holiday in the Army Ordnance Departments, in common with all other public departments in Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) St. Patrick's Day is allowed to the Army Ordnance Department in Ireland as a public holiday, on the same conditions as for Admiralty employees, namely, without pay and without the right of making up lost time.

Army Engineer Surveyors.

MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): To ask the Secretary of State for War what is the reason for the delay which has occurred in the promulgation of the scheme affecting the staff of surveyors for engineer services in the Army which received the concurrence of the Treasury some six months since; and whether he is aware of the existence of anxiety in the service lest the recommendations of successive committees of inquiry should not have effect given to them.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Many administrative details had to be considered after the Treasury's consent to the scheme was received before it could be promulgated. It is hoped that these can be finally settled in a few days time. The changes introduced by the scheme will be started at the commencement of the next financial year.

Assam-Bengal Railway—Sylhet Connection.

MR. REES: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the Government of India contemplates the inclusion of a feeder line connecting Sylhet with the Assam-Bengal Railway in its railway programme for the forthcoming year.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) An estimate for a section of such a line, from Kalaura station to the Koosеara River was sanctioned in 1906, and a sum of Rs. 3,52,000 was allotted to this work for expenditure in 1907–8. The grant that will be allotted for the forthcoming year will be shown in the usual statement of capital expenditure on railways published with the Financial Statement of the Government of India.

Indian Railway Construction — Bridges over the Ganges.

MR. REES: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the programme of railway construction includes any provision for a bridge across the Ganges at Sara Ghaut or across the Hooghly at Caluctta.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) Provision is made in the programme of railway construction for expenditure on a bridge over the Lower Ganges, but the site has not been definitely settled. No provision is made for a bridge over the Hooghly at Calcutta.

Bombay-Sind Railway.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has yet received from the Government of India the memorial of the Cutchi inhabitants of Bombay relative to the proposed Bombay-Sind connection railway; and, if so, will he state whether he has yet arrived at a decision on the subject.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) The Memorial has been received and considered. I have decided that the line, if constructed, shall follow the route north of the Runn of Cutch, which is shorter and less costly than that through the Cutch State.

Viceroy's Executive Council—Commercial Ministry.

SIR H. COTTON (Nottingham, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether the post of Commercial Minister in the Viceroy's Executive Council in India is now vacant; and, if so, whether in filling up the appointment, he will give effect to the original intention of selecting for the office a practical representative of commerce and industry and railway management.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Morley.*) There is a vacancy on the Council of the

Governor-General of India. I am unable at present to make any statement as to my intentions for filling it.

Irish Estimates.

MR. HAZLETON (Galway, N.): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether any of the grants-in-aid under Sub-head C, Vote 6, Class II., Civil Service Appropriation Accounts, 1906–7, was devoted to Ireland; and if so, how much.

(*Answered by Mr. Churchill.*) The grant made for the Emigrants' Information Office, to which the hon. Member refers, was applied in acquiring and distributing information for use in the United Kingdom generally, including Ireland. It is impossible to apportion the expenditure.

Illegal Trawling in the Moray Firth.

SIR ARTHUR BIGNOLD (Wick Burghs): To ask the Secretary for Scotland whether he is aware that, on Wednesday, 5th February, the fishing boat "Benaigen" of Wick, whilst fishing in the Moray Firth, seven miles off the coast of the county of Caithness, had five of her nets carried away, and eight of her nets with fishing ropes destroyed by the trawler "Bangkok" of Gotheburg, value thereof £68 10s.; whether he is aware that several similar losses have been sustained this winter by fishing boats in the Moray Firth having their nets destroyed by foreign trawlers in the Firth, from whom no compensation is obtainable; and whether he will take steps for the protection of fishermen's property and for the vindication of their rights against foreigners.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) The usual procedure in cases where damage is inflicted by foreign fishing vessels on British fishing vessels is for the complainers to institute proceedings against the offenders in the Courts of the country to which they belong, but in this particular instance the matter has been referred to the Crown Office who have it under consideration.

Tuberculosis in Scotland.

MR. WATT: To ask the Secretary for Scotland if he will state how many cows were examined in Scotland under Article 3 of the Amended Order of 1899 in each of the years 1906 and 1907; how many of these were certified to be affected with tuberculosis of the udder; and what was done with those cows so affected.

(*Answered by Mr. Sinclair.*) Figures for 1907 are not yet available. From Returns in possession of the Board, approximately 34,253 "inspections" were carried out under Article 3 in the year 1906. It is impossible to give the number of cows examined. In approximately 257 cases the udder was certified to be tubercular. The Local Government Board have no information as to what was done with such cases.

Board of Inland Revenue—Secretary's Inspection Expenses.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury, with reference to his reply last session to the hon. Member for Kilkenny City as regards the holiday inspection expenses of the Secretary to the Board of Inland Revenue, that only expenses incurred strictly on official business are charged to the Vote, and that these are of course subject to the scrutiny of the Audit Office, whether he is aware that the claims made out by this official indicated that the expenses were incurred during his autumn holiday; that up to the suspension last year of these so-called inspections they have been systematically made in connection with his holiday visits, depending entirely on the situation of the places where he happened to spend his vacation; that in 1906 he stayed at a Yorkshire watering-place and visited the various Excise stations in the neighbourhood, receiving in connection with these visits subsistence allowance at the rate of £1 per day; and that, as Secretary to the Inland Revenue Board, he sometimes issues so-called Board's orders on his own account; and whether he will direct inquiry to be made into all the circumstances under which this official has been paid expenses during his holiday intervals, together with the total amount since his appointment to his present position.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) It is with the authority of the Board of Inland Revenue that their Excise Secretary has visited from time to time various collections in the United Kingdom; and they propose to continue an arrangement which, in their opinion, conduces, at trifling cost, to the efficiency of the Department. No Board's orders are issued, either by the Excise Secretary or by other officers of the Board, otherwise than by the authority and on the responsibility of the Board.

Irish Grants and Expenditure.

Mr. HAZLETON: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state the estimated amount of the grant and expenditure on account of Ireland, under each sub-head of Vote 3, Class II., Civil Service Appropriation Accounts, 1906–1707.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*)—

Estimated Amount of the Grant and Expenditure on account of Ireland under Sub-heads of the Vote for Treasury, &c. (Class II., Vote 3), 1906–7.

Sub-head.	Grant.	Expenditure.
	£	£
A. Salaries	4,580	4,500
B. Travelling	25	25
D. Incidental expenses	26	25
N. Treasury Remembrancer, Ireland, Salaries, &c.	3,319	3,316
O. Treasury Remembrancer, Ireland, Travelling, &c.	40	28
Q. Teachers' Pension Office, Ireland, Salaries	2,394	2,398
R. Teachers' Pension Office, Ireland, Travelling, &c.	5	1

Mr. HAZLETON: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state under each sub-head the Irish proportion of the amount granted and the sum expended for the year 1906–7, under Vote 10, Class 1, Civil Service, Appropriation Accounts; and also the estimated and realised amounts from Ireland under Sub-head H.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*) £95,500 was provided in the Survey Estimates for 1906–7 in respect of work in Ireland, and £94,170 was expended. The appropriations-in-aid amounted to £4,060. The net expenditure was therefore £90,110, or 43·85 per cent. of the aggregate net expenditure for the United Kingdom.

Mr. HAZLETON: To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he will state the Irish proportion of the amount granted, and the sum expended under Sub-heads A. and B., Vote 13, Class I., Civil Service, Appropriation Accounts, 1906–7; and also the estimated and realised amounts from Ireland under Sub-head I.

(*Answered by Mr. Runciman.*)—

Class I., Vote 13, 1906–7.	Amount of Grant estimated for Ireland.	Amount of Expenditure on Irish Account.
Sub-head A	£120	£120 (estimated)
Sub-head B	Nil	Nil
	Estimated receipt from Ireland.	Actual receipt from Ireland.
Sub-head I	£30	£26 1s. 2d.

MR. HAZLETON: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will state the amount, or estimated amount, of the grant and expenditure on account of Ireland under each Sub-head of Vote 4, Class II., Civil Service Appropriation Accounts, 1906–7, and also the estimated and realised amounts from Ireland under Sub-head II.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Gladstone.*) The following statement shows the estimated amount of the grant and expenditure on account of Ireland during the year 1906–7, and the estimated and realised amounts from Ireland under Sub-head II. (Appropriations in Aid)—

Sub-head.	Estimated Grant.	Estimated Expenditure.
Inspection of factories:	£	£
Salaries and allowances	2,830	2,790
Travelling, &c.	1,640	1,570
Fees to surgeons, &c.	160	180
Costs of prosecutions, &c.	20	10
Incidental expenses	55	55
Inspection of explosives:		
Salaries and allowances	45	45
Travelling	40	40
Inspection of mines and quarries:		
Salaries, &c.	275	270
Travelling	300	290
Workmen's Compensation Act:		
Fees, &c., of medical referees	30	20
Aliens Act:		
Expenses of expulsion orders	10	5
	Estimated.	Realised.
Receipts:		
Appropriations in Aid	100	100

MR. HAZLETON: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will state the amount or estimated amount of the grant and expenditure on account of Ireland under each sub-head of Votes 8, 9, and 10, Class II., Civil Service Appropriation Accounts 1906–7.

(*Answered by Mr. Kearley.*) No separate accounts are kept of the sums voted and expended on account of

Ireland under Votes 8 and 9. In the annual Financial Relations Return (House of Commons Paper, No. 245, of 1907) the expenditure under these Votes has always been treated as common to the United Kingdom. Before the next Return is prepared I will ascertain whether it will be possible to give an approximate estimate of the expenditure on English, Scottish, and Irish services. Expenditure under Vote 10 is for the administration of the Bankruptcy Acts, 1883 and 1890, and the Companies (Winding-up) Act, 1890, which do not extend to Ireland.

Training Colleges for Rural School Work.

Sir F. CHANNING (Northamptonshire, E.): To ask the President of the Board of Education, if he will state at how many training colleges provision is now made for the instruction of teachers for rural school work in the teaching of science as applicable to agriculture, and in facilities for practical training in the processes of agriculture, either on land attached to the training colleges, or on farm land adjacent to the colleges and hired temporarily for the purpose; and whether he can give an approximate estimate of the number of teachers now qualified by training to teach nature study and elementary science suited for rural industries, and of the number of teachers now qualifying themselves by attendance on short summer courses, or Saturday lectures, or other facilities provided by county councils or agricultural colleges.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) In all but one of the training colleges, excluding the Universities, nature study is included as part of the ordinary course in general elementary science regularly taken by students. At such short notice it is not possible to say how many of the colleges have special gardens or other lands appropriated for practical teaching. Nor can I, without further inquiry, give precise information as to the relations of agricultural colleges and their teaching staffs with the training colleges or the training departments of university colleges. In considering the extent to which training colleges specialise their courses in this or indeed in any particular direction, it must be remembered that practically every training college is attended by students who have come to it from all parts of the country, urban and rural, and also that students at training colleges have not, at that stage of their lives, at all decided whether the schools in which they will ultimately seek or obtain employment will be rural or urban; and it would thus hardly be possible, or fair to the students, for colleges to specialise in the directions referred to in the Question to an extent which would be unsuitable for those who would ultimately take service in urban schools. I may say, however, that the Board of Education have recently formulated an optional course in rural science, of a somewhat elaborate character, leading up to a practical study of vegetable culture, fruit culture, and flower culture; this is included amongst the possible syllabuses for recognised training colleges, and is already taken by one college. I may say, further, that the Board of Education have agreed to approve arrangements by which they will pay a special grant in respect of a year of special training in rural subjects, at certain horticultural and agricultural colleges, which may be taken by any qualified elementary school teacher. And the Board of Education have occasionally in recent years themselves provided very valuable summer courses at South Kensington for the teaching staff of certain training colleges, dealing in practical fashion with science adapted to rural requirements; and pecuniary assistance is given by the Board of Education to enable selected teachers to take advantage of these courses. As regards the concluding paragraph of the Question, it is not possible to state how many of the 84,000 certificated and 40,000 uncertificated teachers on the teaching staffs of the public elementary schools in England and Wales are qualified by training to teach nature study and elementary science suited for rural industries; but it will be seen from the earlier part of this Answer that a considerable proportion of the students who now leave the training colleges annually have some qualification for this work; while the large number of elementary schools obtaining the Board's special grant for instruction in gardening clearly shows that the number of persons possessing practical qualifications in this respect, whether on the staff of these schools or (as is frequently the case) employed specially from outside, is considerable and is increasing. The point, however, is more particularly dealt with by means of courses arranged by county councils for the existing teaching staff of public elementary schools, in the matter of nature study and rural science. Most of the county councils in England and Wales now make provision for enabling their rural elementary teachers to improve their qualifications for work in rural schools, day and evening; and in a number of instances, more particularly in the case of afternoon and evening courses, the instruction is given at, or in close connection with, a central agricultural institution. A large part of the work of this character is carried on in continuous courses of two or three weeks during the summer vacation. As application to the Board of Education for recognition of these courses is not necessarily made at the beginning of the session, the Board are unable to state now the total of the courses for the current session. Judging, however, from the experience of last session, the Board anticipate that for the current session the number of such courses will be about forty, neighbouring counties having combined for the purpose in certain cases. It is estimated that some 1,800 elementary school teachers will this year be improving their professional qualifications by attendance at such courses. It must further be remembered that, apart from attendance at courses specially arranged for the further instruction of rural teachers, many teachers avail themselves of the opportunities presented by the various classes in science conducted in technical schools and elsewhere aided by grants from the Board of Education. The Board are not in a position to state how many teachers are so benefiting, but they know that the number is large.

H.M.S. "Dreadnought."

MR. GRETTON: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, whether, in view of the special stress laid on H.M.S. "Dreadnought" as a reinforcement in war after she was commissioned on 11th December, 1906, it is the intention of the Board to allow this vessel to be tested by the Admiral who has been designated by the First Lord of the Admiralty for the chief command in war.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The Admiralty are already satisfied as to the fighting value of this ship, and see no necessity for a special Report on her from any admiral other than the one whose flag she flies.

Public Trustee Vote.

MR. DUNDAS WHITE (Dumbartonshire): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether he will consider the desirability of including in the Public Trustee Vote for the ensuing year not only those items of expenditure which are included in the present Supplementary Estimates, but also the estimated rental of the premises in Clement's Inn, the rates of contributions in lieu of rates in respect of these premises, and the various other items which would be debited to the Public Trustee Office if it were carried on as an independent business undertaking.

(*Answered by Mr. Asquith.*) The Estimate for the office of the Public Trustee for the ensuing financial year, as issued, contains a statement showing, in accordance with the usual practice, the provision made for the Department in respect of office accommodation (including rent, maintenance, furniture, and fuel and light), stationery, and printing. The rent paid for the premises includes rates, which are payable by the landlord. By Section 9 of the Public Trustee Act, 1906, the fees charged in respect of the duties of that officer are required to be arranged from time to time so as to cover the salaries and expenses incidental to the working of the Act. These expenses include the items referred to in the Question, as well as the Vote for the Public Trustee.

Volunteer Officers and the Territorial Army.

SIR GEORGE FARDELL (Paddington, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether Volunteer officers who elect to transfer to the Territorial Army will be allowed to retain their honorary rank.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The reply is in the affirmative.

Officers of Cadet Battalions.

MR. HICKS BEACH: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state what will be the position of officers of cadet battalions after 1st April; will they be given commissions in the Territorial Force and thereby become liable for service away from their units in times of emergency; or will they be given honorary commissions and only be called upon to serve with their cadet battalions.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) The question of the position of officers of cadet battalions is now under consideration.

Cloch Point—National Defence Laws.

MR. DUNDAS WHITE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether any land was purchased for the purposes of national defence about twenty years ago in Renfrewshire, in the neighbourhood of the Cloch Lighthouse; and, if so, in what year, and from whom it was purchased; what was the price paid; and whether it was subsequently sold.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Land at Cloch Point in possession of Sir Michael Shaw Stewart was selected in 1899 for the construction of one of the batteries for the defence of the Clyde, and in January, 1905, the negotiations for purchase were completed, at a cost of £13,050. In 1907 it was decided not to construct a battery at Cloch Point, and the land being no longer required was re-sold to Sir Hugh Shaw Stewart.

Waltham Abbey Factory Wages.

MR. STAVELEY-HILL (Staffordshire, Kingswinford): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state how many of the men employed at the Royal Gunpowder Factory at Waltham Abbey have had their wages reduced since 1st May, 1906, and the amount of the reduction.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Haldane.*) Will the hon. Member kindly refer to my reply on this subject to a Question put by the hon. and gallant Member for the Epping Division of Essex on 4th February, which will, I think, give him ample information on the points raised.

Cordite Destroyed.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what was the estimated value of the cordite which had to be destroyed owing to having been kept long in hot climates.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The approximate value is £8,000.

Range Finders.

LORD BALCARRES: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what sum is included in the Naval Estimates for range finders, and in what Vote the item is included.

(*Answered by Mr. Edmund Robertson.*) The amount provided for the purchase of range finders is included in the Navy Estimates under Sub-head F. of Vote 8, Section 2 (Purchase of Torpedo and Electrical Stores), but it is not in the public interest to state precisely what portion of the total provision under this sub-head has been allocated to the purchase of range finders or any other instruments.

West Riding Schools.

MR. CARLILE (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): To ask the President of the Board of Education what is the total number of places provided in the West Riding schools, provided and non-provided; and what was the average attendance in these schools for the years 1904–5, 1905–6 and 1906–7.

(*Answered by Mr. McKenna.*) The following Table gives the accommodation and average attendance in council and voluntary schools in the area of the West Riding County Council for the years 1904–5, 1905–6, and 1906–7—

Year.	Council Schools.		Voluntary Schools.		Total.	
	Accommodation.	Average attendance.	Accommodation.	Average attendance.	Accommodation.	Average attendance.
1904–5 -	118,896	85,371	133,209	85,469	252,105	170,840
1905–6 -	125,419	92,257	127,828	82,292	253,247	174,549
1906–7 -	135,890	97,051	121,490	77,011	257,380	174,062

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Chatham Dockyard Workmen and the Territorial Force.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether orders have been issued that no employees at Chatham Dockyard may join the Territorial Force.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, Dundee): No orders have been issued, but the question is being discussed between the Admiralty and the War Office.

Royal Naval Engineering College, Devonport.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that the food supplied to cadets at the Royal Naval Engineering College at Deponport is not sufficiently nourishing to enable these youths to withstand satisfactorily the mental and physical strain which their training involves; and, if so, whether he proposes to take any action in the matter.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: No complaints have been received, but I shall make inquiry, and I hope my hon. friend will supply me with the information upon which his question is based.

Royal Naval Reserve.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty, having regard to the fact that prior to 1st April, 1906, second-class Royal Naval Reserve men were allowed to re-enrol for periods of five years up to the age of forty-five, will he consider the expediency of having the new rule so amended as to admit of the re-enrolment, in periods of five years, up to the age of forty-five of all men who were in the second class of the Royal Naval Reserve at the time the new rule came into force.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: My hon. friend refers to the case of second-class Royal Naval Reserve men who, on 1st April, 1906, had reached the age of thirty-five without qualifying for advancement. The rule excluding such men from re-enrolment has been well considered, and no reason is seen for amending it.

New Quick-Firing Gun.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington): In view of the general interest taken in all parts of the House in the converted gun to be issued to the Territorial Army, will the Secretary for War takes steps to exhibit a specimen of this weapon to hon. Members in some part of the precincts of the House—presumably not in the tea room—and without ammunition?

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman consider the propriety of having a miniature shooting gallery on the Terrace with popguns?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): I believe there is a rule against introducing lethal weapons into this House except with the consent of the House; but already we have, I think, the new bayonet and the new converted rifle in the Tea-room, and if it is agreeable, I will arrange that on Monday a specimen of the new quick-firing gun shall be here after question time and also a specimen of the old gun.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.): Turn it on the House of Lords.

Anglo-Tibetan Agreement.

MR. O'GRADY (Leeds, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, whether the text of the Anglo-Tibetan Trade Agreement, arranged between Sir Louis Dane and Mr. Chang, the Chinese Commissioner, will be laid upon the Table of the House at an early date.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Mr. MORLEY, Montrose Burghs): The Agreement has not yet been concluded. It will be laid before the House when completed. It is concerned solely with the Amendment of the Trade Regulations of 1893 provided for by Article III. of the Lhasa Convention, which, with the subsequent Agreement with China, is already in the hands of hon. Members.

Famine in India.

MR. O'GRADY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India what are the figures at present of the number of persons in receipt of State relief in India; whether the relief is given in provisions as pauper relief or providing work, and, if the latter, whether wages are paid for such work; whether the areas of distress are extending; whether the Government of India has made any inquiry into the causes of the distress; whether at present any new legislative proposals are before the Viceroy in Council to deal with such causes, or in providing machinery to more effectively cope with the effects; and, if not, whether, having regard to the seriousness of recurring famine, he will consider the matter and suggest proposals to the Indian Government as a basis of experimental legislation dealing with famine.

MR. MORLEY: The total number of persons in receipt of relief, according to the latest report, is 1,388,000. For the able-bodied, relief is provided in the form of work, for which a suitable wage is paid: other classes receive grants of money or food in their homes or in poorhouses. The number on relief, and the area in which distress is acute, must, I am afraid, be expected to increase until the rains in June or July. It is hardly necessary to say that the Government of India have made full inquiry into the causes of the distress. The Famine Relief Codes, in accordance with which relief is being administered, are the result of accumulated experience, and are subject to revision in the light of further experience. I do not think that I could usefully make suggestions to the Government of India for dealing with the question by experimental legislation.

MR. O'GRADY: Will the result of the inquiries be made public?

MR. MORLEY: I should not think so, but I will make sure.

MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford): Is it the fact that when there is great poverty in agricultural districts in India the taxes are still collected by cast iron rule without regard to the particular circumstances of the district?

MR. MORLEY: No, Sir, I do not think so.

MR. SMEATON (Stirlingshire): Is it not the case that in such circumstances the taxes are suspended?

[No Answer was returned.]

Conviction of a Bengali Barrister for Assaulting English Railway Officials.

MR. O'GRADY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the trial and sentence to two years rigorous imprisonment of a Bengali barrister on the charge of murderously attacking two English railway officials; whether he is aware that the accused was sixty years of age, and in defence stated that he got into a first-class carriage by mistake late at night at a wayside station the carriage being occupied by the two railway officials, and because he would not leave was set upon by the prosecutors, and in self-defence picked up a Goorka dagger lying on the seat of the carriage; whether he is aware that one Judge tried the case, and that another Judge came along, read the evidence, and gave judgment against the accused, on the grounds that the dagger must have been his property, because it was exactly the length of the accused's carpet bag; and whether, having regard to the whole circumstances of the case, he will cause inquiries to be made, with the view of exercising the prerogative of mercy.

MR. MORLEY: I have seen a report of the trial, and also a report that on 28th January an appeal was admitted by the Calcutta High Court, who released the accused on bail. Until the result of the appeal is known, I can express no opinion on the case; but I may point out that the Judges who tried the case were both Indians, and that it was at the request of the accused that the Judge who took up the case when the original Judge was taken ill decided not to re-hear the whole case. My hon. friend will find the grounds of the judgment reported at length in the Indian newspapers of the time. I have no information as to the dagger or carpet bag.

The Zakka Khel Settlement.

MR. GRETTON (Rutland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India if he will lay upon the Table a translation of the agreement with the Afridi tribes who undertook to punish the Zakka Khel.

MR. MORLEY: The substance of the undertaking given by the Afridi tribes in respect of the Zakka Khel was stated in the announcement of the close of the operations which I made on 2nd March. There will be no objection to laying the document on the Table when the full text is received by mail.

British Post Office in China.

MR. NUTTALL (Lancashire, Stretford): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in view of the fact that at Tientsin, the second in importance among China treaty ports, the British post office will be closed unless the Chamber of Commerce guarantees the financial deficit, and in view of the fact that the British post offices at Hankow, Chefoo, and Canton are maintained without merchants being required to contribute to the working expenses, His Majesty's Government will undertake the charge, in order to assist our commerce and maintain the same *status* for England as that established by Germany, France, and Russia at that port.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. CHURCHILL, Manchester, N.W.): The question of the maintenance of these postal agencies is now being discussed between the Colonial Office and the Treasury, and the point raised by the hon. Member will receive consideration.

Cyclone in Mauritius.

MAJOR ANSTRUTHER-GRAY (St. Andrews Burghs): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can give any official news of the recent disastrous cyclone in Mauritius; whether any petition for help has been received from that Colony; and, if so, can he hold out any hope of a favourable reply.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Governor of Mauritius has reported that the Island was visited by a cyclone on the 1st of March which caused six deaths, and interrupted railway and telegraphic communications. A certain amount of damage has been done to houses, mostly to those of the poorer classes, and the crops have also suffered to an extent which will depend partly on the weather during the next month or so. The first estimates gave a 15 per cent. reduction on a crop which previously promised to be a very good one. The Answer to the latter part of the Question is in the negative.

Natives in the Transvaal Mines.

MR. GUINNESS (Bury St. Edmunds): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what number of the natives now employed in the Transvaal mines are British subjects, and what number have come from Portuguese territory.

MR. CHURCHILL: The detailed territorial analyses are no longer supplied to the Colonial Office since the establishment of responsible Government, but the number of Portuguese natives would probably be not less than half. This appears to be borne out by the statement that of the total number of natives recruited during 1907, according to the Report of the Witwatersrand Native Labour Association, 47,656 out of 117,991 were Portuguese natives from the East Coast, and the increase in native labour during the year is largely attributed to the fact that an unusual proportion of East Coast natives have renewed their contracts.

MR. GUINNESS: I beg to ask whether, in view of the objection so freely taken by hon. Members opposite to the importation of indentured labour on the Rand on the ground that it is likely to displace or restrict the employment of British subjects, His Majesty's Government propose to take any steps to repatriate, or, at all events, to prevent further recruiting of this Portuguese labour, which, from that point of view, is objectionable.

*MR. SPEAKER: The Question is not supplementary, but argumentative.

Mozambique Labour in the Rand Mines.

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state whether, in the event of any further importation of native labourers from Mozambique for work in the South African mines taking place, the labourers imported will be housed and fed on the higher scale of the Chinese labourers, or on the lower scale of the native labourers.

MR. CHURCHILL: They will not be subject to the objectionable provisions of the Chinese Ordinance, but will no doubt be treated like their fellows, many thousands of whom have worked on the mines. As the Chinese leave the country the new compounds which were built for them under such severe Parliamentary supervision will no doubt become available for native labourers.

MR. STANLEY WILSON asked whether these natives would be compulsorily repatriated.

MR. CHURCHILL said he did not understand that they were compulsorily repatriated now.

MR. GOULDING (Worcester) asked whether these natives were, in the time when they were not employed, permitted to go in and out of the compounds freely?

MR. CHURCHILL replied in the affirmative. The case as regarded the natives of Portuguese Africa was that the Portuguese Government were very anxious to have them back after their indenture, because they had their wives and families still in Portuguese territory, but they were not repatriated because there was any objection to them on the part of the population of the Transvaal.

MR. GOULDING repeated his Question —were these natives, while they were not employed, allowed to go in and out of the compounds as free men?

MR. CHURCHILL: Certainly. They have all the freedom which ordinary natives have.

SIR GILBERT PARKER (Gravesend) asked whether, in view of the fact that the agreement was that the natives should be repatriated, the Government would take the same interest in their repatriation as was taken in the repatriation of the Chinese?

[No Answer was returned.]

Suggested Further Introduction of Chinese Labour.

EARL WINTERTON (Sussex, Horsham): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in view of the admitted difficulty of obtaining sufficient labour in South Africa for the Transvaal mines, His Majesty's Government will consider the advisability of sanctioning the importation of more Chinese labourers on, so far as possible, the same terms as the Kaffir labourers, but with due regard to the prevention of their permanent settlement in South Africa, before they sanction the importation of other labourers from outside sources, among whom the mortality is likely to be far higher.

MR. CHURCHILL: If the importation of Chinese for labour on the mines in South Africa as advocated by the noble Lord were under the same conditions as the natives of that country are employed, no special legislation imposing fresh distinctions between race and race might be required, and the question would not, I presume, fall in the category of Bills specially reserved under the constitution. It is, therefore, to the Government and people of the Transvaal that the noble Lord should address his missionary efforts on behalf of the free importation of Chinese. In view of the known opinions of the overwhelming majority of the Colonists, both Dutch and British, his exertions will be watched with interest.

EARL WINTERTON: Will the Government have any objection to sanctioning this importation?

MR. CHURCHILL: Either an Ordinance proposing special restrictions will be needed, or it will not be needed. If an Ordinance is needed, then I think it will be time to consider that Ordinance when it reaches this House.

Compounds at the Mines.

EARL WINTERTON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies whether there is any difference (as regards the amount of accommodation allowed per head and the form of building) between the compounds occupied by the Kaffirs and Chinese, respectively, who are at present working in the mines in the Transvaal.

MR. CHURCHILL: Cd. Paper 2786 will afford the noble Lord very full information on this and many kindred matters connected with the mining industry upon the Witwatersrand.

EARL WINTERTON: Are we to understand that there is no distinction between the two classes of compounds, whether occupied by natives or Chinese?

MR. CHURCHILL: It would be better for the noble Lord to have recourse to the authorities to which I have referred him before putting any further Questions.

Mortality among Labourers in the Transvaal.

EARL WINTERTON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will grant a Return showing the mortality per month since January, 1906, among the following classes of labourers working in the Transvaal mines: South African Kaffir natives, Central African natives, Nyasaland natives, Portuguese Territory natives, and Chinese.

MR. CHURCHILL: The information is not in the possession of the Colonial Office, but the Secretary of State will ask the Transvaal Government if they will furnish it for presentation to Parliament.

SIR GILBERT PARKER: May I ask if, in view of the paternal position which this Government has taken up through granting the Transvaal a Constitution, the hon. Gentleman would ask that Government to keep them* supplied regularly with facts concerning the position of the natives?

MR. CHURCHILL: No, Sir; the constitutional position of this country is very clearly defined and I do not think I can modify it.

MR. LYTTELTON (St. George's, Hanover Square): Are we to understand that these natives for whom His Majesty's Government have a special responsibility, are to be ignored in this matter?

MR. CHURCHILL: No, Sir. The right hon. Gentleman is well aware of the conditions under which legislation is reserved in the Transvaal Constitution. Apart from that, there is no power to deal with the internal affairs of the Transvaal.

MR. LYTTELTON: This is not an internal matter; it is a matter external to the Transvaal Government peculiarly affecting natives under His Majesty's protection.

MR. CHURCHILL: I do not see how it affects natives under His Majesty's protection.

Transvaal Mines and Malagasy Labour.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies when the first communication was received by His Majesty's Government from the Transvaal Government as to recruiting labour from Madagascar; when and what reply was given to the communication from the Transvaal Government; whether any communication on the subject has been made by His Majesty's Government to that of the French Republic; and whether any reply has been received from the French Government.

MR. CHURCHILL: The Governor's despatch on the subject containing Minister's request was received on 18th January. It was answered on 28th January by a request that a missing enclosure should be forwarded, and further communications have since taken place. No communication to the French Government has at present been made.

MR. CLAUDE HAY asked whether the correspondence would be laid on the Table of the House.

MR. CHURCHILL: My noble friend has decided not to lay on the Table any correspondence on the matter until it is complete.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: When does the right hon. Gentleman expect to be in a position to give the House the information?

MR. CHURCHILL: I cannot say. The Foreign Office is also involved in this matter.

SIR GILBERT PARKER asked whether they were to conclude, from the fact that negotiations had been entered into for recruiting natives of Madagascar for the Transvaal mines, that the supply of natives from the sub-continent had not been found sufficient by the Transvaal Government?

MR. CHURCHILL: I cannot govern the inferences that the hon. Gentleman may choose to draw, but I am of opinion, as far as I am able to inform myself, that the supply of natives has proved very much in excess of the demand.

MR. CLAUDE HAY asked whether the negotiations between the Home Government and the French Government were still in progress?

MR. CHURCHILL: The Transvaal Government have made a request to us to obtain information from the French Government. We have asked the Transvaal Government certain questions, and upon receipt of the answers to those questions, if we find they are satisfactory, we will make the necessary representations to the French Government.

Dinizulu.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies with reference to the telegram sent by the Colonial Office, at the request of Mr. Colenso and on his behalf, on 7th December last, to Dinizulu, whether it was sent at the expense of the Government; and what was the cost of the message.

MR. CHURCHILL: The message was sent at the expense of the Government, and the cost was £4 5s.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: Is the House to understand that in future the Colonial Office intend to send telegrams on behalf of private individuals at the expense of the British taxpayer?

MR. CHURCHILL: The telegram in question was sent to prevent the effusion of blood in South Africa, and it could not have reached Dinizulu except by State assistance, through which it acquired an official character. It was right that the expense should be borne by the Government.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: But was not the telegram sent on behalf of a private individual?

MR. CHURCHILL: Yes, and in similar circumstances a similar telegram would be sent.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the sending of the telegram met with the approval of some hundreds of Members of this House? Will he send a further telegram to ascertain whether it is true as stated in the Press that the solicitor representing Dinizulu——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. That does not arise out of the Question on the Paper.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Then I will put the Question down.

Native *v.* Chinese Labour Comparison.

MR. FELL (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, how many natives are required to replace every 100 Chinese repatriated from the Transvaal mines; and is the estimate of 150 natives being required to do the work of 100 Chinese approximately correct.

MR. CHURCHILL: Sir, I cannot say. A more interesting calculation would be how many white men at high wages and with the best machinery would replace 100 of either natives or Chinese.

MR. FELL: Is it not the case that it is in the knowledge of the Colonial Office that it takes considerably more natives than Chinamen to do the same work?

MR. CHURCHILL: I have answered the Question. I said I could not give the relative figures.

EARL WINTERTON: In view of the statements made by his Party at the last election, will the right hon. Gentleman take steps to ascertain?

*MR. SPEAKER: I must really enter a protest against the practice of introducing a lot of fresh matter in supplementary Questions. A Question was asked of the right hon. Gentleman and he said he did not know. That, surely, is sufficient for the time being.

MR. STANLEY WILSON rose to put a further Question.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order.

Mortality in the Mines.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies how many natives employed in the Transvaal mines died in the month of December last, and how many Chinese; and what percentage these numbers bear to the numbers of each class employed.

MR. CHURCHILL: I have no official information. But from Press telegrams it appears that the number of Chinese employed in December was 37,728, and the number of deaths 66, giving a death rate of 20·9 per 1,000 per annum, while the native death rate for the whole of 1907 is stated to have been 32·42 per 1,000 per annum. I cannot give the native death rate for December separately; and I cannot vouch for the accuracy of the figures.

Medical Inspection of the Natives.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies if the English medical inspector employed to look after the health of the natives in the Transvaal mines has recently been discharged; if so, what reason is alleged for this; and is another medical man to be appointed in his place.

MR. CHURCHILL: Dr. Sansom, the officer in question, is to be retrenched, but I know nothing of the reason or of the arrangements which may be contemplated by the Transvaal Government.

MR. FELL: Does that mean he has retired?

MR. CHURCHILL: Yes.

MR. LYTTELTON: Do His Majesty's Government absolve themselves from all responsibility for the health of the natives, and do they, in consequence of the grant of self-government to the Transvaal, consider they have no longer any power with regard to the protection of these natives?

*MR. SPEAKER: The right hon. Gentleman must give notice of that.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: Is it proposed to appoint another medical man in the place of the one who is being retrenched?

Mr. CHURCHILL: I do not know the intention of the Transvaal Government, but in view of the right hon. Gentleman's suggestion that His Majesty's Government takes no responsibility, we have yet to be convinced that the Transvaal Government, which enjoys the support of the great majority of the people in the Transvaal, will not do its duty in the matter.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: Will the right hon. Gentleman ascertain whether the Transvaal Government propose to make another appointment?

Mr. CHURCHILL: I am here to say distinctly that in the communications which we make from time to time to the Transvaal Government we shall be guided by the practice which the Coloni l Office pursues in dealing with other responsible Governments, and shall not at all embark upon a policy of nagging them from day to day.

Governorship of Macedonia.

Mr. ALDEN (Middlesex, Tottenham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any steps have been taken to ascertain the feeling of the Austrian and Hungarian Governments with regard to the appointment of a Turkish governor for Macedonia.

The SECRETARY of STATE for FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Sir Edward Grey, Northumberland, Berwick): A despatch has been addressed to the Powers putting forward for their consideration the views of His Majesty's Government as expressed in the House the other day, including the matter referred to in the Question.

Japanese Infringements of British Trade Marks.

Mr. LONSDALE (Armagh, Mid.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the complaints of British traders as to the wrongful use of British trade marks by Japanese firms; and whether he is taking any steps to ensure protection for British trade-marks in the Far East.

Sir EDWARD GREY: The Answer to both the hon. Member's Questions is in the affirmative, as was stated in a reply given on behalf of the Board of Trade on the 5th instant.

Great Britain and Siam.

Mr. LONSDALE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is in a position to make any statement with respect to the terms of a new Treaty between Great Britain and Siam.

Sir EDWARD GREY: I regret that I cannot for the present add anything to my reply of the 5th instant to the hon. Member for North-West Lanark.

Indentured Labour at St. Thome and Principe.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): On behalf of the hon. Member for East Nottingham, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Portuguese Government have promulgated revised rules for the regulation of indentured labour traffic from the mainland for the cultivation of cocoa in the islands of St. Thomé and Principé, and have deputed a specially qualified official to supervise their operation; and whether he can lay any Papers on the subject.

Sir EDWARD GREY: I am unable to add to the information given to the hon. Member for Shrewsbury in answer to his Question on the 10th ultimo. We have not yet heard that the fresh Regulations which were being drawn up have been promulgated, or that the official who is to superintend the inauguration of the new system has left for his post. I do not propose to lay any Papers on the subject.

Congo Treaty of Cession and Additional Act.

Sir GILBERT PARKER: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government are in possession of the additional Act to the Treaty of Cession of the Congo approved by the Belgian Government, and are aware that it leaves Article 1 of the treaty unaltered, save for the obligations attaching to the retention by Belgium of the Crown Domain foundation, and that no fundamental change is proposed in the present system which disregards native rights in the soil or the products of the soil; and whether His Majesty's Government, in view of the assurances given to this House by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, will now make representations to the Belgian Government that terms of cession which do not provide for elementary native rights, and for the re-establishment of commercial liberty, cannot be recognised by this Government.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The Answer to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. His Majesty's Government have at this moment the additional Act under their consideration with a view to examining what effect it is likely to produce, if accepted in its present form, on the various questions at issue between them and the Congo Government. But the terms of the annexation of the Independent State by Belgium are still the subject of discussion and until the Bill has assumed its final shape I cannot promise a definite statement of what should be said about it.

Russia and the Aland Islands.

MR. GRETTON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if the Aland Islands are now occupied by Russian troops.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I have no information subsequent to that contained in my replies to the Questions asked by the hon. Member for Blackpool on 25th October, 1906, and 30th July last. I have no reason to suppose that anything has occurred since which materially alters the situation.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley): And were the Russians not at that time in occupation?

SIR EDWARD GREY: There were two officers and fifteen men in the islands then.

British Army in Egypt.

MR. KETTLE (Tyrone, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether, in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, the time has arrived for reducing the army of occupation in Egypt, which was increased to its present proportions in consequence of the Denshawai incident.

SIR EDWARD GREY: There was no increase of the army of occupation in Egypt in consequence of the Denshawai affair. The last decision to increase it was announced two months before that incident occurred. It is not proposed to alter it.

Egyptian Schools Sports Competition.

MR. KETTLE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether Mr. Dunlop, adviser to the Ministry of Education in Egypt, has procured the alteration of the date on which the sports competition for the schools is usually held, so as to fix it this year for Friday, 20th March; whether he is aware that a public announcement had previously been made that a mourning ceremony in commemoration of Moustafa Kamel Pasha would be held on Friday, 20th March; and will he instruct the British agent to advise the Government to hold the sports competition on the usual date, so that it may not clash with the memorial ceremony.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I can, if desired, inquire whether there is such a competition, whether there is a usual date for it, whether the date has been altered, and if so, why, but it is clearly a matter of detail not to be settled in London.

Carthagena—Estate of John Riddle of Sunderland.

MR. SUMMERBELL (Sunderland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if his attention has been called to the case of John Riddle, of Sunderland, who died at Carthagena, on the 30th April, 1882, and to the fact that the acting Vice-Consul has declined to supply an inventory of the belongings of the deceased, stating that the documents necessary are missing; whether the Vice-Consul acted in the matter in his private or public capacity; and, if so, whether it is his intention to take any action in order to compel the production of the necessary Papers.

SIR EDWARD GREY: This case has formed the subject of correspondence since 1898. The Vice-Consul, who is an unsalaried officer, has stated that there is no inventory of the estate among the Consular Papers. His business firm was previously connected with the administration of the estate, and whatever Papers he may possess are held by him in his private capacity. The matter is a purely private one, and I am unable therefore, to take any action in order to compel their production. The Foreign Office has frequently advised that this can only be done through the Spanish Law Courts.

Egyptian Students at Moustafa Kamel's Funeral.

MR. KETTLE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Mr. Dunlop, the adviser to the Ministry of Education in Egypt, has advised the Government to inflict punishment on the students of the Government schools who attended the funeral of the late Moustafa Kamal Pasha; whether some years ago when a Mr. De Vere, professor of gymnastics, died, the pupils of the Government schools were requested by Mr. Dunlop to attend his funeral; and whether any students have actually been punished for attending the pasha's funeral.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I have no information on this subject. If the hon. Member will tell me on what foundation the statement implied in the Question is based, I will inquire into it.

MR. KETTLE: It is based on accounts in the Egyptian papers.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member had better convey the information by letter.

Sir Harry Maclean.

MR. FELL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he is aware that Kaid Maclean has gone to Rabat in a French gunboat; and, if so, can he state if we are now entirely free from any responsibility in regard to him if he is captured again.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I am unable to add anything to the Answer which I gave the hon. Member on the 27th ultimo; but it will be made clear that we cannot accept unconditional responsibility for future contingencies.

Government Employees and the Territorial Force.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye): I beg to ask the Prime Minister whether His Majesty's Government intend to set an example to other employers of labour by themselves giving opportunity and encouragement to Government employees to join the Territorial Force.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. ASQUITH, Fife, E.): Subject to the requirements of the service both in time of peace and in time of war, it is the intention of His Majesty's Government to afford to those employed in public departments every reasonable facility for joining the Territorial Force.

MR. COURTHOPE: Does that apply to the employees at Chatham Dockyard?

MR. ASQUITH: There is a question to the Admiralty on that subject.

The Licensing Bill.

MR. ELLIS (Nottinghamshire, Rushcliffe): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can now state when the Second Reading of the Licensing Bill will be taken.

MR. ASQUITH: I am not yet in a position to make a statement.

MR. GIBBS (Bristol, W.): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if the income-tax will be levied upon any sums set on one side for sinking fund purposes, should the Licensing Bill become law.

MR. ASQUITH: The Income-tax Acts do not permit the allowance from the assessment upon the profits of a business of any sums set aside for the purpose of a sinking fund.

MR. GEORGE FABER (York) asked whether income-tax would have to be paid on the sinking fund which was to take the place of the licence, as well as upon the licence itself.

MR. ASQUITH: Sums set aside for a sinking fund are not allowed to be deducted from the income-tax before it is paid.

MR. GEORGE FABER: May it be deducted after payment?

MR. ASQUITH: The hon. Member must give me notice.

MR. GIBBS: I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if surveyors of taxes have been specially instructed from Somerset House not to allow the Compensation Fund under the 1904 Act to be charged against profits for income-tax purposes; if so, on what grounds; and how will it be with a time limit.

MR. ASQUITH: A Compensation Fund charge borne by the person carrying on the business in the licensed house is allowed as a deduction from the profits of that business for purposes of assessment to income-tax. A Compensation Fund charge borne by the owner of a licensed house which he lets to a tenant is not, in the opinion of the Board of Inland Revenue, an admissible deduction from the profits of any other business carried on by him. This view has, however, been disputed, and the matter has been made the subject of an appeal to the High Court, which is now pending.

Hong Kong Mail Contract.

MR. HAROLD COX (Preston): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he has yet had under his consideration any proposal for the renewal of the Liverpool and Hong Kong mail contract; and whether, before giving his assent to any renewal of the contract for this service, he will satisfy himself that the terms of the contract are in accordance with the letter and spirit of the declaration made by the Prime Minister in this House on 27th March last.

MR. ASQUITH: The Question of the renewal of the contract is now under the consideration of His Majesty's Government, and the statement made by the Prime Minister on 27th March last is being fully borne in mind.

Imprisonment for Debt.

MR. PICKERSGILL (Bethnal Green, S.W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Returns for 1907 of debtors imprisoned by orders of county courts have now been received; what was the total number of debtors imprisoned during last year; and whether, in view of the early inquiry by a Select Committee into the subject of imprisonment for debt, he will publish at once in a separate Paper the detailed Returns of committals for each circuit.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. GLADSTONE, Leeds, W.): These figures are not yet complete. If the Select Committee which is shortly to be appointed desire to be furnished with them before the annual Return in which they are embodied is ready for publication, I will endeavour to meet their wishes.

MR. BYLES (Salford, N.): Does that include imprisonment for non-payment of rates?

MR. GLADSTONE: I cannot say.

MR. BYLES: I will put the Question down.

The Children Bill.

MR. NIELD (Middlesex, Ealing): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the omission to deal with the question of street trading in the Children Bill now before the House is intentional or due to inadvertence; if the former, if he will state his reasons to the House for not legislating upon the subject; and, in the latter case, if he will move Amendments to the Bill in Committee for the protection of children and young female persons in relation to street trading.

MR. GLADSTONE: After the fullest consideration, it was decided not to deal in the Bill with any of the numerous and often controversial questions which arise in connection with the employment of children. It was undesirable to deal with them piecemeal, and to have dealt with them comprehensively would have involved breaking up the Factory and Mines Acts, and would have altered the Bill's character and imperilled its chances of success. As regards street trading, I may remind the hon. Member that extensive powers of dealing with this form of employment of children are conferred on local authorities by the Employment of Children Act, 1903. These powers, as the Return presented to Parliament last year showed, have been largely exercised; and, according to the representations which reach me, with excellent results.

The Hamstead Explosion.

MR. ALBERT STANLEY (Staffordshire, N.W.) asked if the Home Secretary could give the House any further information regarding the lamentable Hamstead explosion.

MR. GLADSTONE said that, as the House was aware, thirteen bodies were recovered yesterday from the Hamstead Colliery. The only telegram he had since received stated that another body had been recovered. Three sets of men were carrying on the search, and others were employed in securing a more direct route to get the bodies out.

MR. JOHN WILSON (Durham, Mid.) asked if the Home Office intended to send a representative to the inquest to be held on 23rd March on the fourteen men who lost their lives at the Washington Glebe Colliery, in the county of Durham, on 21st February.

MR. GLADSTONE said the Home Office would of course be represented.

MR. JOHN WILSON: By whom?

MR. GLADSTONE asked for notice.

Railway Shunting Accidents.

MR. MADDISON (Burnley): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he is aware that the railway shunting accidents for last year exceeded those of 1906 by about 40 per cent., those of 1895 by nearly 95 per cent., and those of 1887, the year in which railway companies adopted the shunting pole, by no less than 250 per cent.; whether coupling and uncoupling accidents have proportionately increased by 30 per cent, since 1889, when the Automatic Couplings Bill was withdrawn; and whether he is taking any steps under the Act of 1900 to select automatic couplings and to enforce their adoption on the railways of the United Kingdom.

*THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. KEARLEY, Devonport): The comparisons suggested by my hon. friend are misleading, owing to the fact that the basis of the Returns of non-fatal accidents was altered in 1895 and again in 1906. As regards fatal accidents connected with the coupling and uncoupling of vehicles the figures are: 1887, 26; 1895, 16; 1899, 16; 1906, 9; 1907, 18. The question of improved couplings is at present under the consideration of the Railway Employment Safety Appliances Committee, who have, however, expressed the view that there is good reason to doubt whether the adoption of an automatic coupling would tend appreciably to reduce the number of accidents.

MR. GUEST (Cardiff District) asked on what grounds that decision was arrived at?

MR. KEARLEY'S reply was inaudible.

West Riding Education Loan Payments.

MR. CARLILE (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether he will state what was the amount of the annual payments on account of loans for education purposes in the West Riding of Yorkshire when the West Riding County Council first took over the administration of education within its area.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. JOHN BURNS, Battersea): My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to this

Question. The payments referred to in it amounted to £64,853.

Chinese Mails.

MR. NUTTALL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government will endeavour to make the same arrangement with China as that made by France and Germany, by which sealed mails are sent, *via* Siberia, from Pekin and other parts of China to London and from London to China.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON, Tower Hamlets, Poplar): My right hon. friend has asked me to reply to the hon. Member's Question. The matter is engaging my attention; but I am not at present in a position to make any statement on the subject.

Neyland Telephone Exchange.

MR. OWEN PHILIPPS (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that a fishing industry is being established at Neyland; and if he can see his way to assist this new industry by establishing a telephone exchange at Neyland.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: My attention has been drawn to the proposed establishment of a fishing industry at Neyland and I am ascertaining upon what terms a telephone service in connection with the Pembroke Exchange system can be given there. I am in communication with the Urban District Council on the subject.

Post Office Contractors and Cruelty to Horses.

SIR F. BANBURY (City of London): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether his attention has been called to the case of a Post Office contractor named Boon, who was convicted at Peterborough, on 4th March, of cruelty to a horse employed to draw three-quarters of a ton of electric wires belonging to the Post Office up a hill; whether he is aware that Boon admitted that the horse was a shiverer, and that since he had beeen summoned he had sold it to a man named Peacock, who was convicted on the same day at the same court for cruelty to a worn-out horse, for £3; and what steps he proposes to take to prevent the use of such horses by Post Office contractors.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: Boon was not a Post Office contractor in any ordinary sense of the word. He was employed to cart a load of wire, and gave instructions on the subject to one of his men. This man disregarded Boon's instructions to go by the longer route to avoid the hill and took the shorter and steeper of two routes. The man was fined for cruelty; but the case against Boon was dismissed. If cruelty to horses were proved against a Post Office contractor I should not hesitate to take action in the matter.

Newcastle Postman's Grievance.

MR. HUDSON (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that Mr. W. E. Patrick, of Newcastle, on 16th March, 1907, informed his superior officer that, owing to the number of circulars he had to deliver he would be unable to return in time to perform certain duty; that in consequence of this extra work he was unable to return, and as the superior officer had made no provision considerable delay occurred; whether he is aware that Mr. Patrick was accused of deliberately delaying his work and was heavily punished, first by extra duty without pay, then by the stoppage of 1s. 6d. a week for a year, and then a further stoppage of 1s. a week stripe money for an indefinite period of not less than two years; whether he is aware that Mr. Patrick appealed, pointing out that he drew attention to the large number of circulars he had, and that in reply he was informed not only that his punishment must be maintained, but that it was considered to be too light for his offence; whether he is aware that this addition is likely to have the effect of intimidating men who desire to appeal against punishments; and whether he will inquire into the whole case.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The matter referred to was fully investigated on the postman's own appeal, and the inquiry showed that the delay had been easily avoidable and merited severe punishment. Apart from the case in question the postman's record had been by no means satisfactory. No addition was made to Patrick's punishment on appeal, nor would this be the case. The loss of the yearly increase of pay and the deferment of his good conduct stripe followed necessarily from the fact that the conduct of the officer in question could not be certified to be satisfactory. He was aware of this when he appealed.

Politics in the Post Office.

MR. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether associations among postal servants are permitted which subscribe to political funds.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: I stated in reply to a Question the other day that, as far as I am aware, Civil servants have never been prohibited from subscribing individually or collectively to such objects as they think fit.

MR. ALBERT STANLEY: How does the right hon. Gentleman reconcile that statement with the fact that——

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. Notice must be given.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he is aware that there is an association of post office servants, which is acknowledged by him, which does contribute considerable funds to a political Party, and which is affiliated to that Party?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: My Answer covers that.

EARL WINTERTON: Will the right hon. Gentleman, in view of the great difficulty of understanding what the regulations of the Post Office are, place a copy of them on the Table of the House?

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON suggested that an unstarred Question should be put down on the subject.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: Will the right hon. Gentleman now give equal rights in the Post Office to all political organisations?

[No Answer was returned.]

Equipment of Contracting-Out Schools.

LORD EDMUND TALBOT (Sussex, Chichester): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether, in the event of a school contracting-out under the Education Bill, the furniture and equipment will be transferred to the trustees of such school.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Mr. MCKENNA, Monmouthshire, N.): The provisions of the Bill will not affect the ownership of the furniture or equipment of schools not transferred to the local education authority.

LORD EDMUND TALBOT: May I ask whether we are to understand that it will be in the power of the local education authority to remove the furniture out of the schools?

MR. MCKENNA: It would be so if the furniture was the property of the local authority.

LORD EDMUND TALBOT: Is it not the property of the local authority?

MR. MCKENNA: That would depend. I could not say in each case whether it would be so or not, but I think not. As a rule the furniture was in the school before the local authority took the school over.

LORD EDMUND TALBOT: Is it not a fact that the local authority has acquired the furniture in many schools?

MR. MCKENNA: In some cases they have, but my Bill does not touch those cases.

LORD EDMUND TALBOT: Then I take it that it will be in the power of the local authority to remove the furniture?

MR. MCKENNA: No, that is not quite accurate. It would be so in some cases, but not in others.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Is it not a fact that in most Roman Catholic schools the whole of the furniture before the present Act came into operation was very wretched and dilapidated and poor, and has been replaced under the present Act by proper furniture, which furniture, of course, is the property of the local authorities, and does it not mean that in the case of all these poor schools this furniture will be removed and the burden thrown on the people of finding new furniture?

MR. McKENNA: Such a general statement as that I could not reply to by a general answer. It would require examination in each case to see whether, in fact, the furniture had always been supplied by the local authorities.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Speaking generally of these Catholic schools, is not the right hon. Gentleman aware that they have been very poor and necessitous schools, and that, in almost all these cases, the furniture was bad, and was replaced by the local authorities.

MR. McKENNA: No, I could not say that with my present knowledge. I could inquire into the point.

LORD EDMUND TALBOT: If the statement of the hon. Member for Waterford is correct, will the right hon. Gentleman insert provisions in his Bill so as to arrange for this?

MR. McKENNA: No, Sir; I can give no undertaking.

Teachers' Parchment Certificates.

LORD R. CECIL (Marylebone, E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he will state when the parchment certificates which were promised to be issued to the newly certificated teachers last Easter will be issued to them; and what is the reason for the delay that has taken place.

MR. McKENNA: No parchment certificates were promised to be issued to newly certificated teachers last Easter. The certificates which became due for issue at or about that time were certificates for teachers who had been originally recognised from 1st August, 1905. These certificates have been issued in all cases in which the necessary conditions were satisfied. In the Code for 1907 the Board announced their intention to issue certificates in future on the recognition of a teacher, instead of after an interval of eighteen months, as has hitherto been the practice. I regret that for various reasons, principally the labour involved in the preparation and printing of the large number of certificates required by the new conditions, it has not been possible to bring this change into operation so soon as had been intended, but it is hoped that certificates will be issued shortly to all teachers qualified to receive them.

LORD R. CECIL: The matter is exciting great interest. Cannot the right hon. Gentleman announce some date?

MR. McKENNA: It is in the printers' hands. It is a matter of some difficulty, and I cannot give a definite date.

Secondary Schools.

SIR PHILIP MAGNUS (London University): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education whether secondary schools placed on the grant list will be considered as complying with the Regulations, especially as regards Article 20, Chapter III., for receiving grants on the higher scale under Article 36, Chapter VI., provided they admit, without payment of fee, as part of the required proportion of scholars from public elementary schools, children from State-aided voluntary schools which under the new Education Bill will cease to be classified as public elementary schools.

MR. McKENNA: Yes, Sir.

Dewsbury Education Bequest.

MR. CARLILE (Hertfordshire, St. Albans): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if he will state to what purposes the money left by the late Dr. Hinchliffe, of Dewsbury, for the promotion of higher education in Dewsbury, has been put since the County Council took over the management of education in the West Riding.

MR. McKENNA: The funds in question have been applied under Charity Commission Schemes of 24th August, 1900, amended by a Scheme of 3rd July, 1902, for purposes which may briefly be described as: (1) General maintenance of the Wheelwright Grammar Schools (Boys and Girls), and Technical School in Dewsbury; (2) provision of free places at the Technical School Evening Classes; (3) provision of scholarships and exhibitions tenable at or from the Wheelwright Grammar Schools.

West Riding Schools.

MR. CARLILE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education what is the total number of places provided in the West Riding schools, provided and non-provided; and what was the average attendance in these schools for the years 1904–5, 1905–6, and 1906–7.

MR. McKENNA: If the hon. Member will allow me, I will circulate with the Votes a table giving the information he requires.

MR. CARLILE: When?

MR. McKENNA: To-day.

MR. CARLILE: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education what is the difference in cost for the maintenance of a place for a child in a provided and also in a non-provided school in the West Riding of Yorkshire this year, in comparison with 1906–7, 1905–6, 1904–5, 1903–4.

MR. McKENNA: The financial statements of local education authorities do not show separately the expenditure upon council schools and voluntary schools and it is, therefore, impossible to state the difference in cost between them.

MR. CARLILE: Cannot the right hon. Gentleman give some indication? Will he endeavour to get it from the West Riding authorities?

MR. McKENNA: They are under no obligation to give it to me. I shall be happy to ask for it, but I have no power to insist.

MR. CARLILE: Does the right hon. Gentleman doubt that they will furnish it?

MR. McKENNA: I have no knowledge on the point, I doubt neither one way nor the other.

MR. CARLILE: Will the right hon. Gentleman ask for it.

MR. McKENNA: I have already said I shall be pleased to do so.

Provided School Grant.

LORD R. CECIL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education what, approximately, will be the maximum and minimum grant paid in respect of any provided school apart from grants for special subjects under the Education Bill and the explanatory memorandum.

MR. McKENNA: Owing to the changes which would result from the operation of the Bill, it is not possible to estimate, even approximately, the effect in any area of the limitation of the grant to 75 per cent. of the local authority's expenditure on the elementary education account. But, ignoring altogether this limitation, which is expected to operate in very few areas, the maximum grant per child would be about 62s. and the mimimum about 38s. 6d. These figures are, however, based on the returns for the year 1906–7, and some small modification may be necessary when the figures for the current year are available. The noble Lord will, however, observe that the grant is not a grant in respect of individual schools, but is a grant in aid of the total expenditure of the local education authority on the elementary education account.

LORD R. CECIL asked whether they were to understand that in the case of the voluntary schools there was to be a uniform grant of 47s. per child, but in the council schools the grant might vary from 62s. to 38s. 6d.

MR. McKENNA: The noble Lord has fallen into an error. The grant to the local authorities is not paid in respect of schools. The grant varies in the case of each local authority, partly in accordance with the amount of the total expenditure of the local authority. The noble Lord has correctly stated the amount that is proposed in the Bill in respect of each child in each voluntary school.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe) asked whether the grant would be subject to deductions for fines and other contingent expenses.

MR. McKENNA: The 47s. will be subject to fines, as is the case now with the grant paid to the local authorities.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR (City of London) asked whether 47s. was the grant per child in the case of voluntary schools, while the grant per child in the case of other schools might vary between 62s. and 38s. 6d. Was that an accurate summary of the right hon. Gentleman's statement?

MR. McKENNA: Not quite, Sir. By working out what each local authority will receive, and by dividing that amount by the number of children, we obtain a figure varying between 38s. 6d. and 62s. But the amount of money which the local authorities will receive will not be the amount per child, because, as the right hon. Gentleman will remember, there is the building grant as well.

Teachers and the Education Bill.

MR. BRIDGEMAN (Shropshire, Oswestry): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education if any compensation will be paid to teachers who may lose their employment if the Education Bill becomes law, and who will not, even with an additional year of recorded service, have reached a pensionable age.

MR. McKENNA: No, Sir, but I imagine that the large increase of Parliamentary grant under the Bill will result in an increased demand for efficient teachers. There is nothing in the Bill which will restrict the demand for teachers.

Single School Parishes.

LORD R. CECIL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education when he will be able to lay upon the Table the promised information as to the single-school parishes.

MR. McKENNA: Next week, I hope.

Swansea Education Dispute.

LORD R. CECIL: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Education, whether he has yet received any reply from the Swansea Local Education Authority to the Board's letter of 10th February.

MR. McKENNA: No answer has yet been received other than that to which I referred in reply to the noble Lord on Monday.

LORD R. CECIL: Is not the right hon. Gentleman going to take any further steps to obtain a reply?

MR. McKENNA: After the lapse of a sufficient interval I shall certainly take further steps, but I have no reason to suppose I shall not receive a reply.

LORD R. CECIL: Was not the meeting of the local authority held on Monday or Tuesday last?

MR. McKENNA: I said it was to be held on Tuesday, and it is only Thursday now.

Marble Arch Clock.

MR. ANNAN BRYCE (Inverness Burghs): I beg to ask the First Commissioner of Works whether he is aware that the clock on the Marble Arch lodge gate, lately demolished, has been of especial convenience to the public owing to the paucity of clocks on the Oxford Street-Bayswater Road line of traffic; and whether he will arrange for the erection of a clock with a larger dial, capable of illumination at night, in some prominent position near the site of the old gate lodge.

THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Mr. HARCOURT, Lancashire, Rossendale): I am aware of the convenience to the public, and it is intended to re-erect the clock on the new lodge in a position where I hope that convenience may be maintained. If

I see an opportunity in the future to enable the public to know the time more easily and correctly I shall not fail to take advantage of it.

Royal Philanthropic Society.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, with regard to the transference of the Royal Philanthropic Society to the Royal Liver Friendly Society, whether in the cases of the transfer of engagements and liabilities of the Swansea Royal Friendly Society to the London, Edinburgh, and Glasgow Assurance Company, Limited, of the Royal Oak Friendly Society to another assurance company, and of the case of the Protective Friendly Society to the Victoria Legal Society, any sums of money were paid to the officials of the said societies for compensation for disturbance in office; whether the fact of such payments, if made, was made known to the members of the said societies before the said transfers were authorised; whether there is anything in the Friendly Societies Act prohibiting such compensation being so paid; can any instance be given, or can the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies name any society transferred as a going concern, where there was no payment made for compensation for disturbance or loss of office; whether he is aware that in the case of the transfer of engagements and liabilities of the Swansea Royal Friendly Society to the London, Edinburgh, and Glasgow Assurance Company, Limited, of the Royal Oak Friendly Society to another industrial assurance company, and of the like transfer by the Liverpool Protective Friendly Society to the Victoria Legal Friendly Society sums of money were paid by the transferees by way of compensation to officials for disturbance or loss of employment, and that the assent of the members of the societies so transferred to such compensation being paid was apparently not deemed necessary under the Friendly Societies Act by the Chief Registrar, before giving his official sanction to such transfers; and will he explain why more stringent regulations should be enforced in regard to a similar transfer by the Royal Philanthropic Friendly Society to the Royal Liver Friendly Society.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. RUNCIMAN, Dewsbury): In cases of transfer of engagements by one society to another the Chief Registrar is not necessarily informed, and in the instances quoted was not informed, so far as can be ascertained, of the terms of the transfer, which are a matter of arrangement between the societies concerned. It is not the fact that more stringent regulations have been enforced in the present case than were enforced in other similar cases. In every case the requirements of the Friendly Societies Act, 1896, have to be complied with, which provide, among other things, that the assent of five-sixths in value of the members shall be obtained. In the present instance opposition has arisen among the members to the transfer on the ground partly of the compensation to be paid to the officers of the transferring society, and on this account the Chief Registrar has felt it his duty to satisfy himself that the necessary assents have been given with full knowledge of the transaction. There is nothing in the Act to prohibit compensation being paid to officials for disturbance in office.

Chicago Beef Trust.

MR. MORTON (Sutherland): I beg to ask the hon. Member for South Somerset, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he will lay upon the Table a copy of the correspondence which passed in 1903 between the Board of Agriculture and Mr. Herbert Swift, Mr. Ogden Armour, and other representatives of the Chicago meat packers, commonly known as the Beef Trust.

MR. J. A. PEASE (for Sir E. STRACHEY): The Board have no knowledge of the correspondence to which my hon. friend refers.

"The Times" and the Correspondence between the German Emperor and Lord Tweedmouth.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask Mr. Attorney-General whether, having regard to the fact that the spreading of false news for the purpose of making discord or concerning very great officials of the realm is a misdemeanour punishable by common law or under certain statutes with fines and imprisonment, he has considered the advisability of putting the Public Prosecutor in motion against *The Times* newspaper, with reference to the statements in that newspaper concerning the correspondence between the German Emperor and Lord Tweedmouth.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir SAMUEL EVANS, Glamorganshire, Mid.): My hon. and learned friend has asked me to reply to this Question, and I propose to give it in his own words: "I think any ground of complaint against *The Times* newspaper in relation to the statement mentioned by the hon. Member may well be left to the judgment of the public, and I do not think it would be advisable to make the statement referred to the subject of legal proceedings."

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: May I ask the hon. and learned Gentleman whether we may take it for granted that the law officers do not regard *The Times* as of sufficient political importance?

SIR SAMUEL EVANS: That is a question which has not come before the law officers.

Nith Fishery.

MR. GULLAND (Dumfries Burghs): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, if he can now say whether he will accede to the petition from the Nith Fishery Board to extend for a fortnight the fishing in the Nith.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SINCLAIR, Forfarshire): The Nith is already one of the latest in respect of the date of the termination of rod-fishing, and I am advised that to extend the rod-fishing to 30th November would not be in the best interests of the river.

MR. GULLAND: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that a very largely signed petition, endorsed by the Fishery Board has been sent in, and that there has been no expression of opinion against it?

MR. SINCLAIR: I was aware of that. But after investigation into the circumstances my experts came to the conclusion I have announced.

Whaling Stations on the Scottish Coast.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary for Scotland, in view of the fact that the establishment of a whaling station on the coast of Ireland was recently refused on account of the injury inflicted by whaling on the herring fishing, will he state why he allows whaling to be prosecuted at stations on the West Coast of Scotland; and will he reconsider his decision in regard to the appeal of the Crofters and Cottars Association, Carloway, Island of Lewis, on this question.

MR. SINCLAIR: The general considerations bearing upon the subject were before Parliament last session when the Whale Fisheries (Scotland) Act was passed into law. It is hoped that the Act will be found to safeguard all interests; but time and experience of its working are required before any amendment can be properly considered.

MR. WEIR: Will the right hon. Gentleman answer the last part of my Question?

MR. SINCLAIR: Parliament, in the Act it passed last session, laid down the conditions under which the industry shall be carried on.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): Would it be of any service to break the right hon. Gentleman's windows?

Flooding of the Valley of the Inny.

MR. VINCENT KENNEDY (Cavan, W.): I beg to ask the Vice-President of the Department of Agriculture (Ireland), if he can say whether the Conservators of Fisheries in Limerick are taking steps to erect a grating in the mill race at Pollereagh, in the valley of the Inny; and, in view of the fact that this obstruction would cause serious flooding and consequent damage to crop land in the district affected, and that the people of the district at a large meeting protested against the proposal, alleging that their houses would be flooded, will he make inquiries with a view to securing the abandonment of the proposal to erect this grating.

I beg also to ask Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland if he can say whether the Commissioners of Fisheries are about having a strong grating erected in the passage of the Inny River; will this grating interfere with the free flow of the river, and are there any mill races in this river; and, in view of the anxiety of the people who live along the valley of the Inny River lest the proposed erection may cause serious flooding and damage to their property, will he make representations to the Commissioners with a view to safeguarding their interests.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. CHERRY, Liverpool, Exchange): My hon. friend has asked me to reply to this Question, and the answer includes a reply to the next Question which the hon. Member has addressed to myself. The Limerick Board of Conservators are not taking steps to erect a grating in the mill race referred to. They have, however, taken proceedings against the owner of a mill at Pollereagh to compel him to comply with the statute law which requires the erection of gratings at mill races for the protection of salmon. The Department possess the power to exempt, in whole, or in part, owners or occupiers of mills from the necessity to erect such gratings. If any person considers he is entitled to such an exemption he should make application to the Department, and the case will be investigated. The owner of the mill referred to has not made such an application to the Department. As regards the allegation that flooding may be caused, the Department have requested the local Board of Conservators to suspend proceedings pending further inquiry by the Department.

Bevan Estate, Limerick.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland if he is aware that the owner of the Bevan estate at South Camas, Bruff, County Limerick, and his agent, or rather the Receiver under the Court of Chancery, Mr. Poe Hosford, of Limerick, have arranged with the tenants for the sale of the lands to them; can he say whether an inspector from the Estates Commissioners, a Mr. Coughlan, visited James Mulcahy and James Butler, who claim to be evicted tenants on that estate, in December, 1906, and, if so, with what result; is he aware that the parents of Mulcahy and Butler offered for the lands a higher rent than the planter, John Van Bevan, who is not a *bona fide* farmer; and will the Estates Commissioners use their endeavours to have Mulcahy and Butler reinstated and included in the sale.

MR. CHERRY: The Estates Commissioners have inquired into the claims of the two evicted tenants mentioned in the Question, and have issued a request to the Land Judge, under Section 7 of the Act of 1903, with a view to making an offer for the purchase of the estate. In the event of the Commissioners acquiring the property the claims of both applicants will be considered. The Commissioners have no knowledge of the facts alleged in the Question.

Irish School Teachers' Salaries.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I desire to ask the Secretary to the Treasury a Question of which I have given him private notice, which is of an urgent character, in order to prevent misapprehension arising in a matter which has excited great public interest in Ireland. I notice that in the Irish Education Estimate for the year, published this morning, there is an item down of an increase of £26,000 in respect of principals, assistants, and so forth in Irish national and model schools. Is that not merely a normal increase and entry, is there no provision in the Estimates for the substantial increase in the salaries of teachers in national schools which has been more than once promised during the last year.

MR. RUNCIMAN: Yes, Sir, the hon. Member is quite right in assuming that the £26,000 is the normal increase for the year. The exact figures for the increase in the teachers' salaries were not agreed upon at the time we had to go to press with the Estimates. We shall provide for a very substantial increase, very much more than the £26,000 referred to, and we shall take measures during the session, by a Supplementary Estimate or otherwise, to provide funds for the purpose.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Then I understand you will introduce a Supplementary Estimate. May I ask the hon. Gentleman will he introduce it at an early portion of the session in order to make sure that the increment in the salaries will take effect this year.

Mr. RUNCIMAN: If a Supplementary Estimate is necessary we will bring it in early, as we are anxious that the increase shall take effect as soon as possible.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: Is it possible to make this increase without an Estimate passed by this House?

Mr. RUNCIMAN: The substantial increase will be made, but I cannot tell the hon. Gentleman right off the method. He may rest assured that we do intend that the increase shall take place at the earliest possible moment.

Mr. JOHN REDMOND: In a fortnight's time I shall ask the hon. Gentleman a Question as to the amount.

THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL gave notice of a Motion: "That the House of Peers in Parliament is useless, dangerous, and ought to be abolished."

Lord R. CECIL: Does the Chancellor of the Exchequer propose to give a day for the discussion of this Motion?

Mr. ASQUITH: I want notice of that Question.

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is the Chancellor of the Exchequer not satisfied that nine-tenths of the House approve this Motion?

[No Answer was returned.]

Mr. SWIFT MACNEILL: Of course the right hon. Gentleman is.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Mr A. J. BALFOUR asked as to the course of business next week, and when the Second Reading debates were likely to come on?

Mr. ASQUITH: I should prefer not to answer the last Question yet. On Monday the Civil Service Vote on Account in Committee, and afterwards the House will go into Committee of Ways and Means; on Tuesday, Report of the Supplementary and other Votes; on Wednesday, the Report of the Vote on Account; and on Thursday, Report of all remaining Votes and the introduction of the Consolidated Fund Bill and Report of Ways and Means.

Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: In what order will the Report of Supply be taken on Tuesday?

Mr. ASQUITH: According to the days in which the Resolutions were passed in Committee.

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITEES).

Sir William Brampton Gurdon reported from the Committee of Selection; That they had discharged the following Member from Standing Committee A: Mr. Charles Craig; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Thomas Lorimer Corbett.

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported from the Committee: That they had added to Standing Committee A the following Thirteen Members (in respect of the Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill): Mr. John Wilson (Durham), Mr. Glover, Mr. Guy Wilson, Sir Edwin Cornwall, Mr. Newnes, Mr. McKinnon Wood, Mr. Wiles, Mr. Carr-Gomm, Mr. Trevelyan, Mr. Guinness, Viscount Morpeth, Sir William Bull, and Mr. Goulding.

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported from the Committee: That they had discharged the following Members from Standing Committee A (in respect of the Education (Local Authorities) Bill): Mr. Secretary Gladstone and Mr. Herbert Samuel; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. McKenna and Mr. Lough.

Sir William Brampton Gurdon further reported from the Committee: That they had added to Standing Committee A the following Thirteen Members (in respect of the Education (Local Authorities) Bill): Mr. Walker, Mr. Wedgwood, Mr. Adkins, Mr. Gordon Harvey, Mr. Massie, Mr. Verney, Mr. Winfrey, Mr. Walsh, Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Staveley-Hill, Sir Francis Powell, Viscount Morpeth, and Sir Philip Magnus.

Sir WILLIAM BRAMPTON GURDON further reported from the Committee: That they had added to Standing Committee A the following Thirteen Members (in respect of the Incest Bill): Colonel Lockwood, Sir John Kennaway, Colonel Sandys, Colonel Ward, Mr. Crossley, Mr. Maclean, Mr. George Hardy, Mr. Henry Wilson, Mr. Weir, Mr. Hedges, Mr. Robert Pearce, Mr. John Wilson, and Mr. Clynes.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

NEW BILLS.

PAROCHIAL MEDICAL OFFICERS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the tenure of office of Parochial Medical Officers in Scotland, presented by Mr. Cathcart Wason; supported by Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Leicester Harmsworth, Sir John Dewar, Mr. Crombie, Mr. Gulland, Sir Henry Craik, Viscount Dalrymple, Major Anstruther-Gray, Mr. Younger, Mr. Cross, and Mr. Mitchell-Thomson; to be read a second time upon Thursday, 30th April, and to be printed. [Bill 153.]

EXPORTATION OF HORSES BILL.

"To regulate the Exportation of Horses, and to prevent cruelty in connection therewith," presented by Sir Howard Vincent; supported by Sir Brampton Gurdon, Sir Frederick Banbury and Mr. Nield; to be read a second time upon Wednesday, 25th March, and to be printed. [Bill 154.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Proceedings on the Business of Supply, if under discussion when the Business is postponed this day, be resumed and proceeded with, though opposed, after the interruption of Business, notwithstanding anything in Standing Order No. 15."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

The House divided:—Ayes, 277; Noes, 79. (Division List No. 39.)

AYES.

Abraham, William (Cork, N.E.)
Abraham, William (Rhondda)
Acland, Francis Dyke
Adkins, W. Ryland D.
Agnew, George William
Alden, Percy
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hn. Herbert Henry
Astbury, John Meir
Atherley-Jones, L.
Baring, Godfrey (Isle of Wight)
Beale, W. P.
Bellairs, Carlyon
Benn, W. (T'w'r Hamlets, S. Geo.
Bennett, E. N.
Bethell, Sir J. H. (Essex, Romf'rd
Bethell, T. R. (Essex, Maldon)
Birrell, Rt. Hon. Augustine
Boland, John
Boulton, A. C. F.
Bowerman, C. W.
Brace, William
Bramsdon, T. A.
Branch, James
Brigg, John
Brocklehurst, W. B.
Brunner, J. F. L. (Lancs., Leigh)
Bryce, J. Annan
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burke, E. Haviland-
Byles, William Pollard
Carr-Gomm, H. W.
Causton, Rt. Hn. Richard Knight
Cawley, Sir Frederick
Channing, Sir Francis Allston
Cherry, Rt. Hon. R. R.
Churchill, Rt. Hon. Winston S.
Clancy, John Joseph
Cleland, J. W.
Clough, William
Clynes, J. R.
Cobbold, Felix Thornley
Condon, Thomas Joseph
Cooper, G. J.
Corbett, C H (Sussex, E Grinst'd)
Cox, Harold
Crean, Eugene
Crooks, William
Crosfield, A. H.
Crossley, William J.
Cullinan, J.
Curran, Peter Francis
Davies, David (Montgomery Co.
Davies, M. Vaughan- (Cardigan
Davies, Timothy (Fulham)
Delany, William
Dewar, Sir J. A. (Inverness-sh.)
Dickinson, W. H. (St. Pancras, N.
Dickson-Poynder, Sir John P.
Donelan, Captain A.
Duckworth, James
Duffy, William J.
Duncan, C. (Barrow-in-Furness
Dunn, A. Edward (Camborne)
Dunne, Major E. Martin (Walsall
Edwards, Enoch (Hanley)
Elibank, Master of
Ellis, Rt. Hon. John Edward
Erskine, David C.
Esslemont, George Birnie
Evans, Sir Samuel T.
Everett, R. Lacey
Fenwick, Charles
Ferens, T. R.
Ffrench, Peter
Findlay, Alexander
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, John Michael F.
Fullerton, Hugh
Furness, Sir Christopher
Gibb, James (Harrow)
Gill, A. H.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Glendinning, R. G.
Goddard, Sir Daniel Ford
Gooch, George Peabody
Greenwood, G. (Peterborough)

Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gulland, John W.
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hall, Frederick
Halpin, J.
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Lewis
Harrington, Timothy
Hart-Davies, T.
Harvey,W.E.(Derbyshire, N.E.
Haworth, Arthur A.
Hayden, John Patrick
Hazel, Dr. A. E.
Hazelton, Richard
Hedges, A. Paget
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (Durham)
Herbert,Col.Sir Ivor (Mon.,S.)
Herbert, T. Arnold (Wycombe)
Higham, John Sharp
Hobart, Sir Robert
Hogan, Michael
Holland, Sir William Henry
Holt, Richard Durning
Hope,W.Bateman(Somerset,N.
Horniman, Emslie John
Howard, Hon. Geoffrey
Hudson, Walter
Hutton, Alfred Eddison
Hyde, Clarendon
Illingworth, Percy H.
Jackson, R. S
Jacoby, Sir James Alfred
Jardine, Sir J.
Johnson, John (Gateshead)
Johnson, W. (Nuneaton)
Kavanagh, Walter M.
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kekewich, Sir George
Kelley, George D.
Kennedy, Vincent Paul
Kettle, Thomas Michael
Kilbride, Denis
King, Alfred John (Knutsford)
Laidlaw, Robert
Lamb, Edmund G.(Leominster
Lamb, Ernest H. (Rochester)
Lambert, George
Lamont, Norman
Lardner, James Carrige Rushe
Law, Hugh A. (Donegal, W.)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Lea,Hugh Cecil(St. Pancras, E.
Leese,Sir Joseph F.(Accrington
Lehmann, R. C.
Lever,A.Levy(Essex, Harwich)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Lupton, Arnold
Luttrell, Hugh Fownes
Lyell, Charles Henry
Macdonald, J. R. (Leicester)
Macdonald,J.M.(Falkirk B'ghs.
Mackarness, Frederic C.
MacNeill, John Gordon Swift
Macpherson, J. T.
MacVeagh,Jeremiah(Down, S.)
MacVeigh,Charles(Donegal, E.)
M'Callum, John M.
M'Crae, George
M'Hugh, Patrick A.
M'Kenna, Rt. Hon. Reginald
M'Laren, Sir C. B. (Leicester)
M'Micking, Major G.
Maddison, Frederick
Mallet, Charles E.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Marks,G.Croydon (Launceston)
Marnham, F. J.
Mason, A. E. W. (Coventry)
Massie, J.
Masterman, C. F. G.
Meagher, Michael
Meehan,Francis E.(Leitrim,N.)
Menzies, Walter
Middlebrook, William
Montagu, E. S.
Montgomery, H. G.
Mooney, J. J.
Morgan, J. Lloyd (Carmarthen)
Morley, Rt. Hon. John
Morse, L. L.
Murray, James
Myer, Horatio
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Napier, T. B.
Nicholls, George
Nicholson,Charles N(Doncast'r
Nolan, Joseph
Norton, Capt. Cecil William
Nuttall, Harry
O'Brien,Kendal(Tipperary Mid
O'Brien, Patrick (Kilkenny)
O'Brien, William (Cork)
O'Donnell, C. J. (Walworth)
O'Grady, J.
O'Kelly,James(Roscommon,N
O'Malley, William
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
O'Shee, James John
Parker, James (Halifax)
Partington, Oswald
Pearce, Robert (Staffs, Leek)
Pearce, William (Limehouse)
Philipps, Owen C. (Pembroke)
Pickersgill, Edward Hare
Pirie, Duncan V.
Power, Patrick Joseph
Price, C. E. (Edinb'gh,Central)
Priestley,W.E.B.(Bradford, E.)
Raphael, Herbert H.
Rea, Russell (Gloucester)
Rea, Walter Russell (Scarboro'
Redmond, John E. (Waterford)
Redmond, William (Clare)
Rees, J. D.
Rendall, Athelstan
Richards,Thomas (W.Monm'th
Richards,T. F. (Wolverh'mpt'n
Richardson, A.
Roberts, Charles H. (Lincoln)
Roberts, G. H. (Norwich)
Robertson, Rt. Hn. E. (Dundee
Robertson,Sir G.Scott(Bradf'rd
Robinson, S.
Roche, John (Galway, East)
Rogers, F. E. Newman
Runciman, Walter
Rutherford, V. H. (Brentford)
Samuel, Herbert L. (Cleveland)
Scarisbrick, T. T. L.
Seely, Colonel
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Charles Edw. (Stafford)
Sheehy, David
Sinclair, Rt. Hon. John
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Stanley, Albert (Staffs, N.W.)
Stanley,Hn. A. Lyulph (Chesh.
Stewart, Halley (Greenock)
Straus, B. S. (Mile End)
Strauss, E. A. (Abingdon)
Summerbell, T.
Taylor, John W. (Durham)
Taylor, Theodore C. (Radcliffe)
Tennant, H. J. (Berwickshire)
Thomas,Abel (Carmarthen, E.)
Thomas,David Alfred(Merthyr
Thomasson, Franklin
Thompson,J.W.H(Somerset, E
Tomkinson, James
Torrance, Sir A. M.
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wadsworth, J.
Waldron, Laurence Ambrose
Walsh, Stephen
Walters, John Tudor
Walton, Joseph
Wardle, George J.
Waring, Walter
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason,Rt.Hn.E.(Clackmannan
Wason,John Cathcart (Orkney)
Weir, James Galloway
Whitbread, Howard
White, J. D. (Dumbartonshire)
Whitehead, Rowland
Whitley, John Henry (Halifax)
Whittaker, Sir Thomas Palmer
Wiles, Thomas
Williams, J. (Glamorgan)
Williams, Osmond (Merioneth)
Wilson, Hon. G. G. (Hull, W.)
Wilson, John (Durham, Mid)
Wilson, P. W. (St. Pancras, S.)
Wodehouse, Lord
Wood, T. M'Kinnon

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Whiteley and Mr. J. A. Pease.

NOES.

Arnold-Forster,Rt.Hn.Hugh O
Aubrey-Fletcher,Rt.Hn. Sir H.
Balcarres, Lord
Baldwin, Stanley
Balfour,Rt.Hn.A.J.(City Lond.
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Baring,Capt.Hn.G (Winchester
Beach,Hn.Michael Hugh Hicks
Beckett, Hon. Gervase
Bridgeman, W. Clive
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M.

Carlile, E. Hildred
Cavendish, Rt. Hn. Victor C. W.
Cecil, Evelyn (Aston Manor)
Cecil, Lord John P. Joicey
Cecil, Lord R. (Marylebone, E.
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A. (Worc.
Chaplin, Rt Hon. Henry
Clark, George Smith (Belfast, N.
Clive, Percy Archer
Collings, Rt. Hn. J (Birmingh'm)
Corbett, T. L. (Down, North)
Courthope, G. Loyd
Craig, Charles Curtis (Antrim, S.
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Doughty, Sir George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duncan, Robert (Lanark, Govan
Faber, George Denison (York)
Fell, Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, G. A. (Bristol, West)
Glover, Thomas
Gordon, J.
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Guinness, Walter Edward
Haddock, George B.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Helmsley, Viscount
Hunt, Rowland
Jenkins, J.
Jowett, F. W.
Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hn. Col. W.
Kimber, Sir Henry
Law, Andrew Bonar (Dulwich)
Lee, Arthur H. (Hants, Fareham
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (Dublin, S.
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. Alfred
M'Calmont, Colonel James
Magnus, Sir Philip
Mason, James F. (Windsor)
Mildmay, Francis Bingham
Moore, William
Morpeth, Viscount
Nicholson, Wm. G. (Petersfield)
Nield, Herbert
Parker, Sir Gilbert (Gravesend)
Pease, Herbert Pike (Darlington
Randles, Sir John Scurrah
Ratcliff, Major R. F.
Rawlinson, John Frederick Peel
Roberts, S. (Sheffield, Ecclesall)
Ronaldshay, Earl of
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seddon, J.
Smith, Abel H. (Hertford, East)
Talbot, Lord E. (Chichester)
Thomson, W. Mitchell- (Lanark)
Thornton, Percy M.
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. Howard
Wilson, A. Stanley (York, E.R.)
Wilson, W. T. (Westhoughton)
Winterton, Earl
Wolff, Gustav Wilhelm
Wyndham, Rt Hon. George
Younger, George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Viscount Valentia

SUPPLY [SECOND ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. EMMOTT (Oldham) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1908–9.

1. Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,422,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1909."

MR. STANLEY WILSON (Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness) said he had no intention of detaining the Committee at any great length, but there were one or two points on which he would like to raise the general question of the Army, as he understood it had been arranged that a general discussion should take place on this Vote. They all knew the great enthusiasm of the right hon. Gentleman for his scheme, and he had given them in that House many most admirable speeches. But when the right hon. Gentleman began to think aloud—and there were occasions when he thought aloud at considerable length—he was perfectly confident that hon. Members were always delighted to listen to him. They would give him the greatest credit for the work he had done during the recess, when he addressed meeting after meeting at very great length in expounding the scheme which he had brought before the country. He had told the country in those speeches that his scheme would have the effect of strengthening the Army. If to reduce was to strengthen then he must agree with him that the Army was going to be strengthened, but if they were to carry that to the *reductio ad absurdum* and to a final conclusion, then when the country had no Army at all it would be in the strongest position. Of course, the right hon. Gentleman did not mean that at all. He meant that he was strengthening the Army in the way of greater efficiency. He would like to assure the right hon. Gentleman that during the recess he had done his utmost to give him his humble assistance in endeavouring to persuade all members of the Volunteers and Yeomanry to re-engage, and to give the right hon. Gentleman's scheme a fair and proper trial. He had told them that they could be engaged for one year, and that they would, in his opinion, find that there would be very little alteration brought about by the right hon. Gentleman's scheme. He had heard a great deal of talk as to what was going to be the effect of the scheme. They knew that the Government had told the country, when they came into office, that they had found a Napoleon who was going to succeed where so many others had failed in the past. But as a matter of fact, as the right hon. Gentleman's scheme gradually matured, they began to realise, and he believed the country began to realise, that less and less was going to be done. As far as he could see the ultimate result of the scheme would be that it would have brought in a new name, the "Territorial Army," and the right hon. Gentleman would have reduced the Army by a very large number of men. Except with regard to a certain number of details which, in his view, it was entirely unnecessary to have brought forward in that large and important Bill of last session, he was afraid they would find that very little had been done. The Secretary for War told them last year that his scheme was of an economical nature. They were all aware that the Government got into office on the pledge to the electors that they were going to be a Government of economy; and the Secretary for War had said that his scheme would mean a reduction of Army Estimates. He ventured to say that in the course of the past week they had seen that idea, at any rate, exploded. The Committee must realise that this idea of the right hon. Gentleman was not going to be carried out. It was unquestionable, from what the right hon. Gentleman had himself said, that if his scheme was to be carried out properly and in its entirety, it would lead, not to a reduction of the Army Estimates, but to a considerable increase of expenditure. When he first introduced these County Associations the right hon. Gentleman was of opinion that through them he would be able to raise considerable sums which would be used for carrying on the Yeomanry and Volunteers in their particular districts. He ventured to think that the right hon. Gentleman was not going to accomplish that object with the County Associations. The country districts were not going to supply these funds for which the right hon. Gentleman had hoped. It was absolute common sense that the people in the country districts were not going to subscribe funds to the County Associations in order to carry out work which should be done by the National Exchequer itself. A week ago the Secretary for War told them that he had a considerable difficulty to face, and that was the putting together of an efficient reserve of officers. Everybody must acknowledge that this was a most important point, and it was absolutely essential that there should be a large and efficient Reserve. The right hon. Gentleman had evolved a wonderful new idea to carry out this much-desired object. He was going, he said, to train boys in the cadet corps of public schools, and afterwards train them as men of the Volunteer corps of their universities. After that they would be sent through a month's course of training at some Army school or in some regiment, and they would be then efficient and good enough to take the position of captain in the Army Reserve. Would such a training as that possibly bring forward an efficient Reserve of Officers such as everybody so much desired to see brought about? They maintained that it was absolutely essential that that Reserve of Officers should have full knowledge of the duties which they would have to take up. They thought that those officers should be ready at any moment to take their place in the ranks which they held in the Reserve, and he thought that nobody who had studied this question could possibly believe that, by the training which the right hon. Gentleman himself suggested, such a Reserve as was desired could be established. He should like to refer for a moment to a branch of the service in which he had the honour to hold a commission, and that was the Yeomanry. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had told them very little with regard to the Yeomanry. He had told them he had been unable to raise the fourteen squadrons which should be ready to go abroad if called upon, but anybody who knew anything with regard to the Yeomanry would have been able to tell him that that part of his scheme was impossible. They in the Yeomanry wished to know what exactly their position was; he did not think there were any Yeomanry officers who quite realised where they were. The right hon. Gentleman had told them last year that there were going to be considerable alterations made and that it was the intention to train the

Territorial Army by combined training. All officers in the Volunteers and Yeomanry welcomed that statement, believing it was bound to lead to the greater efficiency of all arms. But they no longer heard anything with regard to these combined trainings, and he would like to know whether that was one of the ideas that the Secretary of State had abandoned, and, if so, why he had abandoned it. He understood that the right hon. Gentleman had laid it down that leave for training would not be granted to any member of the Yeomanry, unless he applied to the General Officer Commanding the district, who, it appeared, would have to go to the commanding officer and then to the squadron leader to ascertain whether the man ought to be granted leave. Surely the present system had worked well, by which the man asked permission from his squadron leader, who, after all, knew more about the training of his particular men and whether the application was one that ought to be granted. Then the squadron leader could make the application to his own commanding officer. He had very few applications in his squadron for leave, perhaps one or two during training, and these had only been made in cases which were undesirable.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. HALDANE, Haddington): It was right and important that we should lay down clearly that the General Officer Commanding has general control over these matters. He will give general instructions, and subject to those instructions things will go on in the future as in the past.

MR. STANLEY WILSON said he was exceedingly glad to get that, but he rather thought there had been a false impression with regard to what had been said previously. The right hon. Gentleman had issued a leaflet, a great deal of which was admirable, but on the first page he read—

> "No non-commissioned officer or man who has not signed his attestation paper will be permitted to attend the annual training."

He thought that was rather a mistake. If a man was already enrolled for a period of service in the Yeomanry he could not see what was the object of signing the attestation paper, which enlisted him under absolutely dissimilar conditions from the present. He thought it advisable that that particular point should be reconsidered. He welcomed the fact that the right hon. Gentleman had not interfered very greatly with the existing constitution of the Yeomanry, because everybody who had had any connection with the Yeomanry, must acknowledge that since its reconstitution it had worked extremely well. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman should have reduced the pay of the Yeomanry, and it was a pity that he had not laid down the exact amount a man was going to receive, because it took a very considerable amount of consideration of the various allowances that were made before a man could quite realise what pay he was going to receive. There was since the issue of the leaflet a very great deal of unrest amongst the Yeomanry, and it would be well if some strong statement came from the Secretary of State as to the exact position they would serve in, and the exact amount of pay they would receive. With regard to Volunteers, he would like to ask whether it was the right hon. Gentleman's intention to do away with the honorary rank of lance-corporal. He was glad to see the right hon. Gentleman shook his head, and he concluded that they were to be allowed to continue. It would have been a mistake to do away with the rank. He very much regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not seen his way to grant the separation allowance to the rank and file. He had had in the past few days letters from one or two Volunteer officers who had asked him to raise the question. They told him that their best men, the backbone of their battalions, were the married men, and that if they did not get the allowance they would inevitably be lost to their country's service, which would be the greatest pity for the sake of the Volunteers and of the country. He was afraid the right hon. Gentleman had found out that his scheme was going to cost him a very great deal more than he had expected, and that it was from an idea of economy that he had not seen his way to grant this allowance to the rank and file. He was extremely pleased that the right hon. Gentleman had seen his way to withdrawing that unfortunate attestation paper. It really seemed that under their new Napoleon at the War Office very great blunders could be committed. The new attestation paper he was sorry to see included the same penalties although they were not put quite as prominently before the eyes of the men who read it as in the original. Still, the man came under Section 99 of the Army Act, which involved the possible consequence of two or three months hard labour, and he did not think that that would add to the popularity of the scheme. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would see his way to introduce some Amendment into the Army Act.

MR. HALDANE: The hon. and gallant Member would not wish anybody who wilfully gave a false answer to be exempt from severe punishment? The Volunteers would not ask for that.

MR. STANLEY WILSON agreed to it on a different point, but he did not quite like the three months hard labour, and their coming under Section 99. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman had considered the question of granting decorations to the Territorial Army, and that they would be granted as they had been in the past to the Volunteers and Yeomanry. He had received a letter from a Volunteer who would next June, under ordinary circumstances, be qualified for the decoration, and would feel it a hardship if he was deprived of the honour which he had looked forward to. With regard to the new Field Artillery of the Territorial Army, he was extremely sceptical as to whether that portion of the scheme could possibly prove a success. He would like to ask how it was intended to supply the necessary number of horses. Considerable difficulty had been experienced in his own district in getting fit and proper horses for the Yeomanry, and under the new scheme a large additional number would be required. Then how was it intended to supply the drivers? He was informed by an artillery officer that it took two years of continual training before a man could become an efficient driver. Was it contemplated that the Volunteer Field Artillery were going to be trained in such a manner as that? His own opinion was that this scheme was not going to be that very great revolution that they had expected or feared, and that it would prove a great deal more expensive than the right hon. Gentleman ever contemplated. He would find that beyond reducing the Army largely in its numbers he would accomplish very little else. He sincerely trusted that his somewhat gloomy forebodings would prove to be wrong.

*SIR IVOR HERBERT (Monmouthshire, S.) said the concluding words of the hon. Member who had just sat down led him to think that he did not look upon the scheme launched last year as a revolution. Personally he preferred the smooth force of evolution to the more drastic one of revolution, and he looked to the Secretary of State for War to make the way easier, thus facilitating the efforts being made by persons all over the country and by a very large number of the hon. Members of this House in connection with the various County Associations who were anxious to make the scheme a success. In rising to move the reduction which stood in his name, he did not wish to divert the course of the debate from the very many useful points which had been raised by the hon. Member who had just sat down, but there was a duty incumbent upon him in regard to his own particular district, and to the Principality of which he was proud to be a Member, of bringing forward what was felt to be a very serious grievance. He was not going to put forward any exaggerated claim on behalf of Welsh nationalism, but the grievance of which he complained arose from their peculiar geographical position, a grievance which was felt in a different degree and manner by those in various parts of the kingdom. What he felt—and he was stating the Welsh view purely, and probably other hon. Members would apply what he was going to say to the circumstances of their own district—was that they had not been encouraged to come into the general scheme of the military administration of the country. The Principality had been treated as though it were a fortuitous aggregation of English counties. What was the effect of that? By ignoring geographical, racial, lingual and other considerations, which went to make up a distinct nationality, they had shut out from the service of His Majesty very many valuable elements which otherwise would contribute greatly to its strength. They were encouraged last year by some of the words of his right hon. friend in the very interesting and able Circular which he caused to be issued, with regard to his own scheme recently adopted by Parliament—

> "Local sentiment and susceptibilities can be better provided for by a system which appeals to local patriotism than is possible in a system of centralised control."

Those words and other utterances which the right hon. Gentleman made in numerous speeches were hailed with a great feeling of hope everywhere throughout the country, but nowhere more strongly than in Wales. They felt then that there was going to be a chance for them; that they had got somebody at the War Office who really understood the feelings of the Welsh people, and so they approached the right hon. Gentleman and asked him for that which he proposed to ask for again to-day; namely, that he should consider the advisability of making the Principality—that is, the geographical entity consisting of the thirteen counties of Wales—into a distinct administrative military district. He said "district" because he wanted to avoid the confusion which might otherwise arise from that unusual use of the word "command," which had been adopted in official quarters. A command he understood to be one of those larger divisions which had been made in the area of the Kingdom, and a district he understood to be a lesser area over which jurisdiction was exercised by an inferior officer. Therefore they did not come forward asking for a "command" with all the great expense and all the surroundings and glamour which attached to it; they were not asking that such a command should be set up in their little country, but merely that Wales should be made a distinct administrative district within the area of one of those greater commands. It might facilitate the Committee in understanding the scope of the suggestions they were making if he recalled for a moment what was the administrative scheme which existed at present in the United Kingdom. Under a special Army Order, issued about three years ago, in the early part of 1905, the United Kingdom was divided into certain commands. It was then understood that this term "command" was adopted to express what had hitherto been known as a district. There were seven commands: Scotland and Ireland had one command each and the rest of the United Kingdom was divided up into four large territorial areas, the Northern, the Southern, the Eastern, and the Western. And then there were two exceptional commands, one at Aldershot for a very small area, but a very important one in its *personnel*, and the other was the London military district, which was an administrative district within the larger area of the Eastern command. It was an independent command, but he thought he was correct in saying that it was a district within and subject to the control to a certain extent of the Eastern commander. Although that arrangement was only made three years ago it had already been subjected to some very large modifications. There remained, however, seven commands and one military district. The only clear principle that seemed to emerge from a consideration of the distribution which had been made of the area of the United Kingdom was that the national principle had been applied in the first instance in the arrangement of those commands. Ireland was made a separate command, Scotland was a separate command and the rest of the kingdom had by some extraordinary ignorance on the part of the General Staff been regarded entirely as England. He denied that as a geographical fact, and he claimed that there was a neighbouring country named Wales, which although its area was less, it was certainly not less in importance than England in the estimation of its inhabitants. He claimed that some consideration should be given to the very marked characteristics which that country possessed. Having been encouraged by the right hon. Gentleman last year they approached him and asked him to make this little concession to Wales. Of course, he was very sympathetic, he always was sympathetic, and he hoped he was going to be sympathetic to-day. The right hon. Gentleman told him that what they asked for was not in his power to give, but he was prepared to give them a great deal, and something which they never thought of, namely, a whole division to themselves. At the time that promise was made he (Sir Ivor Herbert) had his doubts as to its feasibility, but he thought it prudent to hold his tongue, and the sequel had confirmed those suspicions. It was impossible to have a whole Welsh division, because they were only a humble people, and could not possibly raise the number of men to make up a whole division. Consequently, the scheme sketched out by the right hon. Gentleman was not practicable, and it was now suggested that Wales should invade the neighbouring districts, and Wales had been requested to annex the county of Shropshire, which claimed the right hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite, and Cheshire, which claimed the Member for Dover. Of course, they were ready to welcome those right hon. Gentlemen, more particularly if they would address them in Welsh. At the same time he quite recognised that this arrangement was inflicting upon the invaded districts the very injury from which Wales desired to escape, namely, an interference with local patriotism. If Shropshire was to be brought into Wales, naturally all good Salopians would say that they were not Welshmen, and they did not wish to have their local patriotism interfered with. He did not wish to put forward any claim that would in any way interfere or clash with the local feeling in any English district. What he complained of himself was the interference with local patriotism, which was the essence, in his opinion, of the whole of this scheme. It was in order to enlist that feeling which was very strong in Wales that he said: Set up Wales as one administrative district. Let them have a general officer commanding. He need not be a lieutenant-general; a major-general would do as well, or even they might put up with a brigadier-general. If they had one who would be able to assist the local Associations, who would make himself acquainted with the different conditions which existed in Wales, he was sure that would assist greatly in making this scheme workable. There was a point he would make on this, which was after all the *raison d'etre* for his giving notice of Motion to reduce the Vote. He would suggest that it would possibly lead to the four commands being reduced to three, and the formation of one smaller district. He did not wish to press the point, but it was a fact that for the staff of one of these large commands the annual cost to the country was £10,000, and he thought it was very difficult to prove that the country got full value for that in military efficiency. The work could be done by a smaller staff in the smaller area he proposed at a cost of probably under £5,000. The cost of the London district was, he thought, £5,050 a year. The gain in efficiency, and the gain especially in the way of bringing into the service of the country that which never yet had come into the service, would be very great indeed. The reason why Wales had never done very much in the way of supporting the military forces of the country was this. The Welsh were essentially a people of ideals, and they wanted some ideal to awaken their enthusiasm. There had been nothing in connection with military service that had awakened the enthusiasm of Welshmen since the great Parliamentary Wars of the seventeenth century. Before that there were various times when Welshmen did go into the Army in large numbers, especially under the Plantagenet Kings, and their history, traditions and poems, were full of the traditional fighting feeling of the race. But that had died down, and it had never come into the service of the British Army. Wales had never poured her manhood into the ranks of the British Army in the way Scotland did at the end of the eighteenth century, or in the way Ireland did at the beginning of last century. Wales had never furnished any great number of officers to the British Army, and he was afraid that he must acknowledge that Welsh names were conspicuously absent among the great commanders of the Army. That all sprang from the same cause, namely, that the spirit of the people was not touched. It was that spirit they wanted to get at, and unless they got at it the Territorial Army would be a dead letter to the Celtic race in Wales. He could assure hon. Members that there were parts of Wales which had never yet provided a recruit for Great Britain, and it was not because the Welsh were not a fighting race. What did they do in the South African War? Although there was no enthusiasm about that war, a very large number of Welshmen took part in the fighting, and on the memorial which was now being set up at Cardiff, there would be the names of 886 Welshmen who laid down their lives in South Africa. But in how many units were these men serving? They were serving in 126 different units, which showed that there was no movement which carried them into any particular regiment or part of the Army. That showed that the spirit of the people had never been with military service, and yet the national spirit was undoubtedly a fighting one. The figure he had given meant that a very considerable number of men from Wales must have been serving unknown to anybody in the British ranks, and unknown especially to the War Office. He and others had had to carry out the inquiries to obtain the verification of all those names, and they got very little information from the War Office. The proportion of the killed to those serving would be high indeed if it reached 25 per cent. In the tightest place he ever was in there were 25 per cent. killed and wounded, but that was very unusual. Taking that proportion, they must reckon that there were about 4,000 from Wales serving during the last war. They wanted a stronger enthusiasm than that, and they could produce something more. He would like to refer to the scheme of the divisional organisation because it was a point which affected the whole future of the Territorial Army. In his opinion they were sacrificing to an imaginary symmetry the real strength of the whole scheme. They were setting up a fictitious standard, and they were forcing the Territorial Army into it, whether it suited it or not. He thought it would be far better if this somewhat Teutonic arrangement were abandoned, and if the organisation of the greater units were allowed to grow up and adapt itself gradually to the force which we found we could produce. He had been told that there were persons in high office who believed that we would never get anything under the voluntary principle. He had never held that view himself, but the opinion was growing very largely throughout the country that it was the fixed intention and desire of some of those persons to make the present scheme a failure in order that they might bring in their scheme for compulsory service. He could imagine nothing more unpatriotic—nothing that would be more regrettable. But it was not wonderful that these reports should get about regarding high officers at the War Office, because the War Office had always shown itself to be without any beliefs at all. [An HON. MEMBER: Always without knowledge.] He would not venture to criticise their knowledge, but he knew about their beliefs. Was not that the case in the early part of the South African War? It was strong belief that made the Yeomanry a success. But was it found among those who would now be described as members of the Army Council? He ventured to say that it was the noble Viscount opposite and the late Lord Chesham who were the real apostles and believers in that movement. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, then in office, was sympathetic and assisted in what was afterwards a great and valuable reinforcement in South Africa. He would like to recall to the right hon. Gentleman some words which he used when he brought forward his great scheme last year. He then stated that it was by appealing to the public and to the nation that they hoped to secure a change for the better Then the right hon. Gentleman asserted his confidence in public opinion and in national feeling. He gave the Secretary of State credit for good intentions, but he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would not allow his good intentions to go to that limbo where all hope must be relinquished.

He asked the right hon. Gentleman to trust national feeling a little bit more and to see whether he could not meet the humble request now put forward on behalf of Wales. He begged to move to reduce the Vote by £1,000.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,421,000, be granted for the said Service."—(*Sir Ivor Herbert.*)

MR. HALDANE: The hon. and gallant Gentleman has raised a specific question which I think I should at once deal with. He spoke eloquently and truly on the necessity of taking locality into consideration and appealing to local patriotism. I entirely agree with him. That is what we are endeavouring to do. But what is it that he asks? He wants the *status* and the ceremony and the gold lace of the staff of a general and the administrative arrangements which are associated with a full command. Well, I venture to say that that has really nothing to do with local patriotism. Local patriotism means the appeal to the people to render service and the recognition of the people as rendering their service in a national capacity. Last summer I went down to Rhyl and addressed a meeting there. In the course of my speech I gave a pledge which is more close to the point than anything which the hon. and gallant Member discussed. I said—

> "The different parts of a nation should be treated according to their temperament and the necessities of their people. We do not desire to rule Great Britain on a cast-iron pattern. Even in the Army that was always the case; and the Government had now decided definitely and finally to offer Wales a division commanded by a general of their own."

That was accepted with a good deal of applause, and I now think that we have come to what the people want—their regiment, their brigades, their units, their staff, their commanding officer, and their commanding-general of their own and a division of their own. The division is the real thing, and that is what contains the distinctively Welsh fighting element. I thought we had come to an understanding upon that, and I went back to the War Office, and within a very short time we had organised and given them a Welsh Division. There is no difficulty made about the Border. Neither did the Border counties demur to working in Wales nor Wales in the Border counties. Wales and the Border counties now work together and nobody wishes to disturb the arrangement under which the Border counties come into the division. Indeed, without them we cannot have a complete Welsh Division with the troops as they now stand. I thought all this matter was settled, and my hon. and gallant friend astonished me to-day by coming and raising a new question altogether—that Wales should not have a division but a command, and, an extraordinary thing, a command with an area smaller than the area of the division. He wanted this command to be distinctively Welsh. That is a remarkable proposition. The organisation of this country for military purposes is one in which, very happily and fortunately for the present plan, the old Auxiliary Forces and the Regular Forces were organised in the same area. The commands were divided into grouped regimental districts and the command of the Auxiliary Forces and of the Regular Forces went to a large extent together. The brigadier commanding the regimental district was in command of the organisation of the Auxiliary Forces. Now the general commanding the regimental district commands the Territorial Force and the divisions of his district are included in the larger area in the command of the general officer commanding. The general officer commanding commands the Auxiliary Forces and the Regular Forces. Therefore, we have kept the same area precisely for the Territorial Forces and the Regular Forces for the future; and we thought it of the greatest importance to do that. Now comes my hon. and gallant friend and asks that we should break up the organisation which was created by the late Government and which was worked out by the right hon. Gentleman opposite according to the provisions of the Esher Report, which divided this country into commands according to the amount of the military enclosed in each command, and sub-divided these commands into grouped regimental districts. The hon. and gallant Gentleman now asks that the area of a grouped regimental district instead of being within the area of the command should overlap the command and contain within itself a command. That is wholly and absolutely incompatible with the policy and arrangement—a very good policy and a very good arrangement—initiated by the late Government and continued by the present Government. That could never be done without causing vast confusion and embarrassment. I come to the second part of my hon. and gallant friend's proposal. My hon. and gallant friend whispered the word "economy," but you cannot have the costly machinery of a new command without a staff and various expenses which are not justified when you are trying to organise on a small scale. There are eight commands, taking them from north to south: The Scottish Command, the Irish Command, the Northern Command, the Western Command, the Eastern Command, the Southern Command, the London District Command and the Aldershot Command. These eight commands are all based on this, that a large number of troops are included in each—sometimes the number is largest on the Regular side and sometimes on the Auxiliary side. The Aldershot Command contains no great amount of Auxiliary troops. The Scottish Command has an enormously large number of Auxiliary Forces and a very small number of Regulars. Ireland has a large number of Regulars and a considerable Auxiliary Force; but every one contains within itself a vast amount of material. If I were to adopt the suggestion of my hon. and gallant friend I would be splitting up the Western Command and creating a new command with so little military material as to render it absolutely unjustifiable to put on the Estimates. But the matter does not stop there. The reason for a command is not merely for the command of the troops.

MR. GUEST: What we ask for is not a Regular command, but a Territorial Army command.

MR. HALDANE: Does that mean that we are to break up the very principle on which our plan is founded, and to have a Territorial command different from the Regular command? If so, that is excluded by the very essence of our plan, which is to organise the Territorial Army as much as possible on the same basis as the Regular Army. We want them to train and work together as much as they can. My hon. and gallant friend is wanting me to go back on the root principle of our plan by what he proposes. Moreover, the division has, I think, this great advantage—that it is not tied down like the German Army Corps or like the Indian division. That is to say, arrangements are made on a large scale so that when it comes into action it can take what it needs in the way of supplies. That has enabled us to make a much more complete and effective administrative arrangement for each unit of the Army and each division than if we had a separate command and administrative staff for each division. The problem was again carefully worked out by the Esher Committee, with the result that the fixed administrative services have been organised on an enlarged scale and the division has been left free and relieved from the conditions to which it was attached in the past. The result is that the one thing that we could do for Wales effectively and which would make Wales feel that it had got a real division within itself is to take the divisional area and to carry out what I undertook to do at Ryhl, and what we have carried out to the letter. It is an entirely new suggestion that you should set up a new command—a very small one—in Wales, and that it should exist only for the Territorial Force.

*SIR IVOR HERBERT: That is not my suggestion. It is that it should be a complete command.

MR. HALDANE: Well, I am afraid that Wales is divided against itself.

MR. GUEST: We would take half a loaf rather than no bread.

MR. HALDANE: What is a poor, stupid representative of the War Office to do between these contending factions? How am I to divine the mind of Wales if Wales cannot state its own mind? The position really is that in Wales there are not enough troops to justify a separate command.

*SIR IVOR HERBERT: Would the right hon. Gentleman state the number of troops in the whole of the Western district, and how many of them are actually in Wales?

MR. HALDANE: Speaking from memory, Lancashire and the other parts of the country included in the Western Command furnish the larger part of the troops in the whole command. And what would Lancashire say? It would demand a separate command also. And York would come on the scene likewise.

*SIR IVOR HERBERT: I apologise for interrupting the right hon. Gentleman again, but it would be just as well to be quite accurate. I can state from documentary evidence that there is one infantry battalion, two batteries of Royal Field Artillery, one heavy battery of Royal Garrison Artillery, and one company of Royal Engineers; and out of that force, that large Army, which is in the Western district, only one field battery of Royal Artillery is outside Wales, and that does not belong to the Western district, and is only lent to it by the Northern district.

MR. HALDANE: My hon. and gallant friend is forgetting the Lancashire Infantry regiments.

*SIR IVOR HERBERT: They are not there.

MR. HALDANE: They come and go in various places, but the command is measured by the number of troops in it, whether Auxiliary or Regular, and Lancashire raises two divisions of the Territorial Force, while Wales, including the four border counties, only raises one division. My hon. and gallant friend is asking me to create something which, from a financial point of view, from a military point of view, from an administrative point of view, and from the point of view of analogy, is totally unjustified. London is an independent command apart from the Eastern district. The London district has 7,000,000 of people to draw upon. The London Command has some 7,000,000 of people in its district, and has, therefore, a very much larger number of troops as compared with the other commands, and it offers no analogy to the other districts. On the whole case I really must say that I thought I had deserved the gratitude of the Welsh nation by having recognised their great qualities in so speedily and rapidly constituting a Welsh division, but I now realise that I cannot any longer put any faith in such expressions as came to me at the meeting at Rhyl.

MR. GUEST inquired if the right hon. Gentleman would give the Committee the constitution of the Welsh Division.

MR. HALDANE: The Welsh Division consists of infantry, artillery and Yeomanry. It includes the border counties by general desire.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): No.

MR. HALDANE: Oh, yes; by general desire. I beg my right hon. friend's pardon. No objection was made in the Welsh interest.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: But Herefordshire, the adjoining county, objected very strongly to be attached to Wales.

MR. HALDANE: They may object to going to Wales, but Wales does not object to her coming. That is the point.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Hear, hear!

MR. HALDANE: Wales has a division of the old grouped regimental districts. In the old Western Command there were two grouped regimental districts, and Wales was one of them, and that district included the four border counties. We have adhered to the condition of things laid down by the old Order in Council, and Wales is not put in any new area, but on the ordinary area of the grouped regimental district. It is called the Welsh grouped regimental district or division, and it will be under a commanding officer who will be distinctly Welsh.

VISCOUNT VALENTIA (Oxford) said that after the ruling of the Chairman overnight he thought it was not necessary for him to confine his remarks to the Amendment which had been moved, and he desired to revert to the general discussion of the Vote which was now before the House. He would only do so for a very few minutes in order that he might get a little information from the right hon. Gentleman, because he had repeatedly told them in the course of last session and this, that the Yeomanry who were still serving and who had not fulfilled their engagements would not have the conditions of their service or pay altered until their service was completed. But a leaflet had been lately issued which had not only mystified the men but mystified their colonels. In this the men were told that they must sign an application paper and make a second attestation in regard to the Territorial Force, but it seemed absurd to give a man who enlisted last year for three years this pamphlet to read, and convey to him the information that he was obliged to sign an attestation form, although he had still to serve for two years.

MR. HALDANE: Of course, he is a member of the old force, but without the attestation form he cannot, under the Act, come into the Territorial Force. This is a new force and without his signing an attestation form you cannot bring him into the new force.

VISCOUNT VALENTIA said he quite agreed; but the very fact of the form coming into use at an early date made the soldier fear that he might unexpectedly become a member of the Territorial Force.

MR. HALDANE was understood to say that a man could not become unexpectedly a member of the Territorial Force and until he had applied.

VISCOUNT VALENTIA repeated that the leaflet had mystified the ordinary yeoman. It told him that it was open to him to join the Territorial Force and that he was to retain his old engagement. If he signed the form he became, as it were, in two forces at once.

MR. HALDANE was understood to say that that would not be so, as the new force would take the place of the old.

VISCOUNT VALENTIA said he quite understood what the right hon. Gentleman meant, but he did not think he would make the yeoman understand it, and he thought that it was natural that a leaflet such as this should mystify the yeoman. One officer had written to him on the subject stating that he understood shortly after the Act was passed that the conditions of service of the Yeomanry would not be affected until their term of engagement had expired, but the new attestation form had given the men the impression that they would not be able to attend at the next annual training. If they thought that and did not attend, that, said the officer, would make his regiment inefficient. They told the yeoman on the one hand that he became a member of the Territorial Force, and then they told him on the other hand that he was not to come out and serve with his regiment unless he signed a new attestation form. It seemed absurd to make a man attest twice over while he was serving in the same force.

MR. HALDANE: A new force.

VISCOUNT VALENTIA said that even if it was a new force it still seemed absurd to make him attest twice over. He thought that this mystification would have a serious effect and men would not come out. They did not read these documents very carefully and had not, like the Members of the House, the advantage of the attendance and explanations of the right hon. Gentleman. Then, again, the conditions of pay were altered, and the man did not get the 4s. a day which he expected to get. If the hon. Gentleman added up the figures of the allowances he would see that the men would not get 4s. They were told, however, that they were only going to lose 1s. 6d. out of the 5s. 6d., but although it was only a few pence it would be more.

MR. HALDANE said the hon. Member was referring to the figures in regard to the recruit. The yeoman would be in a better position, as he would get the benefit of the equitation fund.

VISCOUNT VALENTIA said that the idea in the men's minds was that their pay and conditions of service were not what they expected, and the whole argument of the officers of the Yeomanry and the officers of the County Associations to encourage the men to join the force was that although the pay had been very little altered the conditions of service had not been interfered with. He contended, however, that the pay had been altered. Another small point upon which he would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman was his declaration that no compensation would be paid by the Government in respect of loss or damage by accident to a horse used in the Territorial Army. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the compensation of £50 at present granted to a Yeoman losing his horse would not be maintained, but this was a very material change and seemed a very decided alteration in the conditions of service. The right hon. Gentleman had said that if a yeoman joined the Territorial Force he could insure his horse as he had £5 horse allowance, but that was, he contended, part of the yeoman's pay, which ought to go into the pocket of the yeoman or that of the commanding officer for his use or benefit. Nothing, therefore, should be taken out of it. His sole object in raising this point was to see that the yeoman was not treated differently, and that he was going to get what was promised him and what they, as officers, had promised him, on the statements of the right hon. Gentleman. He hoped the Secretary for War would make it clear that the yeoman would suffer no change in the conditions of his service.

MR. GUEST said he must refer for one moment to the Welsh question which the right hon. Gentleman regarded as rather a nuisance. He was not at all surprised to hear the right hon. Gentleman's statement that with all the best intentions in the world it was impossible to meet the wishes of the Welsh people. It was quite easy to give official reasons why this or that could not be done, such as inconvenience and want of symmetry if such and such a regulation was introduced into such an organisation, but he did not think the right hon. Gentleman quite appreciated the extent to which Welsh feeling had been stirred by Wales being lumped in with English counties, and the feeling of the people of the Principality ignored. That feeling had been strengthened by the fact that the headquarters of the division was not to be on Welsh soil.

MR. HALDANE said that North Wales had refused to agree with South Wales that the headquarters should be at Cardiff, and, therefore, as they could not agree to a place in Wales, an arrangement was made that Shrewsbury, the existing place, was the most convenient spot.

MR. GUEST said the right hon. Gentleman should not lay too much stress on family differences of opinion with regard to the place to be fixed upon, and he thought his right hon. friend had made a mistake in placing the Welsh head-quarters outside Welsh soil, against the desires of most of the Welsh people. He would recall to the right hon. Gentleman the fact that the whole essence of his Army scheme was an appeal to local sentiment and emulation, one county seeking to outvie another. Yet he had deliberately ignored one of the strongest local feelings existing within the British Isles, namely, the Welsh national sentiment. Some might think that this Welsh feeling was rather antiquated. But at any rate it was a great asset. and it was one which the right hon. Gentleman ought to appraise at its true value. There was a tremendous Welsh national feeling, and if they appealed to it they would get a response. If they ignored it, if they included the Welsh with the English countries, and put the Welsh headquarters outside Welsh soil, they would fail in appealing to the one thing, Welsh national feeling, on which they could count for the success of the territorial scheme. He had no wish to make himself a nuisance to the right hon. Gentleman. He quite saw the difficulty he was in, but he was obviously ignoring the more essential condition for the less. If the right hon. Gentleman had paid a visit to Wales recently, he would know how strong the Welsh feeling was on this subject. If his right hon. friend could not see his way to meet the deep-seated desire of the Welsh people, he must expect disappointment so far as the working of the territorial scheme was concerned. Scores of people had told him that if the Secretary for War did not satisfy the Welsh sentiment they would take no trouble to make the scheme a success, because it would be of no use to appeal for recruits, for they would not get them. He hoped, therefore, that the right hon. Gentleman would reconsider the matter, and see if some arrangement could be made to meet the national sentiment of Wales; otherwise he feared that his right hon. friend would be disappointed with the result of his scheme in that part of the country.

*COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, Bootle) said he desired to bring forward two points. In the first place, he might say that in reading the newspaper extracts of what the right hon. Gentleman himself had said he gathered that the Secretary for War had allowed himself to some extent to be a follower of Lord Cardwell's scheme for the Army. The point to which that scheme especially applied was that of linked battalions; and he might say that since he had had the honour of a seat in that House, and of speaking frequently upon matters affecting the well-being and organisation of the Army, he had always opposed the principle of linked battalions, because he believed it to be thoroughly inefficient, and to his mind the severing of the link between battalions, in any way that they might please to effect it, would add to the efficiency, flexibility, and mobility of the Army. The alternative to the linked battalion system was a system of depots. By depots he meant real depots. He did not mean that taking the system and putting it into a brand new organisation, and calling it a Special Reserve, filling the depots with the Militia Force, would in any way meet what he called the real depot needs of the Army. The first thing that struck his mind in reference to this question was the inadvisability of continually re-opening the conditions of service in our Army—unsettling and constantly altering the main principles of its organisation. Each Secretary for War, from whichever side of the House he came, appeared to think it incumbent upon him entirely to reverse, or to a very large extent reverse, the well-known organisation of the Army, with a view to introducing something which, to his mind no doubt, had advantages, but which to the mind of the practical soldier and more especially to the soldier in the ranks, were very doubtful advantages, and made him hesitate as to accepting the conditions under which he was to serve. He confessed he regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not taken the well understood system of the Regular Army, the Militia, and the Volunteers, as the fixed foundation for our military forces, upon which our present organisation should be firmly based, and which, like the rails upon a railway line, could not be altered without risk of serious accident. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover, in speaking yesterday, had touched upon the fact that by taking away the Militia Force there was a hiatus left between the Regular Army and the Volunteers. That was an idea which he could not press too strongly upon the right hon. Gentleman as being indeed most important; for it was an accepted fact by all generals and commanders in the field, in the present day, that the fighting force must be divided into three lines. They must have their line in immediate contact with the enemy; they must have the supporting line behind it; and they must have a Reserve behind that. He would not trouble the House with technical details as to the way in which the principle of the three lines was applied in practice, but, if they would accept the statement from him, this was the unvarying plan of manœuvring troops in the field in contact with an enemy, and he maintained that the principles were identical whether they were manœuvring a company, battalion, brigade, division, or the British Army. These three main lines into which our Army must be divided were understood in the country, and certainly thoroughly well understood among all ranks of the Army. When they took away the second of the two supporting lines of the Army, he maintained that they left a great gap in our military organisation which they could not fill, and that it was dangerous at the present time, in the unsettled condition of matters abroad to take away that one well understood branch of our military organisation, and to unsteady the organisation by leaving it incomplete. President Lincoln used the homely phrase that it was dangerous to swop horses while crossing a stream, and, in the condition of foreign politics at the present time, he ventured to think that it was rather unwise to change our military organisation and try any untested plan involving serious alteration in our forces. He regretted that the right hon. Gentleman had not taken our existing military organisation as it stood, and endeavoured to improve it, making the best of it, taking out its weak parts and converting them into strong parts, instead of applying himself to an almost brand new scheme. One other point he wished to allude to was that the artillery of all branches of the Service was the one that should be altered with the very greatest care. It took longer to train an artillery soldier than the soldier of any other unit of the Army. The artillery must always be kept up to full training in peace as well as in war, if they wished them to be ready for work when called upon. The right hon. Gentleman spoke with a light heart of his intended expeditionary force of 160,000 men. He did not think these islands had ever sent 160,000 British soldiers abroad yet. Wellington at Waterloo only had 35,000, and he had always laid it down, as the result of his observation and experience, that if we could ever put 100,000 men in the field, and maintain them complete in all points for two years, it would be a feat as great as we could possibly be called upon to perform. Therefore, when the right hon. Gentleman spoke of sending away 160,000 men into the field it appeared to him to be an impossibility. We never could attempt such a thing. But if the expeditionary force could ever be got out of the country, what had they left? The Territorial Army was practically Volunteers under another name. He spoke with all respect of the Volunteers—he was himself an honorary colonel. The force was a very good force as far as it went, but they must not expect too much from it, and if it was contemplated to leave the safety of the country mainly in the hands of the Volunteer Force, the safety of the country was being imperilled to a very dangerous extent. They were taking away the Militia, which was a tried force, had always come forward, and was ready to be embodied for any length of time and to serve at home or abroad as long as it was wanted if it was only given the chance. It had been the backbone of the military force of this country from the time of King Alfred to the present time. This fine old force was all to be put into the melting pot and thrown on one side, while the safety of these islands was left to the Territorial Force. He would not venture to put such a scheme before the country under any circumstances whatever, and he pleaded with the right hon. Gentleman before he took this fatal plunge of extinguishing the Militia Force once more to give them a chance to stand in their proper place as the supporting line of the Army. The British Army was expected first and foremost to garrison our possessions abroad. The garrison of India was 75,000 men as a minimum, and circumstances might easily arise in which it might be necessary to increase it. If the expeditonary force were by any possibility got into any foreign country, how would the garrison in India be reinforced? Then also we had to maintain the garrison in the Mediterranean, which might also need reinforcing. The second duty of the British Army was to defend these islands in conjunction with the Territorial Force, and the third was that it must be capable of sending abroad a force to be landed at any tactical point that might be necessary. Unless they had a backbone of Regular troops, or a tried force like the Militia to support them, they could not rely on the Volunteers. During the South African War a request was sent to the Volunteer Force as a whole to ask them to give two months' continuous service, and the reply was that they were unable to do so. He could, of course, quite understand that they could not do so, but if we were seriously attacked by a European Power it would be a question of continuous service, not for two months, but for two years. He would like to lay before the right hon. Gentleman privately various additional points that he might consider worthy of his attention. What we wanted for our Army, in addition to the points he had laid down, was flexibility, mobility, and great powers of expansion. The three main duties of the British Army must be supplemented by those qualifications, and any scheme for its reorganisation must be tested by these main facts. Anything which would not stand these tests, though it might be made to run during times of peace, would inevitably break down in time of war. He recollected hearing the Secretary for War, when he first came into the House, state that the Army was constituted for the purpose of carrying on the military duties of the country in peace time. It made such an effect on his mind that he had never forgotten it, but he trusted that that idea might come to an end, and that the right hon. Gentleman, and those who might succeed him in his office, would recollect that we did not want the British Army to fulfil the duties of the country in peace time, but that we wanted an Army which was capable of expansion to meet the requirements of the country in time of war. With regard to the reorganisation of the Army itself, our present system in the infantry was that the companies were small. They were nominally 100 men, but they varied. They were seldom much more than fifty, and were never more than seventy-five. He had come to the conclusion that the proper strength for a company in the infantry should be on arrival from abroad, nominally 100 privates; in its second strength, 150; and in its war strength, 200. There would thus be instead of eight companies as now, four companies in a battalion, and one company at the depot. Another point in the Regular Army that needed correcting was the superfluity of majors. There were at present four majors to a battalion, and he had never seen what in the world was the use of four majors in a battalion. Why should they not revert to the old system of two majors to a battalion, which was quite enough? The only use of majors on parade was to take certain well-recognised places, and they could not use four majors. Therefore the only thing to be done with them was to let them command companies, which was quite out of their sphere and derogatory to their rank, and he would have very great pleasure in seeing the two superfluous majors done away with, and captains allowed to command the companies, which was their proper duty.

*MR. ACLAND (Yorkshire, Richmond) said it would perhaps be to the convenience of the House that he should answer the questions that had been put as to the Yeomanry. It was true that Yeomen transferred to the Territorial Army must sign the new attestation paper accepting the terms and conditions of service applicable to the Territorial Force. It was not an unnatural thing when a force was disbanded and another force came into being that a man should be asked to enlist into the new force, and it was no hardship to ask that the man should do so. The paper made it perfectly clear that in accepting the terms of service of the new force the exact guarantee as to pay which had been given in that House would still be kept as an absolute guarantee, because in the forefront of the statement on pay and allowances they found that "Men would be permitted to retain the existing Imperial Yeomanry rates and conditions of pay until the expiration of their current engagement," that was, for the period for which they signed the new attestation.

COLONEL SEELY (Liverpool, Abercromby): For how long a period may they sign this new attestation? It is very obscure.

*MR. ACLAND said he believed it was for one, two, or three years. Then there was the question as to the 4s. a day, which was guaranteed to be expended on the new recruit. It was asked how that 4s. a day worked out. It worked out in the following way: Pay, 1s. 2d.; equitation allowance, 1s. 4d.; camp allowance, 1s.; to be paid to the commanding officer for expenditure on the men, and the ration in kind, or 6d. in lieu of the ration.

LORD BALCARRES: Will the hon. Member show where the figures are set out?

MR. ACLAND said it was perfectly clear in the new leaflets.

MR. STANLEY WILSON: Will the hon. Member show me where the camp allowance is shown in the leaflet? I cannot see it.

*MR. ACLAND said that neither could he in the particular leaflet referred to, but he did not think for that reason anyone would disbelieve that it was a guarantee. There was no doubt whatever that it was a perfect guarantee. The allowance was £5 for a period of sixteen days, which worked at 6s. 3d. per day. Under the new conditions they would receive £5 for fifteen days, which worked out at 6s. 8d. per day. If the horse was wanted for a further period than fifteen days the sum of 6s. 8d. would be paid for each additional day for which the horse was retained. Compensation would also be given if the horse was fatally injured or killed during the training. He thought that made the allowance for horses quite as generous as if not more generous than it was before. Leaflet No. 3, relating to services in the Territorial Yeomanry, laid down that Army rations would be issued free to all non-commissioned officers and men, and this would be supplemented by the payment of 1s. per day. The reason the terms of service were not in the leaflet was that it was made perfectly clear in the previous leaflet issued to each individual yeoman. He hoped this explanation would make it clear that 4s. per day given to the man or spent upon him was guaranteed to the new Yeomanry, the old rates were guaranteed to the old Yeomanry for the remaining time they might re-enlist for, and the horse allowance was really a little more generous than it had been in the past.

MR. WYNDHAM (Dover): In regard to the old Yeomanry I should like to know why it is necessary to make them sign again. By asking the yeoman to sign again he naturally supposes you are altering the conditions. I understand that the old yeoman is to get the same pay and allowances which he got before, including the horse allowance of £5, and I also understand that if he does more days than are provided for by the £5 he will get a proportionate part of extra payment in addition. I also take it that if the yeoman's horse is destroyed—and this is not in the leaflet—he is to receive compensation and he has not to insure himself against the loss of that horse.

COLONEL SEELY said he understood the yeoman was to receive the same rate of pay for the period of enlistment in the new form. That would of course enable him to enlist under the old rate of pay for another four years. If that was the meaning of the leaflet it was highly advantageous to the Yeomanry. He wished to put that before the Committee because the time was very short and they must have the answer very soon. He suggested that it was rather ridiculous to insist upon the yeomen taking a fresh oath of allegiance, because, although the duties would be different, they would be under the same Sovereign, and why should they take a fresh oath?

MR. HALDANE: The Answer will be found on page 3 of the leaflet. The yeoman will be permitted to retain the existing rate of pay and allowances. The new attestation is only necessary for the balance of the period for which the yeoman is signing.

MR. WYNDHAM: But the leaflet does not say that the yeoman is to get £5 horse allowance, or that he is to have compensation for the horse if it is destroyed in addition to his £5.

*MR. BRIGHT (Oldham) said he approached this subject from the point of view of a humble economist and a lover of peace. He was also a lover of economy in regard to warlike preparations. He had no wish to make himself a nuisance to the Minister for War, but he hoped to be able to extract from him a little comfort for his soul on the question of the very large preparations which it appeared to him the Government were making for the military defence of the country. If there was one thing which he spoke about more than another at the general election it was what he conceived to be the very gross wastefulness of the late Government, and he believed almost all hon. Members sitting on the Ministerial side joined in that chorus upon a thousand platforms. He thought it was extremely probable that nearly all the right hon. Gentlemen on the Government Front Bench uttered similar sentiments. If there had been a very gross wastefulness in what the last Government did, that pre-supposed that a new Government ought to make a very great reduction. If they had to go back to their constituencies and after all the statements they made as to the enormous expenditure of the last Government they had to confess that the present Government could not carry on with very much less, then he thought they owed an apology to hon. Gentlemen on the Opposition side. He, however, was not going to make any apology for having said that, for he was going to stick to it. They expected something more in the way of reduction from the Liberal Government. He understood that the Secretary for War had arranged for what he called a striking force of 160,000 men. He had been told that that was a great deal larger than had ever been provided before, and he wished the right hon. Gentleman to explain why, when the circumstances of the Empire were such that everything appeared to be perfectly calm and hopeful, they were required to provide such an enormous force. Then there was the question of the troops in the regimental stations in various parts of the world. The right hon. Gentleman had said that if any reductions were made in the Army it would have to be in the forces abroad. There was also the question of the Army in India, where he thought the Government would be quite justified in reducing the number. During the South African war a very considerable number of men were brought away from India. At that time if a certain Empire had wished to attack them that was the moment to do it. But obviously that Empire did not wish to attack them and, therefore, they were not in fear of any such danger. That danger had now been practically removed, and it would be a very reasonable thing under the circumstances to make a considerable reduction in the forces of India, and that would be an immense advantage to the very poor people of India. There was another quarter in which they were keeping a large number of troops for apparently no reason whatever, and that was South Africa. He noticed that the right hon. Gentleman intended bringing back some troops from South Africa, but he understood they were not to be disbanded, but retained in England. It appeared to him that the 14,000 now being retained in South Africa were not wanted there. As to the Mediterranean stations he thought a large number of troops both at Malta and Gibraltar might be withdrawn, because they had now fewer men-of-war in the Mediterranean, and consequently it was not necessary to keep up such a large establishment of troops there. He appealed to the Minister for War to make considerable reductions in those various quarters. The present Government, he knew, did not wish to go to war with other countries, but they could not expect to remain in office eternally, and if they left behind a tremendous striking force, a Party might come into power with predatory instincts, and then they would have ready to hand an instrument to use in a way which might be very injurious and disastrous to this country. He had only risen to clear his conscience and try to get a little comfort as a sincere lover of peace and an economist, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to say something as to the future prospects of such reductions as he had in his mind and which would give a great deal of pleasure to a great many hon. Members on the Ministerial side of the House.

Mr. WYNDHAM asked whether it would not be advantageous at this stage that the right hon. Gentleman should answer the question as to the position of the Yeomanry. The right hon. Gentleman last year said that the Yeomanry were to have precisely the same conditions and emoluments as they then enjoyed. Was that to be so?

Mr. HALDANE said that the £5 horse allowance would be paid to the Association, but if a man rode his own horse the Association would have to pass on to him the £5. As to the horse that had to be destroyed, the Chancellor of the Exchequer authorised him to say that the old rule would be the rule of the future. The State would bear the charge up to £40.

MR. SEDDON (Lancashire, Newton) expressed his sympathy with the argument of the hon. Gentleman opposite who had pleaded for economy. It was as an economist that he himself supported the Territorial Army scheme. He looked upon that as the only buffer between this country and conscription. Those who wanted to avoid conscription ought to give all the support they could to making the Territorial a real scheme. Those who listened to the speech of the hon. and gallant Member for South Monmouthshire would have much sympathy with the appeal he made on behalf of Wales. Whether it was owing to the conditions laid down he did not know, but he had a strong feeling that Welshmen were not satisfied and that the response would not be in accordance with the requirements of the right hon. Gentleman. He would warn the right hon. Gentleman that he had to be very careful, so far as Lancashire was concerned. They might differ among themselves as to religious education and other questions; they might differ about the supremacy of Liverpool and Manchester; but their county pride was, like Cæsar's wife, above suspicion. The people of Lancashire would not tolerate anything to the detriment of that particular county. The hon. Member for Woodstock had said that he did not think promotion from the ranks would be regarded with favour by the rank and file. Since he himself called attention to this matter last week he had had considerable correspondence with non-commissioned officers, from which it appeared that there was a strong feeling that the men in the ranks should have greater opportunity of rising to the commissioned ranks than they had at present. The Minister for War had stated that it was part of the policy of the Army Council to encourage promotion from the ranks, and he took it that that was the right hon. Gentleman's own sentiment. In the *Military Mail* of Friday, 6th March, he found the following statement—

> "An extraordinary letter, it is stated, has been sent to the general officers commanding the territorial divisions pointing out that no one is to be recommended for commission in the new force unless he is a gentleman by birth and socially fitted to be received in the officers' mess of the Regular Army."

It was because it had been stated that the letter had been sent from the War Office that he rose to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether that was correct. The right hon. Gentleman would admit that the old idea of the aristocracy of birth——

MR. HALDANE: I know nothing of any such letter.

MR. SEDDON said he took the right hon. Gentleman's word, of course. He hoped it would be verified when the right hon. Gentleman made inquiries at the War Office. He thought there was something more in this than the right hon. Gentleman was aware of, and he would be glad if that was not so. The old idea of "gentleman by birth" had passed away, and it was the aristocracy of brains that was wanted in the Army.

MR. HALDANE: I can give the hon. Member the assurance that the War Office is no party to the sentiment contained in that letter. We will give every man a chance according to his capacity, and there is nothing further from our mind than the restriction indicated in the speech of the hon. Member.

MR. SEDDON said it was not his statement. It was a statement circulated in a military journal. He was trying to popularise the Territorial Army scheme, believing it was a bulwark against conscription. It needed no argument to show the need of having all ranks, both commissioned and non-commissioned, open to men in every walk of life. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that he wanted the Territorial Army to be a replica of the Regular Army; he wanted to have in it artillery, engineers, infantry and Yeomanry. He thought the right hon. Gentleman would get many skilled artisans who, from the engineering point of view, would be able to give much valuable help which many of those who were called gentlemen by birth would not be able to render. He was preferring no charge against those who were making that distinction; he knew that they were not snobs. There were many young men who were ambitious and anxious to get on, and if they were willing to give their knowledge in building up the Territorial

Army, the right hon. Gentleman should do everything he could to popularise the Force and to remove the suspicion that it was going to be a class preserve for gentlemen of birth so far as the commissioned ranks were concerned. He would advise the right hon. Gentleman to get somebody to sub-edit War Office advertisements. The attestation form sent out was no credit to anyone at the War Office, but he exonerated the right hon. Gentleman from blame. He wanted the existing suspicion removed so that the Territorial Army scheme would realise the right hon. Gentleman's intentions and save the country from the blight of conscription

*MR. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said he began his military career under a very distinguished officer who joined a Highland regiment as a boy, served in various ranks, got the Victoria Cross, and eventually became commanding officer of the regiment. That was an example of what a British soldier had been able to do in the past.

MR. SEDDON said he had simply referred to a statement which had been circulated, and with respect to which he had received a great number of letters.

*MR. COCHRANE expressed the hope that the ventilation of the subject would sweep away the cobwebs. He could speak in the warmest terms of his first commanding officer; he was a gentleman in every sense of the word. He rose from a humble position among the crofters of Scotland and was an exceedingly gallant soldier. There were many such in the Army, and everyone was received by his brother officers on terms of equality. Capable, zealous, and efficient young men should have a chance of rising to the commissioned ranks; still he believed it was not every soldier who was qualified for the post of officer. The hon. Member for Oldham was somewhat disquieted at the Army Estimates; he would like to see a reduction in the garrisons all over the country, and also a reduction in the troops in India, and in the garrisons abroad. [AN HON. MEMBER: Hear, hear!] The hon. Gentleman cheered that. He himself would like to see the day when it would be no longer necessary to maintain armies and garrisons at all, but that day was far distant. Being a sane Imperialist who recognised the responsibilities and duties falling upon us, he felt that there was an obligation on every citizen of this country to contribute in some manner to the fulfilment of those responsibilities and duties. He had listened to the speech which the right hon. Gentleman made in July, 1906—and a very generous speech it was—in which he said that he had found the Army in a more satisfactory condition, both in point of quality and quantity, than in his recollection. Well, was the Army in a satisfactory condition now? What did the man in the street—who, after all, was the man to be consulted—say was the result of the right hon. Gentleman's scheme? The right hon. Gentleman in 1906 described the Army then as thoroughly effective and efficient and it was now reduced——

MR. HALDANE: I said, on the contrary, that it was perfectly inefficient.

*MR. COCHRANE said that the words the right hon. Gentleman used in March, 1906, were that the Army had never been in a more efficient condition. He thought at the time that it was very generous for the right hon. Gentleman to say so.

MR. HALDANE: I said that the Army as a whole was in a very highly unsatisfactory condition.

*MR. COCHRANE thought he would be able to persuade the right hon. Gentleman that he was more generous then than now. The man in the street said that the Army had been reduced by thirteen battalions of infantry, and that two battalions of the Guards had been reduced.

MR. HALDANE: Eight battalions of infantry and one battalion of Guards.

*MR. COCHRANE said that as a Scotsman he deplored particularly the reduction of one battalion of the Scots Guards. The Army as a whole had been reduced by 20,000 men; and as the right hon. Gentleman reduced the

Regular Army, he had increased *pari passu* the length of service.

MR. HALDANE: The terms of service under the late Government were nine with the colours and three in the Reserve. That had been altered to three and nine. I changed it to seven and five.

MR. COCHRANE said that the changes were somewhat puzzling; they altered like a kaleidoscope. At any rate the right hon. Gentleman, not content with reducing the numbers of the Regular Army, had *pari passu* reduced the Reserve. Everyone who saw the Reserves who went out to South Africa knew that these men had served in the Regulars for a number of years, and had then gone back into civil life. They returned to the ranks with a good knowledge of discipline, and with physical strength which made them capable of taking the field at once. He feared that in the future there would not be that class or number of men to be counted upon. Did the right hon. Gentleman realise the great extent of the dislike to the Territorial Force? Recently during a visit to Scotland he asked how the Territorial Force was getting on, and the answer was not at all, what with the fine of £5 in case a man failed to give due notice if he wanted to leave, and what with the attestation form which in almost every line had the word "punishment," which was a euphemism for imprisonment. He ventured to say that, so far as his fellow-countrymen were concerned, these were not conditions which would prove sufficiently attractive to induce them to join the Territorial Force. He did not want to join in the battle of the nations which had taken place; but one hon. Member had spoken of the disabilities which Wales had been put under, and he would speak for a moment of Scotland. The right hon. Gentleman had deprived Scotland of its only cavalry regiment on very insufficient grounds. The right hon. Gentleman had told the House that that was because of the insanitary condition of the barracks at Piershill; but he replaced the cavalry with a battery of field artillery not much less in numerical strength than the cavalry regiment. Then the garrison artillery had been reduced by 1,000 men, and how did that affect Scotland? He would compare Scotland with gallant little Wales. The number of garrison artillery in Scotland had been reduced nominally to 253 rank and file, but actually to only 150 men and those 150 men had to garrison Leith Fort, Inchkeith, Kinghorn, Aberdeen, the Forth Bridges, and three stations on the Clyde. It was no wonder that he was told that at a recent grand parade at Leith Fort there was one non-commissioned officer and nine men in garrison of the Fort which was meant to protect Edinburgh against attack.

MR. HALDANE: There is Inchkeith.

*MR. COCHRANE: But the 150 men have to garrison Leith Fort, Kinghorn, Aberdeen, three stations on the Clyde for the defence of Glasgow, as well as Inchkeith.

MR. HALDANE: There is a large number of Volunteer garrison artillery.

*MR. COCHRANE said he was talking about Regular artillery. The right hon. Gentleman must have often enjoyed hospitality in different parts of Scotland, and he must have heard complaints that there were nominally only 253—actually 150—garrison artillery for the defence of Scotland, from the Orkneys to Berwick-on-Tweed and the Clyde, while Wales made a loud complaint that she had only 340 garrison artillery and Ireland 741.

MR. HALDANE: Ireland has no Volunteers.

*MR. COCHRANE said he was glad the right hon. Gentleman held so much trust in the Volunteers, but he asked if it was not the truth that the men in Scotland were resigning and flocking out of the Volunteers and not enrolling in the new Territorial Force? That was the information he had received. As he had said, they had no Regular cavalry in Scotland, and he would press on the right hon. Gentleman the importance of that to Scotland and to the nation generally. Scotland had proved a very good training ground for cavalry and mounted infantry as had been shown during the manœuvres last autumn of Lord Tullibardine's Lovat's Scouts and the Fife Light Horse. After all, Scotsmen made exceedingly good cavalry soldiers. As to guns, the right hon. Gentleman had spoken about arming the Territorial Force with guns which appeared to be the old 15-pounders with an altered carriage. But had they the same trajectory and muzzle velocity, and the same effective range as the German gun? The right hon. Gentleman said that it had a range of 5,800 yards, but that did not correspond with the Answer which he had given to a Question that session. The right hon. Gentleman was asked what was the effective range of the gun, and he stated that the mere distance the shells travelled was about the same, but the lighter projectile had a less effective range than the heavier one, the resistance of the air operating more rapidly, and consequently there was a difference of 1,000 yards in the effective range, the shrapnel bullets giving a higher degree of momentum. There was a difference of 1,000 yards in effective range. The right hon. Gentleman could not say that this gun was effective at a range of nearly 6,000 yards.

MR. HALDANE: You mean the 18-pounders.

MR. COCHRANE: Then why did not the right hon. Gentleman arm the Territorial Force with the more effective weapon? If he sent out the Territorial Force to fight with a weapon which was outranged it would prove a very expensive target for the enemy's guns.

MR. HALDANE: The range is more than that of the German gun.

MR. COCHRANE said that the trajectory of the German gun was far flatter than that of our gun, and it was a more effective weapon altogether.

MR. HALDANE: The right hon. Gentleman is confusing the rifling with the trajectory.

MR. COCHRANE said that the right hon. Gentleman would not dispute that whereas the altered gun was only capable of firing six aimed rounds and twelve unaimed rounds per minute, the more modern guns could fire twenty unaimed and twelve aimed rounds per minute, thus giving much more efficiency to the 18-pounder than to the converted 15-pounder gun. All he could say was that if the right hon. Gentleman found a difficulty in getting skilled artisans—the very class of men most to be desired—who were willing to give up time to learn artillery shooting he should give them an efficient weapon with which to go to war. With regard to the supply of officers, he did not know how short they were at the present moment as it was difficult to make out, but that there was a considerable shortage and always had been was an established fact. How did the right hon. Gentleman propose to make it up? By taking young men from the schools and universities and putting them in command of men. The fact, however, that a man was in uniform, was well conducted and intelligent, did not make him a good officer. He must have a knowledge of men and have been with them in their games and in the field, slept out in the open with them, and watched Tommy Atkins in every condition of his life, and not only have watched him, but know when not to see him, which was a great thing in a British officer. That was what made an officer—not the fact that he was a pedant or a scholar, but that he was a man. They would not get that class of man by taking young men from the universities and putting them through a few months' classes. Why did not the War Office do as they did in the Navy, and take young men as at Osborne and Portsmouth and train them into efficient officers by a long course of training in their earliest years? They would not get officers by suddenly bringing them out into the field in an inexperienced condition and not knowing how to handle men in camp or field. These young men, moreover, would be liable to enteric or fever, and it was cruel to take them in case of an emergency and put them in command of men. He would also like to call the right hon. Gentleman's attention to the shortage of horses in the Army, and to ask him how he proposed to deal with it now that the 'bus horses which formed the nucleus of our supply and the greatest strength of our artillery in South Africa would be no longer available in the numbers that they were before. Where did he propose to get his reserve of horses, a matter which was of great importance to the artillery and cavalry? The right hon. Gentleman had promised to deal with this question several times, but he had never done so. Every foreign Army had a reserve of horses, sometimes on a very large scale. Of course, they could not ask the right hon. Gentleman to go into such a wide scheme as they had, but the tenant farmers in England, Scotland, and Ireland were always available and ready to bring up and train young horses if they were given something towards their keep, and then they could be registered for use in time of war. He thought the right hon. Gentleman should consider whether he could not make use of that material. The right hon. Gentleman was starving the Army in regard to men, guns, and horses for the artillery and the cavalry, and was apparently looking forward to the day when the burden of these things would fall, not upon himself, but upon hon. and right hon. Gentlemen at present on the Opposition side of the House.

Mr. BYLES (Salford, N.) said the hon. Gentleman who had just sat down began his speech by saying that the Army for which they were going to vote that night an enormous sum of money was not big enough, and he finished his speech by telling them that the right hon. Gentleman was starving the Army in the matter of men, horses, and guns. That was a characteristic remark to come from those benches. The typical Tory always wanted the Army and Navy bigger and bigger and bigger, and if both of them were doubled to-morrow hon. Gentlemen opposite would criticise the Government for not increasing them. He was sure they would, and not one of them had ever confessed that it was possible to have too big an Army or Navy. Happily the Party to which the hon. Gentleman belonged was now a miserable minority and could hardly rake together a three-figure minority for any division at all, and he congratulated the country that another Party animated by totally different ideas and desires had now an enormous majority in this House and in the country. He would bring back the discussion for a moment if he were allowed to the position in which it was put by his hon. friend the Member for Oldham, who asked why this huge force should be supplied? He would not have intervened in this debate, but that last night when he was trying to put this point the clock arrived at a quarter past eight and the right hon. Gentleman felt it his duty to move the closure upon him. [Opposition cheers.] Yes, he was always glad when his Tory friends wanted to see him closured.

Sir F. BANBURY (City of London): We were expressing our sympathy with you.

*Mr. BYLES: I beg the hon. Baronet's pardon. I am always glad of sympathy. It seemed to us that it was rather a harsh measure. [Cries of "No," and of "This is not the House of Lords."]

*The CHAIRMAN: Order, order. It is not desirable to make reflections upon the closure which has been adopted by this House.

*Mr. BYLES regretted that he had said something that was not wise, but he was simply excusing himself for troubling the House again so soon on the same subject. He would not complain of the right hon. Gentleman at all, and the Government which he adorned had no stronger well wisher he could assure him than himself, and nobody recognised more than he did the great and laborious industry and the conscientiousness that the right hon. Gentleman had shown in the conduct of his Department. They all wished him success, but his hon. friend had brought back the discussion to this question, which, he maintained, was the important question in discussing the Army. Why had this Regular Army to be so large, and what was it for? They had never yet had any explanation of why the country wanted 160,000 men. He thought the right hon. Gentleman himself said two years ago that he could give no reason for its being so big. He took it as he found it. He also said he depended upon policy, and was determined by the demands of his colleagues, the Secretary for India, the Secretary for the Colonies, and the Secretary for Foreign Affairs. But he was a Cabinet Minister, and he ought to be able to tell them what 160,000 men were wanted for. Whom did we want to kill, whose houses did we want to burn, whose crops to destroy? That was the question. He maintained, as he had said before, that the pledges which the Government gave before they came into power, he would not say were being violated, but they were not being kept. It was these pledges perhaps more than anything else which brought them over from the benches opposite to that side of the House and put the right hon. Gentlemen into his position. The right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues now enjoyed the luxury of power and the sweets of office, and he thought that the pledges which were quoted last night by his hon. friend who moved the reduction, and which had been frequently quoted by himself and others, ought to be justified by the Estimates which were put before the House of Commons, in regard to both the Army and the Navy. They wanted the whole military scale to be lowered, and those were the words of the Prime Minister himself. He said when he was in opposition that they must have a lower scale of military expenditure. That was what the House of Commons wanted and must impress upon any Government, and that was what he was now trying to impress upon this Government. There was one further point that he desired to make, and that was by this vast expenditure of naval and military expenditure they were really straining the taxable resources of the country. He could never forget where this money came from, and he was afraid too many of them were too ready to forget that there was no treasure chest inherited from a distant past, there was no reservoir built by a kind fairy out of which this money was obtained, but it came out of the pockets, and out of the earnings of the poor, and the very poor, of this country. He did not put it so high as to say that the country could not afford this expenditure, because after the experience of the Boer War it would be rash for anyone to say that there was anything which this country could not bear, but they were burdens which the poor had to bear, and which they ought not to bear. They were burdens which they need not bear, and which were imposed upon them for other people's benefit and not for their own, because all this insurance money as it was called, and all these munitions of war were for the defence of property. They had no property. [A LABOUR MEMBER: Workhouses.] His hon. friend said that they had the workhouses, and he agreed that that was all the property they had, and therefore, in the interest of the poor taxpayer he maintained that it was the bounden duty of a Liberal Government to reduce the scale of expenditure upon military matters. As the money was to a large extent raised by a system of indirect taxation, we took taxes from the poor without their knowing it or feeling that they were paying. That was a most mischievous method, and if the poor knew that a part of the money they were spending on sugar, tea, tobacco, and beer was really being spent in maintaining barracks full of soldiers whom they did not want, and of whom they did not feel the need, and upon the disbandment of whom they would not feel one qualm of fear, they would not suffer the system to go on. He said that in taking the money from the poor in that way they were taking it, he would not say dishonestly, but we were supporting our Army by means which were not justified. In his view on this subject he had the support of a very large number of Members of this House.

AN HON. MEMBER: Seventy-five.

MR. BYLES: No, not seventy-five, but 175. They did not always consider themselves entitled to try to destroy their Government. They had some hopes of its reform, and they knew that if they got out of the frying-pan they would fall into the fire. But it was not only a large number of Members of that House who held these views; if they went to the country they would find that these views were extensively held. He now appealed to the leaders of the Liberal Party, and to the Government supported by the Liberal Members. He would remind the right hon. Gentleman that only a week or two ago the organised forces of Liberalism, drawn from every quarter of the country, namely, the National Liberal Federation, had passed a strong resolution in support of these views. The great Liberal newspapers of the country, daily, weekly, country and Metropolitan, day by day, and week by week, were maintaining that the Army should be reduced. But even that was not all he might appeal to. If they went back to the names of past statesmen who had made speeches on this subject, they would find these views abundantly supported. From the days of Sir Robert Peel and Lord John Russell, through the days of Gladstone and Sir William Harcourt on one side, and of Mr. Disraeli and Lord Randolph on the other, they found that the utterances of these eminent and experienced statesmen might be quoted in support of the views he now advanced. Therefore, he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman not only to remember his own Party, the newspapers which supported him, and the National Liberal Federation, but to realise that all the moral and intellectual leaders of the country, or very many of them at any rate, were in favour of the position which he and others in that House took up. Would they be in great peril, said an eminent Member of the other House a few days ago, if they reverted to the scale of expenditure which they indulged in ten years ago? Was there anybody who believed that we should be risking our freedom if we reduced our expenditure to what it was when Mr. Gladstone was in power and when the last Liberal Government was in office?

AN HON. MEMBER: Name?

MR. BYLES: Lord Courtney, a man than whom none was more entitled to the respect of his fellow-countrymen. If the Liberal Party was to live, it would have to return to its earlier and better traditions; it must keep its pledges; it must husband its resources; it must lighten the burdens of the poor; it must show an example, not of international jealousies, but of international friendship. He had spoken strongly, he hoped not too strongly, but he could assure his right hon. friend that he had spoken more in sorrow than in anger. He was a staunch and stalwart friend of the Liberal Government, and he was deeply attached to the ancient principles of the party to which he belonged—the principles of peace, retrenchment, and reform.

MR. COURTHOPE (Sussex, Rye) said he would like to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to a speech of his made in 1906, when he used these words, reported in *Hansard* on 8th March of that year—

> "Our Army was never more efficient than at the present time. Our Army is now on a better foundation as regards organisation, and a better foundation as regards the knowledge of officers—and I include cavalry and infantry officers just as much as engineers and artillery—than it has been at any previous period."

MR. HALDANE: I said that it was in a more satisfactory position than it had been before, but that I hoped that it would be still more efficient.

MR. COURTHOPE said he would not pursue that argument, but he took the opportunity of drawing the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the words he had used on a former occasion. He wanted, for a moment, to criticise what he called the musketry policy of the War Office at the present time. When he said musketry policy, he meant the training of the Regular soldier and the Auxiliary soldier to shoot, and the means with which he was supplied to shoot, namely, the rifle and ammunition. He wanted to confine himself to that policy because it was the policy which the present Government pursued. He ventured to say that they were getting dangerously behind the times, in the whole matter of the musketry of the soldier. They were failing to make the best use of the material at their disposal, namely, the hands and eyes of the troops they had to train. They were not supplying such weapons and ammunition as would enable those hands and eyes to be used to the best advantage. It seemed, as far as one could judge from the statements which the right hon. Gentleman made, and from the Army Orders which had been issued as to musketry regulations, and so on, that extreme accuracy of fire was not desired at all by the

the right hon. Gentleman and his present advisers, but that it was sufficient if the fire of the soldier was kept within a sufficient "angle of error" to use the technical expression. He really thought that was quite wrong. It might be right to say that a soldier was a tolerably good shot if he fired within a certain distance of the object, but he should be able to shoot nearer and so become a better shot. It might be good shooting for a man to hit a battery of artillery at a distance of 1,000 yards, but it would be better if he could hit a single horseman at the same range. It was simply a question of degree, and it was not, in the least, for any party to say that we should be satisfied with a certain degree of musketry efficiency. The whole tendency of modern warfare —and it should convince the right hon. Gentleman—was that extreme accuracy of fire was extremely necessary. In Germany they insisted on special musketry training under special conditions for 10 per cent. of their infantry, and the importance of this training was recognised by other Continental nations—it was realised in Japan, and by all the leading Powers of the world. It was realised in a very marked degree in the United States of America; and he might quote one instance to show the great importance, of at all events, a certain number of the troops being trained to extreme skill with the rifle. In the Spanish-American War in Cuba they had a very remarkable example of the value of accurate shooting. A large portion of the Spanish Army, he believed approximately a division, were moving from one position to another on one side of a ravine which for a number of miles could not be crossed. It happened, he believed by chance, that a single American scout was on the rocky ground on the other side of the ravine overlooking the road. That single man happened to be a very fine rifle shot. He was at a considerable range, but by his skill with the rifle he succeeded in stopping the progress of the whole division. Now a man who was an ordinary shot would have used all the ammunition he could and done very little damage; at all events, it was absurd to suggest that he would have stopped the progress of a division. But this one American scout killed or wounded over forty officers, and never touched anybody else. He cited this example to show the importance that should be attached to extreme accuracy of fire in certain portions of the Army. In any case, if they could not get a large number of men to attain a degree of extreme efficiency, at all events they ought to train some to attain the highest degree of efficiency of which they were capable, and for that reason they must provide them with plenty of opportunities for practice; they must encourage them to the best of their powers to become efficient with the rifle; they must give them good weapons and good ammunition. But the Government were not doing any of those things. He did not wish to say that their modern rifle and ammunition were really bad, but they were not improving with the times. The right hon. Gentleman knew what other countries were doing; he had seen the comparison between experts with various rifles in the Palma match, in which picked men were engaged. The difference of rifle and ammunition was so great that our men had no chance at all against the experts, who not only shot with much greater accuracy, but shot very much faster, because their Governments, advancing with the times, had provided them with the best rifle, the sights of which could be focussed quickly. We had sights on our rifles which could not be focussed quickly, and which many eyes could not focus at all. The fact remained that we did not do the best we could to provide our troops with a good rifle. The right hon. Gentleman was an expert in the question of ammunition and he knew very well that our service cartridge was thoroughly out of date, owing to the improvements which had taken place since our service cartridges were stocked. It was now possible to have greater range and increased striking velocity. This involved higher pressure at the breech. He suggested that the right hon. Gentleman should consider the advisability of arranging the block part of the breech in connection with the loading breech of the rifle in such a way as would give the extra resistance to the pressure which was required for high-velocity powders. He asked the right hon.

Gentleman to ask his advisers whether something could not be done mechanically and cheaply which would adapt our rifles to the extra pressure required for modern powders. He urged the right hon. Gentleman to make sure that in the matters of training, musketry, and ammunition we should march with the times. At present we were behind our Colonies as well as other countries. We should always try to keep ahead of them in these matters as in others.

*MR. MACKARNESS (Berkshire, Newbury) said he entirely agreed with what had fallen from the Labour Benches in praise of the Territorial Army as a bulwark against conscription in this country. He wished to ask a question with regard to the position of lords-lieutenant under the right hon. Gentleman's scheme. They were now the presidents of the County Associations as well as lieutenants of the King. Would it not be right that an indication should be given them as to the inadvisability of taking part in party politics in their own counties? They were high officials appointed for great public purposes, some military and some judicial. It was their business to recommend gentlemen for appointments to the magisterial bench, and they were now the supreme officials for the purpose of managing, organising and recruiting for the Territorial Army. Was it not advisable on grounds of public policy and of the success of the Territorial Army that they should in future abstain from publicly identifying themselves with party politics in their own counties? He believed it would now be in the jurisdiction of the War Office to give some directions as to the position which they should take up in this matter. He had in his own county a lord-lieutenant, who plunged publicly into party politics who happened to share the views of hon. Gentlemen opposite; but his (Mr. Mackarness's) feelings would be the same if he happened to be a Liberal. These high officials were not placed in the position of representatives of the Crown to use it for the purpose of identifying themselves with either side of party politics. He would like to ask, and he thought he ought to have the support of hon. Gentlemen opposite, why there was such a vast difference between the total Estimate for the Army and the total number of men voted now and the Estimates which were thought sufficient by hon. Gentlemen opposite a few years ago. He found that in 1895–1896 the Party opposite thought it sufficient to spend under £18,500,000 on the Army, and in the following year they spent only £18,269,000. In the year before the war, although there was a slight increase, the Estimates were only just over £19,000,000, and in the year the war broke out they were under £20,000,000. They, in that year of profound peace were spending £7,500,000 more than that, and it was a peace which was secured by friendly treaties with other great Powers such as had never been the case before. Only a week or two ago such a great authority as Lord St. Aldwyn had said he never remembered in the whole course of his experience a time when there was such hope of sustained peace as they enjoyed at present. From 1886 to 1896 the number of men thought sufficient for the Army was about 140,000, taking the mean number for the period. In 1897–8 when the Party opposite had been in office a couple of years, they were then satisfied with 156,000. There was, of course, a great increase during the war, but although the war had been over now for nearly five years, they had got nowhere near back to the numbers thought sufficient before the war. The Party opposite had always claimed to be the special custodians of the armaments and defences of the country. He put it to his right hon. friend that it lay upon the present Government to show what causes there were to justify the Estimates they were asked to vote, amounting to 185,000 men and £27,500,000. That was about 25,000 men and £7,500,000 more than the Party opposite thought necessary before the war. That was a matter which appealed to Liberals not merely on the grounds of the needs of the taxpayers, but because they were pledged to great social reforms for the masses of the people which could only be carried out by the expenditure of money. There were only two ways of finding that money. One was by reducing taxation and saving money on the expenditure on armaments, and the other was by increasing taxation in the way proposed by the Tariff Reform scheme of hon. Gentlemen opposite. He begged the right hon. Gentleman to bear in mind that they meant, so far as they could, to carry out not only a scheme of old-age pensions, but the reduction of the sugar tax, one of which pressed heavily on the mass of the people, while the other was a reform eagerly demanded by aged people in great distress throughout the country. He did not see any way in which these reforms could be carried out unless some large reduction could be made in the expenditure upon armaments, and it was on that ground that he begged the right hon. Gentleman to tell them what were the special grounds upon which he justified this much larger expenditure than was required a few years ago.

MR. HUNT (Shropshire, Ludlow) said the hon. Member opposite had stated that in regard to the affairs of this country there never was such a peaceful outlook as at present. He would remind the hon. Member that that was what the Prime Minister said just before the Franco-German War.

MR. MACKARNESS said he was quoting Lord St. Aldwyn.

MR. HUNT said that did not make any difference. They did not intend to increase taxation upon the poor of this country. Apparently a great many hon. Members opposite wanted still further reductions in the Army, but the Regular Army had already been reduced by 21,000 men. Another hon. Member said he wanted peace, and not war. So did everybody in the House, but if they wanted peace they must be prepared for war. There was another great nation which possessed a comparatively small part of the civilised world, and her increasing population compelled her to find some more land. Therefore this country had to take great care to preserve what it had got. They had already reduced the Regular Army, and he did not see what they had got in its place. There was no doubt that the Territorial Army would not afford any more military training than the old Volunteers, and the numbers would be less. The Duke of Norfolk's Committee said that the Volunteers and the Militia were not good enough in musketry to face a serious foreign invasion; at any rate, not successfully. The Territorial Force would be utterly useless for some time, and it was going to be very expensive as well. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean had said that the artillery force of the Terroritial Army would not be of any use, and he agreed with him, because it would take quite three years to make a skilled artilleryman. The scheme of training was not only useless, but it was not fair either to the employers of labour or to the men. Employers who allowed their men to go to camp for a fortnight would be placed at a great disadvantage with their trade competitors who did not allow their men to go to camp at all. The right hon. Gentleman was asking 300,000 men to take upon themselves the whole duty of defending their country, and he was going to leave the rest of the able-bodied men to do nothing but shirk their first duty to their native land. They were asking those 300,000 men not only to become the sole defenders of their country, but to give up their only holiday in the year. There were hundreds and thousands of able-bodied men with plenty of leisure and money, who were not going to do anything for the defence of their country. The plan was absolutely unfair, and it would never work. The number of men was not anything like enough, and the right hon. Gentleman could not pretend that they would be sufficiently trained they would be quite useless to repel an invasion of this country. They had had sufficient warning from past and present military authorities as to the risk they ran of invasion. The whole scheme was an absolute farce, and if national disaster came upon them the Minister for War would be criminally responsible.

*MR. BELLAIRS (Lynn Regis) said he did not propose to follow the hon. Member for Oldham and the hon. Member for Salford in their disquisition about economy. They posed as lovers of economy and peace, and claimed a monopoly of it, and like all lovers they protested too much. He had the charity to ascribe to all the Members of this House a love for economy and peace. The questions put by the hon. Member for the Newbury Division were answered in the Memorandum, which he suspected the hon. Member, had not read. He proposed to deal with one or two questions which involved an increase in the expenditure. To the scientific mind of the Secretary for War the question must have occurred whether in the near future the Army should not be re-armed. He understood that the short rifle with breech action would only stand a pressure of about 19½ tons, whereas the Continental and American rifles would stand pressures up to about 23 or 24 tons, and were therefore capable of being adapted to high velocities. If adapted they could be used with a fixed sight up to 1,000 yards instead of 500 yards as in the case of our rifle. That was an enormous advantage in action. The cost of re-arming our infantry, he believed, would be £1,000,000. He called attention to the Memorandum of the Army Council, urging the necessity of practice in rapid firing under service conditions. He was informed, however, that the number of rounds of ammunition per man for all purposes had been reduced by about 17 per cent. from 300 rounds to 250. How was this consistent with the Memorandum? He hoped he had been misinformed on this point. He wished to put another question in regard to the large quantity of Kynoch's cordite, which was rejected because it had been treated with mercuric chloride. He wished to know whether that cordite had been destroyed. He was told that during the last seven years the amount of Kynoch's cordite supplied to the Army and Navy was 2,450 tons. He did not know when the firm commenced to mask the heat test with mercuric chloride, but the Navy had found this cordite so dangerous that all which had been doctored with mercuric chloride had been destroyed. Supposing that all of it had been so treated, and only 40 per cent. had been fired, there would be 60 per cent. left on their hands which had to be destroyed. This, at £170 per ton, meant a loss to the two Services of £250,000, but he did not suggest that all this cordite had been so treated with mercuric chloride. Had any claim been made against Messrs. Kynoch for the immense loss to the taxpayers involved by this destruction of cordite? He wished to know whether the reserves of ammunition had been brought up to replace the cordite which had been destroyed. A 12-inch cartridge of cordite took three months to dry, and, therefore, at the very earliest they would only get their first batch of cartridges three months after the first order. The provision of reserves could not be deferred until war broke out. He hoped that the cordite which had been destroyed had been replaced by fresh.

VISCOUNT **HELMSLEY** (Yorkshire, N. R., Thirsk) said he was glad that the question of cordite had been raised, and he would like to hear the answer of the right hon. Gentleman. There was no greater well-wisher of the Territorial Army than himself, and he thought that so far the scheme had been progressing satisfactorily. He wished to know what was going to happen where existing regiments overlapped and were in the areas of two different County Associations. He instanced the case of a regiment with two squadrons under one County Association, and two squadrons under another County Association, and asked whether he was right in coming to the conclusion from the Memorandum he had seen that the four squadrons would be administered by the County Association in whose district the headquarters were situated.

MR. **HALDANE** was understood to state that each County Association would administer the squadrons in its own area.

VISCOUNT **HELMSLEY** said he was glad to hear that explanation. That raised the question how they were going to get uniformity of equipment, and so on, if a regiment was to be run by two different bodies. He had seen nothing in the Memorandum on that point. Were there to be Joint Committees, and, if so, what regulations were to govern the appointment of the Committees? He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give attention to this matter, as there appeared to be some difficulty in connection with it. He had been informed in answer to a Question to the right hon. Gentleman that the school for Yeomanry officers at Netheravon had been abolished for junior officers. He thought it was a great pity that the right hon. Gentleman had abolished that school for officers of all grades. The institution was very much appreciated by Yeomanry officers. The right hon. Gentleman did not say in his answer what rank of officer was still to be allowed to go there. He supposed it was abolished for every junior officer below the rank of captain. It was supposed that these officers would be able to get as good instruction with a cavalry regiment. That had been tried, and it had never been half so popular as the Yeomanry school. It stood to reason that officers of the regular cavalry had something else to do than to train Yeomanry officers; they were busy training their own junior officers and men, and they were not in a position to give the individual time and attention to junior Yeomanry officers which they were entitled to expect if they desired to become efficient. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that junior Yeomanry officers could go to the school at Netheravon for a refresher course. Would officers taking that refresher course be able to qualify themselves for promotion by obtaining a field officer's certificate? He wished to draw the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the question of training manuals in connection with the different branches of the Territorial Army. In recent years the position had been very unsatisfactory. A sergeant or non-commissioned officer who wished to qualify and make himself thoroughly acquainted with his work had to find the information he required in four or five different books. It was difficult for him to learn what was really necessary to be efficient. The right hon. Gentleman would confer a great boon if he would bring out a simple manual containing the rudiments of every branch the man was supposed to know. That would remove what non-commissioned officers felt was a great handicap in their work.

*MR. EVERETT (Suffolk, Woodbridge) said he wondered why the right hon. Gentleman when consolidating and unifying all the fighting forces in the country had not availed himself of the police a fine, numerous and well trained body of men, by placing them in the Territorial Army. In case of invasion there should surely be some place for them in the defence of the country. He rose, however, chiefly to protest in the name of his constituency against the continuous and enormous military and naval expenditure of this country. One of the most conspicuous of the many faults of the late Government was their reckless prodigality and extravagance in military and naval matters. Before the last general election Mr. Gibson Bowles wrote an interesting pamphlet on national finance in which he showed that in the previous ten years the cost of the Army and Navy in this country had been actually doubled. An interesting article had also been written by Lord Avebury in the *Nineteenth Century* Magagine of November 1905, in which he showed that the annual expenditure of this country on armaments in the previous ten years had increased by the enormous amount of £50,000,000. He showed further that we were not obliged to do this by the expenditure of other nations, but that it was we who had compelled other nations to increase their expenditure. It was we who had forced the pace. Lord Avebury set forth the startling fact that the increase in our expenditure on the Army and Navy in those ten years had exceeded that of Italy, France, Germany, and Russia, all put together. Therefore we were not only putting an enormous additional burden on the shoulders of our own industrious folks at home, but driving the Governments of Europe to lay heavier burdens on the shoulders of their people. He had hoped that, when a Liberal Government came into power there would soon be a reduction in the bloated armaments of the last ten years. He could not express the bitterness of disappointment he felt that in the third year of the present Government, supported by the largest majority that had ever sat within those walls, no very substantial reduction in expenditure had yet been made. He earnestly entreated the right hon. Gentleman to do his level best to ensure that, before this Parliament

Viscount Helmsley.

separated and they had to go back to their constituents, they would be able to report very considerable reductions in the expenditure on the fighting services. The great strength of this country lay in its industries, not in its armaments;—not in its fighting people, but in its producing people, on whom lay the additional burden of taxation. We had an income-tax of 1s. in the £ in a time of peace. He could remember when the income-tax in a time of peace was only 4d. When the last Liberal Government was in power and he had the honour of a seat in Parliament, the income-tax had got up to 8d., and now we saw it in a time of profound peace at 1s. When he was last in Parliament, sugar, which was one of the greatest necessities and comforts of the people, was entirely free from taxation, but now £6,000,000 of taxation was put on the poor people's sugar-basins, and a considerable addition made to the cost of their tea. They wanted to have their sugar as free as before, and the tea duties reduced to the level at which they were before their friends opposite started on their career of prodigality and extravagance. It seemed to him that the Tories loved taxes, not in the concrete; but they took a pleasure in swelling the expenditure of the country, especially that on the Army and Navy, from which no profit whatever came to the people, and thus made heavy taxes necessary. It was true that comfortable billets were found for some of the hon. Gentlemen opposite and their friends in the Army and Navy, out of the pockets of the taxpayers. He represented a constituency mostly of poor people who lived in cottages, and who had to fight hard for their daily bread, and in their name he urgently appealed to the right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues to use their utmost endeavours to make substantial reductions in the enormous expenditure on armaments which now prevailed in this country; an expenditure which they had never seen anything like before. We were safe enough formerly relative to other nations, and we were no safer now. We had advanced in civilisation, there was an increasing spirit of friendliness of one nation towards another, communication between nation and nation was easier than before, and we were blessed with a Sovereign who was the best friend of peace of any Monarch in Europe. We believed, however, that our Gracious Sovereign's efforts were heartily reciprocated by the other rulers. And as we as a nation had set the example of vast increase in armaments, so we should set the example of a substantial reduction of armaments. He urged upon the Ministry to set their whole strength to doing this. They wanted this money for the use of the people, and for old age pensions. The right hon. Gentleman was spending £40,000,000 on the fighting services more than was spent ten or twelve years ago. This huge sum would give a pension of 5s. a week twice over to every old man and woman in the country. We were none the better for the enormous increase of armaments, and the money spent on them should be used for increasing the comfort of the people, and to the advancement of social reform. He felt he owed it to his constituents to make this earnest entreaty for reduction. He besought the Minister for War to grant him the assurance with which he could go back to his constituents that very substantial reductions would soon be made in the cost of the fighting services, and very large additions made to the comfort of the people with the money thus saved.

SIR IVOR HERBERT said he did not know whether it was the intention to take the vote for Vote 1 before the interruption of business, but with a view to facilitate the right hon. Gentleman's arrangements, he was willing to withdraw his Amendment.

MR. H. C. LEA (St. Pancras, E.) said he objected to the withdrawal of the Amendment. If it were withdrawn he would move a reduction on his own account.

LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) said that the hon. Member for the Woodbridge Division of Suffolk seemed to be rather anxious about meeting his constituents since he implored the Government to take such steps as would justify him and his friends in meeting their constituents, and in saying that their pledges of economy and reduction in expenditure had been redeemed. The Estimates had been reduced, but it was quite true that this year the reductions effected by the right hon. Gentleman were solely owing to the fact that the undertaking of the late Government, as to the provision of artillery, had been fulfilled. There was, however, no net reduction in the present Estimates. What was more, so far from any reduction being possible in the next few years, the Army Estimates were going to rise again. The right hon. Gentleman could reduce the Army by a few thousand men, but he knew that the expenses connected with the disbandment of the regiments were very high; and the right hon. Gentleman also knew that on account of the policy of Works Loans being dropped, progress with national works was falling into arrear. Next year and the year after, enormous sums of money would have to be found for public works such as barracks. Existing barracks had been neglected and more of them would have to be built, and the money found by the successors of the present Government. Then they must have a new rifle, which meant a million of money. Again, the Territorial Army, if conforming to the expectations and hopes of the Secretary for War, was going to cost far more money than was at present supplied by the Army Votes. It was just the same with the Navy. There was a small saving this year, but next year it appeared that they were to have five new battleships, so that no saving was possible or probable on the Navy expenditure. The same system was being pursued throughout the whole of the departments of Government—a system of mortgaging the future, and of living on post obits. So far from the reductions which the right hon. Gentleman and his friends had promised coming to pass, there would be in the near future a gigantic increase in the National expenditure, and the Army wsa going to take more than its share in that increase. At the present moment and under its present organisation, the equipment of the Territorial Army was not fit for war. They pretended that it was, but it was not. They were anxious, or ought to be anxious, to encourage as far as possible the Volunteer movement of this country, and in order to do so they paid compliments which were not justified by the efficiency of the Territorial Force. The right hon. Gentleman had assured them time after time, and it was on that assurance that legislation was accepted last year, that the Territorial Army would have a grave responsibility placed upon it. Let them look at it from the equipment point of view. The rignt hon. Gentleman had uttered the truism that no artillery was of any use except the best; that that was the arm in which of all others they could not afford to be second best. There had been no war during the past hundred years, since artillery was still in its infancy, in which the preponderance and superiority of the gun had not shown its influence throughout the campaign; and any Army which had an inferior gun was placed in a position of intolerable inferiority. The gun with which the Territorial Army was armed was a second class gun, not even a quick-firing gun. The right hon. Gentleman had spoken of it as if it were; it was nothing of the sort. It was out-ranged. It was no good telling them how far a shot would go; the real thing was how far a shot would tell. The Territorial Army gun was effectively out-ranged by the gun with which in all probability that Army would be faced in the event of war. Then what about the training and efficiency of the men? They had to undergo an annual training of twenty drills, of which ten must be out of doors. A drill was defined as one hour's actual training, and the men might perform three drills in the day. That meant that an afternoon's work would count three drills, so that in seven days they could get under the right hon. Gentleman's scheme all the drill that was necessary apart from camp or artillery training.

And, it being a quarter past Eight of the Clock, and there being Private Business set down, by direction of the CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS under Standing Order No. 8, further Proceeding was postponed without Question put.

LIVERPOOL CORPORATION BILL.

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. HOLT (Northumberland, Hexham) said he had felt it his duty to take exception to Clause 56, but he was glad to say that he had had a conference with the promoters, and they had undertaken to substitute the following clause—

> "The City Council may appoint out of their own number so many persons as they may think fit for the execution of any of the purposes of any local Act or Order for the time being in force within the city, which, in the opinion of such authority, would be better regulated and managed by means of a Committee; provided that a Committee so appointed shall in no case be entitled to borrow money or to make or levy any rate, or order any rate to be made or levied, or to enter into any contract, and shall be subject to any regulations and restrictions which may be imposed by the City Council."

If his hon. friend the Member for the Everton Division, who he understood represented the promoters, would confirm this undertaking he would be pleased to support the Bill instead of opposing it.

MR. HARMOOD-BANNER (Liverpool, Everton) thought there was an undue nervousness as regards the effect of this clause. But the Corporation were perfectly ready to meet the objections that had been taken, and to accept the clause in the amended form. With regard to the objection taken by Warrington to Clause 16, he thought it was more a matter for Committee than for discussion on the Second Reading. Warrington had had the right to call upon Liverpool to supply water for twenty years, and had not exercised that right. Now it was suggested that that term should be extended for three years, when the right should end. He thought that was giving Warrington as much as it was entitled to. But whether it was right or wrong, he would appeal to the hon. Member for Warrington not to raise it now, but to permit it to be dealt with in Committee. Objection was also raised to the Bill by Prescot, which felt strongly on the subject of the water clauses. But in this case also Committee was the proper place to deal with the question, and he therefore hoped the objection on behalf of Prescot would not be pressed now.

*MR. CROSFIELD (Warrington) said he had been desired by the Corporation of Warrington to call the attention of the House to the provisions contained in Clause 16 of the Bill. Under this clause it was proposed that the agreement which was entered into between the Corporations of Liverpool and Warrington in 1887, and duly confirmed by Parliament, should be determined without the consent of the Corporation of Warrington. The Corporation of Warrington protested against this action on the part of the Corporation of Liverpool. They urged that when an agreement had been arrived at between important public authorities, and sanctioned by Parliament, it should not be open to one of these authorities to ask for its recision. As to what the hon. Member for Everton had said as to this being a matter for Committee, he felt that it was of such very deep and vital importance to Warrington that he ought to enter a protest on the Second Reading. But an appeal had been made by the Chairman of Ways and Means that he should not press the matter further at present, but should agree to its being considered upstairs in Committee. He was very happy to agree to the suggestion of the hon. Member for Everton without in any way withdrawing the protest he was bound to make as a matter of principle on the Second Reading of the Bill.

MR. SEDDON who had given notice of Motion for the rejection of the Bill, said he did not propose to take a division, but he desired to state the objections of Prescot to Clauses 16, 17, and 18. These clauses dealt with a matter that had been in dispute for forty years between the small township of Prescot and the municipality of Liverpool. During that time there had been various debates in Parliament, many convictions before the magistrates, decisions of quarter sessions, judgments of the High Courts, and proceedings before Parliamentary Committees which justified him in presenting the case of Prescot to the House. Prescot's position was somewhat different from that of Warrington.

It was under a statutory obligation to take water from the Corporation of Liverpool. The Act of 1866 placed upon the Corporation the obligation to supply water for domestic purposes at sufficient pressure to supply the highest house in the town. Now they sought to evade that responsibility. The history of this matter disclosed unfair dealing on the part of the Corporation towards Prescot. In 1897 there was a police court action that went against the Corporation. It was heard on appeal before the Master of the Rolls, and they were defeated. In 1898 they were again defeated, and eventually, in a test case in the Queen's Bench Division, they agreed to pay the amount sued for in the county court with costs, and to abandon all their pending appeals, the right of the complainants to commence new proceedings being expressly reserved. After all these unsuccessful attempts to cripple Prescot in regard to its water supply, this wealthy Corporation, having been obliged to erect a pumping station because the water could not reach the highest houses by gravitation, were now seeking, by a clause in the Bill, to throw the burden of the pumping station on Prescot. It was said, as a reason for this proposal, that Prescot might erect "sky-scrapers" at the highest part of the township, and that if that were done, the Corporation would be put to very great expense in putting in new pumping apparatus. That time might come, but he thought the House could rely on the Liverpool Corporation, with its love of litigation, to take proceedings if Prescot broke any of the conditions into which it had entered. So far as the pumping arrangements were concerned, it had been said by some members of the City Council that there was only one house in the town that had not an adequate supply by gravitation. He denied that. The inadequate supply affected many houses, and the Liverpool Corporation in this Bill—a very good Bill, which he would like to see passed, except for these two vicious clauses—were trying to throw this great burden upon Prescot. At the present time water in Liverpool cost the consumer 1s. 1½d. in the £, and in Prescot it cost 10½d., or 3d. in favour of Prescot, and Liverpool Corporation thought it unjust that Prescot would get the water at a cheaper rate than the citizens of Liverpool, who had sunk their money in providing one of the best water supplies in the country. But Liverpool had many advantages in regard to water supply that were not possessed by Prescot. When Liverpool had liquidated the sinking fund he believed that the fixed water rent now charged would practically cease. A Committee of the House of Commons in 1887, when the Corporation sought some unfair advantages, laid it down: (1) That the people of Prescot were merely consumers of the Corporation, and not partners in the undertaking; (2) that they had no right to any portion of the sinking fund provided under the Liverpool Waterworks Act; and (3) that the water charges fixed by the Act were fair and equitable, and ought not to be increased. Yet in face of that decision they sought by the Bill to inflict a burden on this small community. So far as Prescot was concerned, they had all along been willing to carry out their obligations under the Act of 1866. He did not want to say hard things of Liverpool. It was a city he had a very great pride in, for he had been connected with it to some extent practically throughout the whole of his life. But he thought in this case the corporation had displayed a selfishness that was untrue to the true character of Liverpool. They appeared in this Bill like a colossal vulture, overshadowing and all-powerful, and thought they could by frequent litigation deplete the reserves of this small community, and compel them by force to submit to unreasonable demands. He would not press his Motion now. He relied upon the Committee to do their duty, and if they did not he would reserve to himself the right to take action upon the Report stage and Third Reading. He thought it fair to say that Committees had always looked at this question with an unbiassed view. He was not unmindful that in the Committee upstairs a long array of counsel heavily briefed would press the claim of this rich corporation over this small community, who would be practically at the mercy of these lawyers. He quite admitted that Prescott had joined with other urban district councils to protect themselves. But their voice would be lost among the many, and this small community in the Committee might be robbed of their rights and have imposed upon them a grievous burden. He thought it only fair to say that so far as concerned the existing Act of Parliament, Prescott was willing to carry out its obligations. He was fortified in saying that by the fact that these obligations were the just and equitable findings of a Committee of that House. They had stated definitely and emphatically that the charges already in existence were fair and just, and because of that statement, and because of the feebleness of Prescott, he now made his protest. Unless consideration was shown to this small community he must reserve to himself the right, though he did not wish to do any injury to other parts of the Bill, of opposing the Third Reading. But he sincerely hoped that hon. Members representing Liverpool would act kindly to a small community, instead of like a bully to a small boy, and if they did that the inhabitants of Prescott would be the first to congratulate them on their magnanimity.

Mr. BRUNNER (Lancashire, Leigh) who had on the Paper the following: "That it be an instruction to the Committee to insert a clause providing that an alderman shall not, as such, vote in the election of an alderman," said he understood that the instruction would not be in order or he would have liked to have raised this question with regard to Liverpool. He understood that the reason why this clause had not been put in was that it was unusual to pass a general law in a private Bill; in fact, the Local Government Board would object. He had put the instruction down because the Liverpool Corporation had petitioned that the law might be altered in this respect. He found, from the reports of public petitions, that a petition was presented by Mr. Royden asking that an alteration should be made in the law so that aldermen as such should not vote in the election of aldermen. But he understood that the President of the Local Government Board intended to propose a general Bill which would have the effect that aldermen should never be permitted in future to vote for aldermen; therefore, his instruction would in any case be unnecessary.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time and committed.

*Mr. SPEAKER: It is unnecessary to deal with the instruction after what the hon. Member has said.

SUPPLY (ARMY ESTIMATES.)

Postponed Proceeding on Motion made on consideration of Question, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,422,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Expense of the Pay, etc., of His Majesty's Army (including Army Reserve) at Home and Abroad (exclusive of India), which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1909,"

Which Motion was, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,421,000, be granted for the said Service."—(*Sir Ivor Herbert.*)—resumed.

Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £9,421,000, be granted for the said Service."

Sir F. BANBURY (City of London) said he saw the Financial Secretary to the War Office present and he proposed to ask him a few questions. But he would first like to deal with the observations of the hon. Member of the Newbury Division of Berkshire and of the hon. Member for Salford, imploring the Government to effect still further economies in regard to the Army. One of the reasons which the hon. Member had given was that Lord St. Aldwyn, speaking in the City a few days ago, stated that Europe and the world at large were never in a more profound state of peace than at present. On that statement, which he said he felt sure would appeal to hon. Members on that side of the House, the hon. Member advocated a reduction in the strength of the Army. He submitted that this was, he had been going to say an extremely vicious, but at all events an extremely erroneous, conclusion to form. He did not apply that remark to Lord St. Aldwyn's statement, which he had no doubt was quite correct. In the year just before the Franco-German War exactly the same remark was made either by the Prime Minister in England or by the Foreign Secretary; yet within two or three months of that statement the whole of Europe was in a blaze. It was fatal, because they were for the moment in a calm, to relax precautions. On board ship they did not, because they happened to be in a calm, throw away all the preparations against a storm, which might arise at any moment. But the policy of the hon. Member for Newbury was apparently that in fair weather they were to throw overboard all precautionary measures taken against a storm. Why? Because he thought a storm would never arise again, or because he thought that they would be able, should a storm arise, to make due preparations against it. There was no greater economist in the House than himself. That statement might not be received with the sympathy with which he hoped it would be received by everybody, but it was a fact, nevertheless. But his idea of economy was not to save money by knocking off expenditure during prosperous times if they had to increase the expenditure tenfold in times of stress. There was no greater lesson as to this than that afforded by the Boer War. In the case of for that war, instead of spending £230,000,000, we should, if we had been prepared in time of peace for emergencies, probably have saved a great many lives and not spent more than perhaps a £100,000,000. Nothing had been more popular at one time than to get up in meetings and say that the lessons of the war should not be forgotten, and that we should provide against the recurrence of any such events by having an efficient Army. He was sorry to say that the pernicious doctrine of the hon. Members below the gangway seemed to prevail, and that there was a considerable section in the House which desired that we should go back to the old days of false economy when, in order to save one or two millions, we laid up an expenditure of a £100,000,000, if not more, in a time of stress. The hon. Member for Salford had addressed his remarks to the Secretary of State for War more in sorrow than anger. He had said that their pledges should not be broken, and he had recited those pledges which were made when the Liberal Party came into power. He thought he went so far as to say that it was in consequence of their pledges for reductions on armaments that the balance of power was transferred. He had gone on to say that he did not wish to put any force upon the right hon. Gentleman, and that he hoped he would reform. He would point out to the hon. Member that appeals of that sort made to any Government were not usually successful. If hon. Members desired to be successful, they must exercise their force in the lobby. That was the only way in which pressure could be put upon any Government; and he hoped, if the hon. Gentleman was genuine in his desire that the pledges of his Party should not be broken and that the promised diminution of expenditure should be made, he would take his courage in both hands and by challenging a division show to the Front Bench what their power in the lobby was. He wanted to refer to one or two questions. First of all, he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether there was any truth in the statement that some change was to be made in the City regiments. He was told that their names were to be changed. The question appealed considerably to him. The old trained bands of the City of London had been the foundation, first of all, he thought, of the first battalion of the Grenadier Guards, who still had the privilege of marching through the City with fixed bayonets. They had also been the foundation of many other illustrious regiments. He would ask whether young men who had served in the public school cadet corps received any abatement in regard to drills or joining the Militia. He thought, possibly, some advantage would be gained if that were done. He did not pretend to be a great military authority and he hoped it would not be thought impertinent if he said this scheme for the Reserve of Officers, under which those who had served in Volunteer corps at Eton would be made lieutenants in the Reserve of Officers, or if they had been in a University corps would be made captains——

Mr. HALDANE: What I said was that if you have been two years in the cadet corps of a public school you get certificate A., which is not up really to the qualification of lieutenant, but is something towards it. When you have been two years more through a University corps you get Certificate B., which is a very much higher qualification. The first, A., lets you off four months of your twelve. B. lets you off four more, and leaves you with only four months to give. In each case you have to be approved.

Sir F. BANBURY said that that, of course, altered matters considerably, and it was an encouragement to these young men to come forward. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not listen to the request of the hon. Member for Oldham, who was most anxious that the Indian Army should be reduced, giving as his reason the Convention entered into with Russia. It was absolutely necessary that the strength of our Army in India should be maintained. It was fixed not upon any consideration of war with Russia or any other country, but on internal considerations. It was fixed at the time of the Mutiny and it was no larger now than in 1859. Another argument was that India afforded a field for military training which no other part of the Empire afforded. The Army in India was kept up at war strength. It was the most efficient part of our Army, and the fact of the opportunity of going to India and being trained with regiments at a war strength was a very strong argument in favour of maintaining the Indian Army at its present strength. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that our Army was a machine, the parts of which were interdependent, and that they could not take from it a bit here and a bit there without diminishing the strength of the whole out of all proportion to the pecuniary saving effected, and without running the risk of throwing additional burdens on countries such as India, which we had constantly striven in the past to help. He could not conceive a better expression of the sentiments of Members on that side of the House than that, but had not the right hon. Gentleman rather violated his own principle? He had diminished the Army by 21,000 men.

Mr. HALDANE: Scientifically and systematically like a trainer for a race.

Sir F. BANBURY said there was a great art in training, and if the horse was overstrained, he did not win the race. He gathered that for the present there was no reduction in the Artillery, though some part of it was in a state of suspended animation, awaiting the creation of that branch of the Army in the Territorial Force. Though he was not a professional soldier, that made him extremely nervous, because he believed the one part of the Army which could not be manufactured quickly and which required two or three years training, was the Artillery. Artillery-driving was one of the greatest arts, requiring a very courageous man, with a very cool head to drive a team of six horses at a gallop over rough and uneven ground. He wanted to be a good horseman, and to know his horses. That could not all be learned in a short time, for however excellent the Territorial Force might be they could not expect a man to get that practice which was absolutely necessary in time of war. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for the Forest of Dean, who was a very great authority on the Army, though he was not quite certain whether the Secretary of State regarded him as a very great authority, was very strongly against a reduction in any way of the Artillery. With all humility, he did not consider it efficient to reduce the best branch of the Army, and that which took a longer time than any other to get into an efficient state. If we had, as he believed we had, the finest artillery in the world——

Mr. HALDANE: Splendid men, but not enough of them.

Sir F. BANBURY said the right hon Gentleman had given his case away, surely. He was not at all sure if he went on like that that he would not be found sitting behind the right hon. Gentleman if he would have him. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give him some comforting assurance with regard to the Artillery.

*Sir W. J. COLLINS (St. Pancras, W.) said that Members who had identified themselves with economy and retrenchment had done well to raise this question again on this branch of the Service, though he thought they had not given due weight to two very important considerations. One was that considerable reductions had already been effected by the right hon. Gentleman, for which he had received criticisms from hon. Gentlemen opposite; and the other was the party of economy and retrenchment had not done themselves justice, because he thought some good had been attendant upon the representations which were made early in February. He thought the inference might be drawn from questions answered and unanswered in the House that those representations were not without effect upon the Estimates of this year. Allusion had been repeatedly made to pledges given by the Party now in power at the time of the general election and repeated on the floor of the House. They deplored the absence of the Prime Minister, who would, no doubt, have influenced the House in the direction of peace, retrenchment, and reform, which he had advocated when in opposition as well as at the Albert Hall meeting. He was reminded specially of a remark made on 15th March, 1906, in a debate initiated by the hon. Member for the Abercromby Division, in which the Prime Minister had spoken of this as a Government which would "strain every nerve to cause great reductions in military expenditure," and stated that "its honour and good faith were bound up with doing it." Also the Chancellor of the Exchequer in a debate on old-age pensions on 14th March, 1906, pointed to the close association between social reform and the reduction of expenditure, and used these words—

> "There are only two ways in which you can reduce expenditure upon the Army and Navy; in the case of the Army by reducing the numbers of your permanent fighting force, and in the case of the Navy by contracting your shipbuilding programme."

Having read the Memorandum of the right hon. Gentleman the Minister for War accompanying the Estimates for the Army, and the Memorandum of the First Lord of the Admiralty, he thought it was still possible, with perfect loyalty to the two-Power standard and to the Cardwellian system, to encourage further reductions, and to express the hope that the policy of the last two years might not be arrested or reversed, but continued. He rather gathered from the Memorandum of the Secretary of State for War that he himself saw a way of continuing that policy with perfect loyalty to the Cardwellian system, by reducing battalions abroad and corresponding reduction at home, and also by encouraging self-defence of the Colonies.

Lord EDMUND TALBOT (Sussex, Chichester) said he wished to refer to that part of the right hon. Gentleman's scheme wherein last year he said he was going to provide divisional cavalry for the Regular Army from the Yeomanry and Territorial Forces.

Mr. HALDANE said he had abandoned that part of the scheme with regret.

Lord EDMUND TALBOT said he did not need to remind the right hon. Gentleman that his abandonment of that part of the scheme was no surprise to them, and he was surprised to hear him say that he abandoned it with much regret. He remembered that towards the end of their discussions last year he himself announced that he had experienced much criticism from cavalry officers in the Regular Army. It was no surprise to him to hear that that portion of his scheme had to be abandoned. What he wanted to know was what was going to take its place? He was told that the right hon. Gentleman did make some remarks in reference to what was going to take its place, but it was not at all clear. Last year the reason the right hon. Gentleman gave for the divisional cavalry being found by the Yeomanry was that in his scheme he had used up all the Regular cavalry he possessed. This question of divisional cavalry was of extreme importance. It was not a question which could be dealt with lightly at all. A very distinguished cavalry leader of the German Army whose name began with "G."—the right hon. Gentleman probably remembered that distinguished officer—had laid down clearly and strongly the need for thoroughly well-trained divisional cavalry. He hoped when the right hon. Gentleman replied he would, if possible, go into more detail as to how he was going to find this divisional cavalry. If it was largely to be found by the mounted infantry, he hoped he would tell them what training for the purpose this mounted infantry was going to have, because if the mounted infantry were to be formed from so many men chosen from various regiments of infantry and trained periodically as mounted infantry, then he must humbly and respectfully beg to assure him he did not think it would be found sufficient. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give them in real detail what this divisional cavalry and the Regular Army was going to be composed of, and what training the divisional cavalry was going to get.

Mr. LEA said that this was the third occasion upon which he had risen to take part in the debates on the Army Estimates, but this occasion had been the most bitter disappointment of all. It seemed to him that there was a kind of compact between the official Liberal Party as it existed above the gangway and the Conservative Party to talk in an academic manner about whether the carbine or the gun was up-to-date, whether the 15-pounder was suitable for the Territorial Army, whether the cavalry were all right, or whether three years was a sufficient training for an artilleryman. But those were not the points at issue. What the democracy of this country wanted was a great reduction in Army expenditure, and the only four speeches which had dealt with that point were those of the hon. Members for Oldham, Salford, and Newbury, and his brilliant colleague the hon. Member for West St. Pancras. The present needs of our Army were a great deal over-estimated. Moreover, he had to voice, and he recognised the very great responsibility, the wishes and views of some 60,000 men, women and children in this matter, who demanded a reduction in Army expenditure. They all realised that five years after the war in South Africa was over the war taxes were still on. Every member of the Government was pledged to retrenchment, and yet the war taxes were still on. The Civil Service could not be cut down, and the supremacy of the Navy must be maintained. It was part of the free trade doctrine to ensure not only open ports but open trade routes. But our military expenditure was to a large extent waste. Next to the Licensing Bill, he regarded the Secretary for War as the greatest danger of the present Government. The latter would ruin the public and the former would ruin the publican. What was wanted was a reduction of £12,000,000 and 40,000 men in the Army Estimates. The only thing which the right hon. Gentleman had done was in the spring of last year when he introduced the Territorial Force Bill with an avalanche of eloquence. If that Force was to be anything at all, it would involve this country in greater expenditure than anything it had been subjected to when the Volunteers and Militia were in force. He wanted to indicate one or two directions in which money could be saved. It would be well within the recollection of the Committee that two years ago the right hon. Gentleman promised the abolition of the Scots Guards and the 3rd Battalion of the Coldstream Guards. The abolition of the Scots Guards had been carried out, but what about the 3rd Battalion of the Coldstreams? The battalion had been sent to Egypt in order to evade that promise. He would like to know at whose instigation it was sent to Cairo. It was of no use there at all, except as an expense to the British taxpayer. Who was responsible for that? He presumed it was the same authority who was responsible for the creation of the military command in the Mediterranean, and for the Duke of Connaught being appointed to the command at great expense to the British taxpayer. [Cries of "Order."] Why order? He was there to voice the views of his constituents, and they objected to pay for that sort of thing. That command was useless, unnecessary, and superfluous, and it was an insult to the intelligence of the public. In his opinion it was nothing more nor less than a job. It had one great disadvantage on account of the command being centred at Malta. It meant that one of the warships of the Mediterranean Fleet would have to be detached to cart the Duke of Connaught to and from his command.

The three regiments of Household Cavalry were of no use for war purposes; and their present duties would be discharged as well by the Metropolitan Police. The view of hon. Gentlemen below the gangway was that the Army should be cut down by 30,000 or 40,000 men. The present Army expenditure militated against social reform in every ramification of life. It was idle to talk of old-age pensions when money was being wasted in that direction. The Party in power at present made promises about cutting down expenditure, on which they gained votes at the election, and if the Government went out of office without fulfilling these promises they would have obtained their position under false pretences.

MR. HALDANE: I do not propose to go over the points raised in the speech of the hon. Member who has just sat down. I think he was at one time associated with the Army.

MR. LEA: I was.

MR. HALDANE: As he appears to have devoted more attention to the affairs of the licensed victuallers lately, and less and less to the affairs of those with whom he was originally associated, I will pass from the hon. Member to the speakers who preceded him. It is quite true that we have not been able to obtain from the Yeomanry the fourteen squadrons which we once hoped for, but it is not difficult for us to re-arrange the cavalry organisation. By the autumn we hope to have another regiment of cavalry home from South Africa. That will give us fourteen at home. With that we shall have enough to provide the strategical cavalry—the cavalry that operates far out on the flanks of the enemy. This will consist of twelve regiments of Regular cavalry and a four-battalion battery of horse artillery. The next element is the protective screen, which will be a couple of regiments of Regular cavalry and two mounted infantry battalions. As that releases two battalions of mounted infantry which, before, we proposed to add to that force, we shall be left with divisional mounted troops, consisting mainly of mounted infantry, of which we shall have sufficient, and a certain amount of Yeomanry. There will be, at any rate, two regiments of Yeomanry, the Irish Yeomanry, who will be trained, as at present, with the Special Reserve, and who take the obligation to go abroad, but the bulk of the divisional cavalry will be mounted infantry, specially trained for that purpose. The hon. Baronet, who represents the City asked me what was going to be the organisation of the City corps. What we have decided on, after a good deal of consideration, is this. We feel that the London Command, which is neither the City nor the county, but a unit including both, gives us an area on which to fix the name "London." London battalions will be the battalions belonging to the corps in the London Command. We respect the feeling of the City and of the county, and, taking the twenty-four battalions of infantry as an illustration, they will be labelled one to eight "City of London," and nine to twenty-four, "County of London."

SIR F. BANBURY asked whether the City regiments would be put under the county administration for the whole of London.

MR. HALDANE: No. There are two counties—the county of the City and the county of London. The eight City regiments will be put under the county of the City. The hon. Baronet may take comfort—I have a great respect for the traditions of the City. The noble Lord who sits for one of the divisions of Yorkshire asked me about a regiment in two counties. Our idea in such a case, as in the case put by the hon. Baronet the Member for the City of London, is to treat, as the very foundation of this plan, the county, but though we do not impose upon them the obligation to do so, an arrangement may be made between two counties. The noble Lord also spoke of the school at Netheravon. I am glad to say that the reason why it is difficult to get Yeomanry officers in there is because it is so great a success and the demands upon it are so great. But we hope to bring about an organisation which will provide half-a-dozen cavalry depots around which the Yeomanry may group, and to provide local classes in which the combined instruction may be effective. I pass to the questions put to me by the hon. Member for Sussex and by the hon. Member for King's Lynn. As regards the rifle, it is still a question whether the light, sharp-pointed bullet is a better weapon for our purpose than the heavier bullet which we use. With the heavier bullet, less pressure is required on the breech mechanism, but it is premature to come to a final conclusion on the question until we know what is really going to be the rifle. It is an open question whether, despite its lower muzzle velocity, and taking into consideration its greater range, owing to the heavier bullet, the rifle we have to-day is not for our purposes the better weapon. But I do not dogmatise upon it. It is a question which will want consideration in the light of the larger and greater questions which loom ahead. With regard to the question of Kynoch cordite, which was raised by the hon. Member for King's Lynn, there were seven lots, weighing about 35 tons, which were accepted and passed. Wherever we found that mercuric-chloride had been used, we rejected the cordite, the reason being that we knew that the heat test had been masked, and that we thought it better to err on the side of caution than to run any risk. It is only in cases where we are satisfied that no chloride is used that we take any cordite that has come from that source. As regards the reduction of the ammunition from 300 to 250 rounds, we found that the men could not use that amount. It is a larger amount of ammunition than is served out to any Army in the world, except the Americans, much larger than France and larger than Germany. It stands in this way: we thought it better to offer the general commanding the choice between that and certain other ammunition; most of them thought it better to take extra ammunition of another kind in place of that which I thought was an excessive measure. I pass to the second class of questions, which are of a very general kind indeed. The right hon. Member for Dover referred to the artillery, and said, as I understood him, that we have been very rash in converting thirty-three batteries out of ninety-nine into training brigades. The right hon. Gentleman said sixty-six is not nearly so good as 150, and that we ought to have 150, and he referred to South Africa. In the case of South Africa it is perfectly true that we had there and at home a considerable number of batteries, but only thirty-nine batteries went out from home to South Africa, and a larger number remained at home training and producing the men. It is vital not only to have guns and men, but to replace the wastage of war, and to provide in addition ammunition columns and other services requisite to keep the artillery effective. To do that we must have some mode of training to make up the wastage of war, and therefore we took thirty-three out of the ninety-nine batteries, and converted them into training batteries. To my mind it was essential that, before we saw what artillery we would have, we should consider what we ought to have. We have a General Staff, which is now becoming a very efficient one. That General Staff computed the amount of artillery that we ought to have in proportion to the other arms, and the computation with which they furnished us was that we should have five guns to every 1,000 bayonets and sabres. Under the present establishment we have only 3·5 per 1,000, the Japanese have 4·5, and the Germans 5·5. That means sixty-six batteries of field artillery, and half a dozen other batteries besides. That is the true proportion of artillery, and that gives us seventy-two batteries, which is on the basis of five guns to every 1,000 bayonets and sabres. I put another proposition to the House. Nothing is more wasteful and mischievous in military organisation than to have too much. It throws everything out of gear, and it inevitably leads to gaps in the rest of the organisation. Suppose I had done what the right hon. Gentleman urged and had 150 batteries. We should have had to go short of transport, in the Army Service Corps, and in the Army medical service, and in certain other units of the Army. [An Hon. Member: "Why?"] Because the Army Estimates would have risen to such an amount that there would have been an inevitable reduction and our Army would have been swept away. I stand to-day midway between too much and too little. In the discussion to-night it has been emphatically insisted upon on side that there is still too much, and on the other side that there is too little, but for my own part, and taking into consideration the fact that the Army has been reduced by 21,000 men and the cost by £4,500,000, I think upon the whole that I am in a position which, because it leans too much neither to one side nor to the other, probably represents the true mean. But I say emphatically that there is nothing worse than to have our arms out of proportion. These training brigades provide machinery of a scientific and systematic kind for replacing the wastage of war. Until to-day that sort of thing was absolutely absent from our Army organisation. These training brigades will also create the ammunition columns that are necessary. We should have a proper proportion of all arms, an organisation not only in brigades but also in divisions, and an Army so proportioned that we are able to see what is in excess or is not in excess. That is a plan that enables us to economise in the right direction and not strike with an axe at the centre of the whole machine. Therefore, despite reductions, we have a more efficient Army than it has ever been before, and it is fashioned on a plan and pattern very different from the plan and pattern of other days. I do not stand before the House as an expert in military affairs. I am a plain man of business. I picked out and listened to the best soldiers I could find in the British Army in working out this organisation. It is an organisation on which many voices have converged and have given me a single opinion, and in regard to which there is not, so far as I am aware, a single dissentient voice in the whole War Office at the present time. It is the unanimous resolution of the best brains in the British Army. We have got at the War Office a General Staff that we really did not possess before. It is wholly different from the Intelligence Department; it is in process of evolution, and it is producing a revolution in Army administration, not only in organisation but in money, because it lops off all that is in excess and all that is costly, and because a scientific organisation is the cheapest in the end. It has been urged by the hon. Member for Derby that the Government have made a mistake in abolishing loans, and I think the hon. Member for Fareham shared that view.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE: I did not say that. My contention was that under loans we had got barracks and necessary works, and now we do not get them at all.

Mr. HALDANE: That is just what we have not got. Here we are to-day with just the wrong things and lacking the right things. If we want to get the right things, there is nothing so good as to have a great deal of trouble to get them. The curse of the loan system is that there is money into which anybody can dip his hands. When I think of the fortifications at St. Lucia, of what was done in the West Indies and elsewhere, and of the money that has been wasted at Gibraltar and Malta—I am not given to emotion, but it makes me almost weep. If I had that money to-day I could make better barracks, I could do better for the ordinary soldier, I could build schools for the training of officers, and I could do a multitude of other things all of which would have been done if only the loan system had not existed. But because we had a loan system everybody has been able to spend as much money as he wanted, and now the nation, in the person of my hon. friend, has risen up against us and said we must justify the expenditure of every penny we ask for. There are a few fragments of the loans remaining, and out of that source we are doing a good deal of building. I could conceive a loan system that would be justified when there was a very clear military programme that had to be accomplished once for all. But we have never had a barracks policy. Such a thing absolutely did not exist in the days of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover. We could not have a barracks policy until we had a settled organisation of the Army, and the hon. Gentlemen opposite never had a settled organisation of the Army. [Opposition cries of "Oh."] They had Army Corps which existed only on paper, and then they proceeded to lavish money on barracks out of loans. I would not like to say what the soldiers of to-day said of the policy of other days. Unless we have thought out the organisation of the Army we are not entitled to a loan system at all.

Mr. BELLAIRS: Has the right hon. Gentleman sold any of the empty barracks built under the old system?

Mr. HALDANE: On the contrary, I am trying to use them. But the point is not whether they are now being used, but whether the expenditure upon them has been justified and whether it is the best of expenditure for the nation, and I hold it is not. The hon. Member for Barkston Ash raised the question of horses. Upon this very important question, I am in consultation with the Board of Agriculture, to see whether we cannot treat this matter of the supply of Army horses as a branch of a much larger question. Whether we shall succeed or not I cannot say, but I am willing so to treat it because I believe in that way and that way alone shall we succeed. Then some concern has been expressed about the largeness of the deficiency in the Reserve of Officers. The figures which I gave the other day included not only the deficiency on mobilisation but the wastage for six months after. Somehow or other that wastage has got to be made up. It has been said to-night that after all, the public schools and the Universities are not the best sources. I listened to that criticism readily, but I want to know what other sources are available? That source is at hand and seems the best, and certainly we get the most loyal co-operation from all those concerned. The hon. Member for Woolwich, whom we are all delighted to see back in his place, has raised a question in reference to the discharges at Woolwich Arsenal, and said it is unfair to charge as against the work which the reduced staff turned out the whole of the ordinary establishment charges. While I entertain great sympathy with the view expressed by the hon. Member, I may say that a Committee has been sitting for some weeks inquiring into the whole matter, and it is engaging the close attention of the War Office. The hon. Member knows what the problem we have to deal with is, and that we have got to provide not only for the production of the goods but for maintaining the reserve for war. The state of Woolwich will not be satisfactory until the material can be produced at prices equivalent to those at which the goods can be obtained outside. Then, a question has been raised of the short training of the Special Reserve. If the Government were going to put whole battalions of these Special Reserves in the field, the training would be too short, but in the recent war the Japanese showed successfully that very short-trained men can be put into the fighting line provided they are put in one by one and not as units. The Japanese were able to use men with only four weeks training. Our Special Reservists will supply substitutes for a good deal of the wastage in war, and will supply in a large measure individual drafts for their own regiments. The Japanese war taught that six-months trained men can be well relied upon for these purposes, and their further training they obtained in the progress of the campaign.

Mr. ARTHUR LEE: Did the Japanese take these men at the age of seventeen?

Mr. HALDANE: I do not know, I cannot answer for that, but I should be surprised if they did not. They took them where they could, and seventeen is an age at which everything turns upon the material upon which you are working. A question was raised by my hon. friend the Member for Berkshire about Lords-Lieutenant and I enter with a little trepidation upon that difficult subject. The Lord-Lieutenant is no doubt in a very responsible position, and it is not expedient that a man in that position should introduce party politics. At the same time I should be extremely unwilling to debar anyone in that high position who has talents in reserve; but I maintain that they should not unduly put forth the party view, and I trust that none of them will. Much criticism has been levelled against many of the things done in the course of the year. I am aware that the Department has made many mistakes. But I can only say that the mass of work which the Department had to undertake since last year has been beyond anything that can be realised. Personally I have not had a day off, neither has any member of my staff. More magnificent service than has been rendered by the staff of the War Office no man can wish to see. The staff have given up their holidays, they have worked over-night, many have made themselves ill through overwork; and I should be extremely ungrateful did I not acknowledge the extraordinary amount of assistance which I have received from my colleagues, and the devoted service which I have received from them.

MR. WYNDHAM: I do not intend to say much on the question of Lords-Lieutenant, but we did not understand when the right hon. Gentleman invited the Lords-Lieutenant to assist him in this scheme, to which request they have generously responded, that one thing incidental to their responsibility would be that the right hon. Gentleman would put them in balk on the political billiard table.

MR. HALDANE: Nothing of the kind. They have always been under that restriction.

MR. WYNDHAM: Then I am at a loss to discover why in reply to a specific question as to whether they were or were not to take part in political questions we are told that they are not to take part "unduly." The right hon. Gentleman began his speech by answering my noble friend the Member for the Chichester Division of Sussex about divisional cavalry, and I should like to know how near the right hon. Gentleman has approached that precision of view as to organisation which he claims as the result of his efforts. The right hon. Gentleman has increased the size of a division in the Army. In old days there was a squadron at the head of each division, and now that six divisions are to be equivalent to nine divisions is that to be continued? The right hon. Gentleman has done a great injustice to his predecessors and their military advisers, because the impression left by his speech is that the soldiers at the War Office five or ten years ago had not a plan for organising the Regular Army at home. That was the impression left upon the Committee, and it was the impression which the right hon. Gentleman meant to leave on it. He used such words as to lead one to suppose that his notions differed *toto cœlo*—by a whole sky—from the notions of persons like myself, who only had the advice of the predecessors of the military advisers of the right hon. Gentleman. He said the General Staff had made a computation, apparently for the first time, that there ought to be five guns to 1,000 bayonets and sabres. I remember the computation at the War Office years ago. The ratio then was four guns to 1,000 sabres, and it was changed to five in 1898. The right hon. Gentleman, whether designedly or not, conveyed the impression that he was announcing a new plan for organising the part of the Regular Army which is at home, and that he had derived immense benefit from the advice given him by the heads at the War Office—that he had listened to the soldiers, and that his plan of organisation was something totally distinct from ours. What is the difference? The difference is one entirely of name, and it is not one of fact. We used to call it a Field Army. He calls it an expeditionary force. We used, in order to get the right proportion between the three arms, to divide it up on paper into three Army Corps. He divides it up on paper and speaks of six divisions with proper proportions of cavalry and guns. Will the House believe it? The plan of nine years ago and the plan which the right hon. Gentleman has announced as a new discovery are almost identical? The right hon. Gentleman laughs in derision. I want to be quite scrupulous, but does it matter what you call it? We said: "There are seventy-five battalions in England. It is right to organise them, and we will organise them into Army Corps made up into nine divisions." The right hon. Gentleman says, "I will have seventy-four battalions." He gets rid of one, and one only, by an alteration of nomenclature. That is all. Did not the right hon. Gentleman say yesterday that his expeditionary force was to have seventy-four battalions of infantry?

MR. HALDANE: Certainly not, I said seventy-four battalions at home to correspond with the seventy-four battalions abroad, and out of that sixty-six

Infantry and six of Guards formed the expeditionary force.

MR. WYNDHAM: That is seventy-two. I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. The difference is seventy-two in his plan and seventy-five in our plan, three more. It is explained by the fact that he talks of six divisions, and we talk of three Army Corps. That accounts for the three extra battalions. We talked of four cavalry brigades, twelve regiments. So does he. We said that in addition to them you needed six more. He says that in addition to his four cavalry brigades he requires four cavalry regiments and two regiments of Mounted Infantry, or eighteen in all. Thus you have seventy-five and seventy-two in the case of the Infantry and eighteen and eighteen in the case of the Cavalry. We said: "Then you ought to have fifty-four batteries of regularly trained Field Artillery." These are the same in the right hon. Gentleman's plan. They are the same plans. Our plan broke down because we had only fifty-four battalions of trained Field Artillery. When it was announced, the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean assured us we were wrong. He stated that if fifty-four batteries was right for the Regular Army, you ought to have Regular Field Artillery for Militia and Volunteers as well.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: That is perfectly true, but I had advocated trying experiments of mixed Field Artillery to replace your Regular Field Artillery in proportion to your Volunteers.

MR. WYNDHAM: Anybody is prepared to consider and even to try those experiments. The predecessors of the right hon. Gentleman tried them and others. They tried having a certain number of short service men in the Artillery in order to create an Army. Plan and plan they are the same. Our plan failed, perhaps more conspicuously in the case of the Artillery than in any other part, and it failed because we had not enough trained Artillery. The right hon. Gentleman says he is going to divert thirty-three of these trained batteries which do exist in order to make men for ammunition columns. The need for great ammunition columns is a somewhat new factor. Rapidity of firing has been developed since the period of which I am speaking. The necessity for howitzer batteries as well as field batteries is also in a measure a new factor. It was the plan of the period before the war to have fifty-four batteries of regularly trained Artillery. We were raising them; they were not complete when the war broke out. I am not saying we had completed our plan, and the right hon. Gentleman is the last to say he has completed his plan. I say there is no new light or vision in his plan. I say we failed in artillery because our plan did not provide enough. There was a debate during the darkest period of the war, and I said you ought not to charge soldiers at the War Office with defects which could be attributed to the settled scheme of the Government. Our scheme was for fifty-four batteries. That is the settled scheme of the right hon. Gentleman, I hope he will abandon it before it is put to the test as our scheme was. He proposes to withdraw thirty-three batteries to make the ammunition columns. Is that a wise way of bringing in the Militia element in your service? That brings me to the question of the Special Reserve of Artillery and Infantry. We know what the right hon. Gentleman thinks of depots and provisional battalions, because he described them when speaking last week—

> "The costly machinery of provisional battalions and depots to my mind is a most wasteful way of training soldiers and providing for drafts."

Why is it wasteful to train soldiers and provide for drafts in the normal course by that method, and wise and economic when they are to be exposed to the far more terrible ordeal of going straight into the line without ever having been drilled in units by officers whom they know, and beside comrades whom they trust? The right hon. Gentleman dismisses and justly dismisses the system of depots and provisional battalions as a means for finding drafts for the Regular Army in time of peace. But, supposing he used for that purpose men who came out of these depots and provisional battalions, who would go into the unit, would remain in it for seven years, would then pass to the Reserve, and if called out in time of war would be a tried article. If he did that, you may say the tried article would be an expensive article. Yes; but it would be one upon which you could put your trust. The right hon. Gentleman is going to set up 101 depots, which are more or less provisional battalions, in order to supply the wastage of war. He says it is of no consequence and we need not trouble our minds over the fact that those who enter these depots and provisional battalions are only to be seventeen years old. He says the value of a soldier in terms of age depends on the climate in which he has to serve. Is the right hon. Gentleman going to arrange where the next war is going to be—because if he cannot settle that it shall not be in a tropical country or in a country exposed to the hardships of a Northern winter, the whole of that argument falls to the ground. We want the Committee to understand that at the moment the right hon. Gentleman is holding up and raising the standard of recruiting for the Army he is opening 101 back doors through which he will admit any boy of seventeen who is short of a job. He is going to teach him for six months in the winter, not in a battalion at all, but with some prospect of having a battalion in the summer, if the English summer does not set in with its usual severity, and these men he looks towards in order to make good the wastage of war. Of course he does not look toward them in order to have a mobile unit. He has disclaimed that intention. But was it worth while to scrap 123 battalions of Militia in order to open 101 cheap recruiting shops? I do not wish to press the matter, but those who heard the right hon. Gentleman suggest that he and his military advisers, and they alone, had taken a scientific view of the best way to organise the regular Army at home, will excuse me if I point out that our plan broke down because it was not big enough, and his will break down for the same reason, and that at the other end, the citizen end of our forces, his Territorial Force is the Volunteers and Yeomanry re-named, and that in the middle he has scrapped the Militia in order to make the very kind of military organisation which he most detests and holds up to the contumely of the nation.

*MR. LUPTON (Lincolnshire, Sleaford) said he had listened humbly and with the utmost respect, and he hoped with some profit, to the speeches of the Secretary of State and others. He would like to put in a few remarks from the point of view of a man who did not pretend to be an expert, but an ordinary taxpayer who wanted to see what he got for his money. The King had under his orders altogether about 1,300,000 men trained for war, who were available in one part or another of the Empire for its defence. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Dover said we were short of men. He wondered how many men we ought to have if 1,300,000 was not enough. It struck him as being a very great number. As to the statement made by the Secretary of State, he had listened with the utmost pleasure to his very eloquent explanation of the evil results following from borrowing money. But he was sorry that the right hon. Gentleman had intimated that where a large outlay was required for some new development it might be wise to borrow money. He, as a plain business man, would suggest that when they had the money themselves it was never wise to borrow from anyone else. It was always bad finance. It was only good finance to borrow when they did not intend to, or knew they could never, repay. Then the more they borrowed the better. If they were going to repay eventually it was shocking bad finance. We were now paying nearly £28,000,000 a year because our ancestors had not the courage to put on a 3s. 6d. income-tax and pay their way as they went along. He hoped a 3s. 6d. income-tax would be put on the next time we went to war, and would come down to the lowest wage-earner in the Kingdom, and the war would not last very long. They knew that as a striking force the Army was absolutely useless for any Continental war. For what purpose did we keep it? If we kept it for the purpose of taking part in any Continental war we must at once proceed to organise an Army of at least 2,000,000 men. The tendency now-a-days was to increase the size of armies. Japan sent 1,000,000 men into Manchuria, and if we were going to place ourselves on the Continent against any armies of France or Germany or Russia it would be absurd to think of sending a single man until we knew we had 2,000,000 men trained, and supplied with corresponding armament. He had always understood that our Fleet would save our shores, and save us from destruction while we were preparing a suitable Army to do the work we had made up our minds to do. If that point was admitted, what was our Army for? Whom did hon. Members want to fight? Let them make up their minds; was it France, Germany or Russia? When they had decided they could then proceed in a businesslike way to prepare a suitable Army. In the meantime let them save the nations money. He took it that our Army was wanted to send to the Colonies and to India, and for similar purposes. His view was that 100,000 men thoroughly well trained would be ample for any purposes of defence which this country might require. He was quite willing to pay for that number. He would like to know why they required a bigger force now than the Conservative Government provided before the late Boer War. The right hon. Gentleman had been asked the question why the Government wanted more men than were considered necessary ten years ago. At the present time no scare-monger was clever enough to make the country believe that Russia could endanger India unless she constructed a double line of railway through the mountains, and all the time Russia was doing that this country could prepare and arm 1,000,000 men ready to meet and destroy an invading force on the plains of India. Russia having been disposed of, principally by treaties, to maintain a great force to fight this imaginary danger on the North West frontier of India was a great waste of money. The hon. Member for the City of London suggested that perhaps he had not read the Memorandum issued by the Secretary of State for War, but he had read that document. Why was it necessary to keep such a large Army in India. When the Indian railways were first made one of the bargains entered into was that they would be able to reduce the number of troops in India. Those railways had now been constructed and in the course of a day or two a large Army could be concentrated in any part of India. At the time of the Mutiny a Hindu gunsmith or brass founder could make muskets and cannons as good as ours, but now our troops were armed with weapons four times as deadly as any that the natives could produce. On that ground alone our Indian Army might safely be reduced to 30,000 men, as far as our white Army was concerned. Nevertheless we continued to keep in India the same number of troops. It should not be overlooked that we also possessed much more rapid steamers to-day by which we could convey troops to India very quickly through the Suez Canal. Another reason for reducing the number of the Indian Army was that millions of poor Hindus were being starved to death in order to keep up this vast Army. [Cries of "No, no."] He repeated starved to death. It had been said by one of the hon. members for one of the Divisions of Leicester, that we could easily reduce our Colonial Forces, and the Secretary of State for War had said the same thing. By reducing the Forces maintained at the present time in South Africa they could get a reduction of 10,000 men from those Colonies alone. The 16,000 men at present kept in South Africa were really in danger of being taken prisoners of war because they were not sufficient to cause a moment's fear to those brave men who fought against us in the South African War. Therefore the fewer troops they had in South Africa the fewer hostages they would risk leaving in the hands of a possible enemy. A great many criticisms had been passed upon the right hon. Gentleman, but however much they complained, they could not get a sufficient reduction. [OPPOSITION cheers.] Hon. Gentlemen opposite, if they came into power, would he gathered from the speeches from the front bench add £5,000,000 to the Army Estimates, and so he did not want to see them in office. He hoped the Committee would not be led away by the false idea that they saved themselves by being always ready for war. It had been said that the great cost of the South African War was due to the fact that they had not enough troops in readiness. The contrary was the fact, the Government were able to take 10,000 men from India to threaten the Boer frontier and so precipitate the war, they also had 80,000 men ready to despatch to the aid of the 20,000 troops already there, and were thus able to threaten war without the previous sanction of Parliament. But for this unfortunate readiness the war would never have been begun, and this country would have been saved £500,000,000 of money. We conquered the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, and now they had very wisely given it away again. For the defence of the country we wanted the great Territorial Force which was being built up under the new scheme. He would be in favour of doubling it, and the cost of so doing could be met out of the saving which would be effected if the Regular Army were reduced to 100,000 men. He ridiculed the suggestion that this Territorial Force could not hold its own against regular soldiers. The reading of history contradicted that assertion. When the American Colonists rebelled we sent against them the best disciplined Army in Europe, but they were defeated by a lot of American farmers. The same thing happened recently in South Africa. We sent a highly disciplined Army of 80,000 men under General Buller, and they were hopelessly defeated by 20,000 Boers. These facts showed that a citizen Army could hold their own against a mercenary Army. The Territorial Force if large enough and properly led, organised, and equipped, would make it impossible for any foreign foe to have any chance whatever in trying to subdue this country. He would say that the Navy could be reduced by a half if we had these Volunteers, and then they would have money for old-age pensions and many other things. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that he wanted to hold his hand in regard to the rifle. What a good thing it would have been if he had done that two years ago, in regard to the last new rifle. A good deal of money would have been saved then if he had done so. An hon. Member had stated that the artillery had covered itself with glory in South Africa. Glory indeed! 400,000 troops fully equipped with every weapon against 40,000 farmers old, young, and middle-aged; where was the glory? He had no doubt it could cover itself with glory if it met a foe equal in number and equipment, but what happened in South Africa was not his idea of military glory. The right hon. Gentleman need not spend £4,000,000 a year on officers. Many men were glad to go shooting at their own expense. It was said that they could not live on 6s. or 7s. a day. He could find any number of young men with all the qualities necessary to make good officers who would be glad to be officers in the Army at 7s. a day. The right hon. Gentleman said he could not get them. That was because of the bad system. It was necessary to make it compulsory for all the officers to go through the ranks; then all would be "rankers," and no false pride would prevent young men joining with a good prospect of a commission after a few years' service. With an improved system there would be no difficulty in getting plenty of good officers, and the right hon. Gentleman would be able to reduce the officers' pay and pensions by at least £2,000,000 a year. The money so saved could be devoted to doubling the Territorial Army.

Mr. GRETTON (Rutland) said that the right hon. Gentleman had said something about the duty of the Chairmen of the County Associations under his scheme not taking part unduly in party politics.

Mr. HALDANE was understood to say that they should not as a rule take a prominent part in party politics in their own county.

Mr. GRETTON said he thought that that was rather a remarkable statement, considering that there were hon. Members in the present Administration who were Lords-Lieutenant of counties, and therefore Chairmen of the County Associations, and there was also an hon. Baronet who sat for the county of Norfolk who took a part continually in party politics. There were also distinguished Members in the other House who were lords-lieutenant of counties, and who took part in party politics. It seemed, however, that the right hon. Gentleman thought that if hon. Members in this House or the Upper House took part in party politics they were not to hide their opinions when they went into other counties than their own. He did not wish to pursue the subject, however, because he was sure that the right hon. Gentleman had spoken hastily and unguardedly. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman a question on a point as to which there seemed to be some doubt, *viz.*, what were the conditions on which officers could join the Territorial Force?

MR. HALDANE: Under the Act, they will become officers by Commission.

MR. GRETTON said that that was what he thought himself, but there had been some doubt about it, and he was obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for clearing up the point.

SIR IVOR HERBERT asked leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

2. £1,743,000, Half-Pay, Retired Pay, and other Non-Effective Charges.

3. £1,782,000, Pensions and other Non-Effective Charges for Warrant Officers, Non-Commissioned Officers, Men, and others.

4. £167,000, Civil Superannuation, Compensation, Compassionate Allowances, and Gratuities.

Resolutions to be reported upon Monday next; Committee to sit again upon Monday next.

ADJOURNMENT.

Motion made, and Question "That this House do now adjourn,"—(*Mr. Whiteley*,)—put, and agreed to.

Adjourned accordingly at Ten minutes before Eleven o'clock.

[APPENDICES.

APPENDIX I.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CLXXXV.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the House of Lords.

(A.) HOUSE OF LORDS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Acts Amendment [H L.]	*Lord Lovat*	Read 2ª 27th Feb. (3)
Education (School Attendance) [H.L.]	*Lord Stanley of Alderley*	Read 1a 12th March (1658)
*Land Values (Scotland)	*Earl of Crewe*	Read 1ª 27th Feb. (17)
Municipal Representation [H.L.]	*Lord Courtney of Penwith*	Read 2ª 3rd March (474)
*Poisons & Pharmacy [H.L.]	*Earl of Crewe*	Read 2ª 5th March (821)
*Small Landholders (Scotland)	*Earl of Crewe*	Second Reading (adjourned) 10th March (1238) Second Reading (defeated) 11th March (1438)
Sunday Closing (Shops) [H.L.]	*Lord Avebury*	Read 1ª 5th March (821)

(B.) HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Agricultural Education in Elementary Schools	*Mr. Jesse Collings*	Read 2º 11th March (1653)
Breaches of Bye-laws	*Mr. Wedgwood*	Read 1º 5th March (903)
Character Note	*Mr. Bell*	Read 1º 27th Feb. (73)
Death Certificates (Charges)	*Mr. Gill*	Read 1º 4th March (705)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) (No. 2)	*Mr. Smeaton*	Bill Withdrawn 27th Feb. (72)
Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) (No. 3)	*Mr. Smeaton*	Read 1° 2nd March (355)
Education	*Mr. Verney*	Read 1° 27th Feb. (72)
Education (Local Authorities)	*Mr. Walker*	Read 2° 6th March (994)
*Election of Aldermen in Municipal Boroughs	*Mr. Burns*	Read 1° 9th March (1137)
Exportation of Horses	*Sir H. Vincent*	Read 1° 12th March (1776)
Factors Act (1889) Amendment	*Mr. Dundas White*	Read 1° 27th March (72)
Ferries (Ireland)	*Mr. Gwynn*	Read 1° 10th March (1328)
Handloom Weaving (Ireland)	*Mr. Sloan*	Read 1° 4th March (705)
Hours of Labour (Bakehouses)	*Mr. Wilkie*	Read 1° 4th March (705)
Hypothec Abolition (Scotland)	*Mr. Dundas White*	Read 1° 27th Feb. (72)
Incest	*Sir J. Kennaway*	Read 2° 10th March (1436)
Law of Distress Amendment	*Mr. A. Herbert*	Read 2° 27th Feb. (200)
*Licensing	*Mr. Asquith*	Read 1° 27th Feb. (73) (173)
Licensing Act Amendment	*Marquess of Hamilton*	Read 1° 27th Feb. (73) Bill Withdrawn 3rd Mar. (815)
Local Authorities (Admission of the Press)	*Mr. Arthur Henderson*	Second Reading (adjourned) 10th March (1433)
Local Authorites (Taxation and Purchase of Land)	*Mr. Scott*	Read 1° 5th March (904)
*London Paving Expenses	*Mr. John Burns*	Read 1° 9th March (1137)
Married Women's Property	*Mr. Hicks-Beach*	Read 1° 5th March (903)
Merchandise Marks (No. 2)	*Mr. Claude Hay*	Read 1° 27th Feb. (73)
Metropolitan Sewers and Drains	*Mr. Dickinson*	Read 1° 5th March (903)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
National Military Training	*Capt. Kincaid-Smith*	Read 1° 11th March (1553)
Parochial Medical Officers (Scotland)	*Mr. C. Wason*	Read 1° 12th March (1775)
Pedlars' Acts Amendment	*Sir G. Kekewich*	Read 1° 4th March (706)
Police (Weekly Holiday)	*Mr. Remnant*	Read 1° 10th March (1328)
Polling Districts and Registration of Voters (Ireland)	*Mr. Jeremiah MacVeagh*	Read 2° 2nd March (472)
Polling Districts (County Councils)	*Mr. Acland Allen*	Read 2° 4th March (816)
Public Health Officers	*Sir W. Foster*	Read 1° 27th Feb. (72)
Rabbits on Commons	*Mr. Everett*	Read 1° 5th March (903)
Small Holdings	*Mr. Jesse Collings*	Second Reading (adjourned) 11th March (1655)
Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland)	*Marquess of Hamilton*	Read 1° 4th March (706)
Trawlers' Certificates Suspension	*Mr. Weir*	Read 1° 11th March (1553)
Trusts	*Mr. Rendall*	Read 2° 11th March (1656)
Women's Enfranchisement	*Mr. Stanger*	Read 2° 28th Feb. (212)

APPENDIX II.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1908.

List of Rules, Orders, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

[In Continuation of List given in previous Volume.]

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Education (Scotland) (Code, 1908),—Copy of Code of Regulations for Day Schools, with Appendices, by the Lords of the Committee of the Privy Council on Education in Scotland [35 and 36 Vic., c. 62, s. 67]	27 February	One month
Public Records (Disposal of Documents),—Copy of Addition to the Rules for the Disposal of Documents under the Public Record Office Acts [40 and 41 Vic., c. 55, s. 1, and 61 and 62 Vic., c. 12, s. 1]	2 March	9 weeks

APPENDIX III.

STATEMENT EXPLANATORY OF THE NAVY ESTIMATES, 1908-1909.

The Estimates for 1908–9 amount to 32,319,500*l.* as opposed to 31,419,500*l.* for the current year.

A statement of the gross expenditure on the Naval Service has been placed at the beginning of the printed Estimates, which shows that although Parliament is asked to vote 900,000*l.* more money this year than last, the total outlay for the year will stand at a figure of 13,984*l.* only in excess of that for 1907–8.

It is an accepted axiom in the finance of the Navy that the governing factor is the provision for new construction, but for the next financial year a variety of unusual causes combine to create an actual increase in the cash provision which Parliament is asked to vote for the Navy, in spite of the fact that the new building programme put forward by the Admiralty is exceedingly modest.

In 1904–5 the Estimates stood at 36,889,000*l.* The succeeding years have shown successive reductions of 3,500,000*l.* in 1905–6, 1,520,000*l.* in 1906–7, and 450,000*l.* in 1907–8 (as I explained in my Statement last year, the reduction then was really 1,427,091*l.*, in consequence of the transfer of loan expenditure to the Works Vote).

In each of these years of falling Estimates the Admiralty were able to reduce the cash provision for stores by, on the average, 1,000,000*l.*—the figure last year being 1,241,800*l.* owing to the large redundancy of stores created by the reforms in dockyard administration and by the re-distribution of the Fleet, which were determined on and carried out by the late Board of Admiralty. Of these surplus stocks about half a million's worth still remain and will be exhausted during the coming year.

A fresh sum of some 700,000*l.* has therefore to be provided to buy the balance of Naval stores required for 1908–9. By 1909–10, surplus stocks will have practically disappeared, and then the whole of the stores required for the Fleet will have to be provided for in cash by Parliament.

Apart from the cessation of the abnormally low cash provision for stores, there are certain items in the Estimates which show an increase, over which the Board of Admiralty have no control whatever. Improvements in pay granted in previous years increase the Pay Vote by 150,000*l.*; the Pension Votes are 70,000*l.* higher; a sum of 300,000*l.* has to be found to provide the balance of 500,000*l.* for cooling the magazines on board His Majesty's ships — a service announced to the House of Commons in last year's Estimates Debate; the Cunard subsidy for the *Lusitania* and *Mauretania* stands now at the full amount of 150,000*l.* per annum; prices have gone up, by 284,000*l.* in coal alone; and the annuity in repayment of advances under the Naval Works Loan Acts now reaches the large sum of 1,264,000*l.* In fact, Parliament and the Board are faced with automatic or uncontrollable increases which make any reduction of the total Estimates impracticable.

By strict economy the Admiralty have been able to bring down the inevitable increase to 900,000*l.*, the figure we now ask Parliament to sanction.

It is interesting to recapitulate the salient features of Naval expenditure during the last eight years:—

The total net sum voted for Naval Services in 1900–1 was - - - - - - - - -	30,041,900
This was increased by about a million for the two subsequent years, and in 1903–4 it advanced to 35,727,500*l.* In 1904–5 it reached its highest limit, namely - - - - - - - -	36,889,500
In 1905–6 there was a decrease of - - - - -	3,500,000
And in the two following years an aggregate decrease of	1,970,000
The increase proposed in 1908–9 is - - - - -	900,000
Bringing the net total to - - - - - - -	32,319,500

Now taking loan money :—

	£
The annuity under the Naval Works Acts first became finally chargeable to Naval funds in 1902, the amount for that year being	122,255
This has increased each year on account of fresh advances of loan money, until it has reached a total of—for 1908–9	1,264,032
The expenditure on Works under the Naval Works Acts began in 1895–6, in which year it amounted to	721,099
It gradually increased until in 1904–5 it amounted to	3,402,575
In the last completed year, 1906–7, it had fallen to	2,431,201
It is estimated that the outlay from loan in 1907–8 will be	1,135,000
And in 1908–9	896,925

Shipbuilding and Repairs.

New construction for the year will cost 7,545,202*l.* as against 8,100,000*l.* for 1907–8. The continuous fall in the estimate for new construction from the maximum of 11,654,176*l.* in 1904–5 is thus carried on, and Parliament is asked to vote 4,108,974*l.* less than it was four years ago. Of this sum of 7,545,202*l.*, 6,795,202*l.* will be spent on the continuation of ships already under construction, and 750,000*l.* in beginning work on ships of the new programme, which is composed as follows :—

1 Battleship (improved *Dreadnought* class) ;
1 Large Armoured Cruiser ;
6 Fast Protected Cruisers ;
16 Torpedo Boat Destroyers ;

and a number of Submarine Boats estimated to cost 500,000*l.* in all.

This programme suffices for 1908–9 ; whether and to what extent it may be necessary to enlarge it next year, or in future years, must depend upon the additions made to their naval force by Foreign Powers. His Majesty's Government have every intention of maintaining the standard of the British Navy which has hitherto been deemed necessary for the safeguarding of our national and imperial interests.

Between the 1st April, 1907 and the 31st March, 1908 the following ships will have been completed and become available for service :—

1 Battleship (*Lord Nelson*).
3 Armoured Cruisers (*Warrior*, *Shannon*, and *Minotaur*).
3 Torpedo Boat Destroyers (*Cossack*, *Mohawk*, and *Tartar*).
10 Torpedo Boats (of the Coastal Destroyer type).
8 Submarines.
1 Repair Ship (*Cyclops*) and the New Royal Yacht *Alexandra*.

On the 1st April, 1908, there will be under construction :—

7 Battleships.
4 Armoured Cruisers.
1 Unarmoured Cruiser.
10 Torpedo Boat Destroyers.
20 Torpedo Boats (of the Coastal Destroyer type).
18 Submarines.

This year again there has been some delay in the completion of contract-built ships, owing to labour disputes between employers and their men in the private shipbuilding yards. A continuance of this delay may involve a modification in the numbers of ships given above.

Several incidents occurred early in 1907 which gave us cause to suspect that the method of storing cordite in magazines on board ship required alteration, in order to meet certain dangers that had been discovered to arise from cordite which is exposed to a high temperature. The matter did not admit of delay, and the Admiralty decided, with the approval of a strong scientific committee, presided over by Lord Rayleigh, to fit the cordite magazines with cooling apparatus, and to destroy all cordite that had been long in a hot climate. The cooling apparatus is expensive, and the work when completed will have cost 500,000*l.*; but the necessity for dealing promptly with the danger will not need further statement. The progress on this work has been very prompt and satisfactory, and the amount estimated for it during the year will be fully spent. It has necessitated an increase in the numbers of men employed in the dockyards, and a slight further increase was also necessary to deal with the large number of casualties to torpedo craft and other vessels after the Fleet Exercises had terminated. The remedy of these defects is nearing completion, and the present progress of repairs is now in a normal and satisfactory condition.

The cost of maintaining the torpedo craft in an efficient condition is increasing as the vessels get older, and many of them are due for large boiler repairs during the present year. Before carrying out this work in the older ones, a careful survey will be made to ensure that they are worth this expenditure. The increasing power of machinery and boilers, due to the higher speeds adopted during the past decade, is also throwing an increasing share of repair work on the engineering side of the dockyards and necessitating an increase in the numbers of men therein employed, though no corresponding increase is required on the constructive side at present. Although no important re-constructive work is contemplated, many minor but very important alterations are being carried out gradually with the object of improving the general fighting efficiency of the Fleet. Wireless telegraphy is being adopted in most of the later destroyers, and the improvements in the system adopted in our big ships have required constructive alterations in them to enable the instruments to be fitted. These alterations require considerable time and money to carry out, in view of the great number of vessels involved.

Excellent work continues to be done by repair ships and the artificers of the Fleet in correcting small defects which might otherwise develop to such an extent as to necessitate dockyard assistance before the annual refit was due: but nevertheless, for the reasons I have given above, an increased provision of 700,000*l.* for repairs is needed for the coming year.

We have begun to build submarines in the Royal Dockyards, a step which, besides affording desirable work to them, will be a check on contract prices.

The Admiralty have come to an arrangement with the armour-plate manufacturers for a considerable reduction in the price which is paid for armour plates, and this will take effect in the construction of the new armoured ships of the current year's programme.

General Progress of Recent Reforms.

A review of the memoranda issued by the Admiralty during the last few years discloses a series of important changes and alterations affecting all branches of His Majesty's Naval Service. These are all, in my opinion, entirely well conceived and salutary. Time is now required for the Service to digest and assimilate the new arrangements, and caution will, therefore, be used in bringing forward further schemes at present.

Under the nucleus crew system, the chief executive officers and more important ratings are always on board the ships; from time to time the crews are made up to full complement and are given seagoing practice; the boilers and machinery are always maintained in good order, so as to be ready for sudden mobilisation.

The rapidity and certainty with which the nucleus crew ships can be fully manned has been illustrated signally by the recent exercises of mobilisation at Devonport, Portsmouth, and Chatham.

It has been alleged that the Admiralty have no war plans properly worked out, nor strategical operations thoroughly elaborated; this is a baseless allegation. Such plans are in the possession of the Admiralty in abundant number to meet all probable emergencies. The details of these plans cannot, of course, be made public, for their successful operation in actual warfare must largely depend upon their secrecy.

The new disposition of the Atlantic Fleet with its base at Berehaven and its repairing dockyard at Gibraltar, and the development of the Home Fleet have been notable examples of the progress of the last two years. The fully manned portion of this Fleet at present has its base at the Nore, and is now in full working order, though not yet up to its intended full strength. It will consist this summer of twelve of the latest battleships and armoured cruisers, with destroyer and submarine flotillas attached, and the nucleus crew ships at the three Home Ports ready for rapid mobilisation.

The remarkable results which have during the last year been returned of the gunnery practice carried out by our Fleets and ships all over the world, are facts of great interest and worthy of congratulation. The reports of the efficiency which signalling has reached in the Naval Service, whether by the older systems or by electric and wireless telegraphic installations, are very satisfactory and speak very highly for the intelligence and hard work of the officers and men who take charge of this important part of the service of the sea.

The new system of entry, training and education for all classes of officers in the Navy—executive, engineers and marines—instituted a little more than four years ago, is yielding good results. The first two batches of Cadets are now serving in the training cruisers *Cumberland* and *Cornwall.*

After six months' service in these cruisers, they will be drafted to ships in the seagoing fleets, the first batch going to sea in April. In the fleets they will be trained in a practical way as Naval officers, and after three years they will be examined in Seamanship, Navigation and Pilotage, Gunnery, Torpedo, and Engineering, and in certain optional subjects, such as Mathematics, Mechanics, Electricity, Languages, and History, the study of which at sea will be voluntary. After passing the examinations in the above subjects, they will become Sub-Lieutenants and remain at sea, receiving their promotion to Lieutenant according to the results of their examination. After serving at least two years at sea as Sub-Lieutenant and Lieutenant, a certain proportion will be selected to qualify in the separate specialist branches of the Service, in preparation for which they will then undergo courses at the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, and the specialist schools.

The officers will thus serve for 5½ years continuously at sea before they can specialise.

The Interview Committees which, since taking office, I have appointed to report on the respective qualifications of the candidates for entry as Naval Cadets, have included Admirals of the Fleet Lord Walter Kerr and Sir Edward Seymour, Admirals Sir Archibald Douglas and Sir Arthur Fanshawe, Vice-Admiral Sir John Durnford, the Right Hon. Arthur Acland, Mr. A. C. Benson, and the Headmasters of Marlborough, Wellington, Radley and Dartmouth. Their reports to me have revealed a most satisfactory unanimity of opinion as to the value and success of this method of differentiating between the merits of boys of the young age of twelve years.

Administration.

A reform long advocated by Naval officers has been carried out this year by the transfer of the work of making contracts for Naval guns and Ordnance stores from the War Office to the Admiralty and by the creation of a Naval Ordnance Inspection Department. The Admiralty, therefore, now for the first time have direct control and responsibility for the manufacture and supply of the guns and ammunition of the Fleet. The Army Inspection officers have done the work for the Admiralty with great ability in the past, but the growing divergence in pattern between the Stores required by the two Services and the necessity for the rapid expansion of the supply in war time, a requirement for which the War Office Staff were admittedly unable to provide, rendered the change inevitable.

I am glad to be able to report that the London County Council have accepted the solution of the difficulty with regard to the interference of their electric generating station with Greenwich Observatory, to which I referred in my statement last year.

APPENDIX III.

The Admiralty Office has lost through retirement several of its Heads of Departments. Engineer Vice-Admiral Sir John Durston, K.C.B., for many years Engineer-in-Chief of the Navy, and the first holder of his present rank, has had a unique experience in the superintendence of the development of steam machinery in the Fleet. Well-deserved praise was awarded to the Transport Department by the South African War Commission for its work during that campaign. Vice-Admiral Sir George Boyes, K.C.B., who became Director while the war was in progress, and Mr. Stephen Graff, C.B., who was Civil Head of the Department throughout, have both retired this year.

The labours of the Malta Fever Commissioners have during the past year been brought to a successful termination. They have made the discovery that the milk of the goat is the chief medium by which the bacillus of Malta fever gains access to the human body. We hope that in future this disease, which in the past has committed such ravages among the crews of vessels serving on the Mediterranean Station, will entirely be banished. Since this discovery was made, and the use of goat's milk was forbidden to our seamen and marines, Malta fever has practically disappeared from among them. The Commission, working under the ægis of the Royal Society, was composed of Naval, Military, and Colonial medical officers under the chairmanship of Colonel Bruce, C.B., F.R.S., and their patient and skilled investigations merit the highest praise. Fleet Sugreons Shaw and Clayton, who represented the Navy on the inquiry, contributed not a little to the result.

Personnel.

The War Course College at Portsmouth, re-named the Royal Naval War College, has now been placed under the command of a Flag officer—Rear-Admiral Robert Lowry—with an increased staff of assistants, and work of the greatest value is now being carried out there, in close connection with the Naval Intelligence Department whose Director, Captain Sir Charles Ottley, K.C.M.G., has, on appointment as Secretary of the Imperial Defence Committee, been succeeded by Captain Edmond Slade, hitherto Superintendent of the War Course College.

The report of the inter-departmental Conference on the subject of the present administration of the Coast Guard service, to which reference was made last year, has been received, and has been under consideration by the various Departments concerned. The effect of the policy upon which the report was based would be to bring about a material change in the relations of the Admiralty, Board of Customs, and Board of Trade, in regard to the carrying out of various services which have gradually been undertaken by the Coast Guard during the 50 years that it has been directly under the Admiralty; and looking to the many issues involved, the Board of Admiralty recognised that the change proposed could not take place without very careful consideration. Accordingly it was decided that no attempt should be made to provide for any new policy as regards the administration of the Coast Guard in connection with the preparation of the Estimates for 1908–9.

The New Victualling and Canteen arrangements, based upon the recommendations of a Committee presided over by Rear-Admiral Spencer H. M. Login, C.V.O., whose report has already been presented to Parliament, came into operation on the 1st October last, except on some of the more distant Stations, where the change was deferred until the 1st January. All the reports received are to the effect that the new arrangements are working smoothly and satisfactorily. The new victualling system is, practically everywhere, resulting in economy to the men, partly because the substitution of a fixed daily messing allowance for the varying amount formerly received under the complicated "savings system" enables them to keep closely in touch with their expenditure from day to day, and partly on account of the facilities now given to the messes for purchasing many articles of food for use on board ship from Government stocks and at Government prices. The new Canteen system, under which the Admiralty exercise general supervision over the Canteen arrangements throughout the Fleet and furnish Commanding Officers with official information and assistance in connection with Canteen matters, is also working well, and seems likely to have a very beneficial effect in many ways.

As a result of the deliberations of a Committee on Pay and Allowances of Seamen of the Fleet, new regulations have been issued which will tend to improve the fitness and disciplinary position of the Petty Officers of the Royal Navy, and will ensure a higher standard of general efficiency among the more important ratings.

The annual battle practice is steadily training the Fleet for the firing conditions which would be met with in action. Each year our experience gained increases our knowledge of the practical means of developing the fire of our ships, and we are continuing to make progress in the direction of imitating more closely the actual conditions of battle. It is difficult to appreciate the revolution in Naval gunnery which has taken place in the last few years, and the labour and patience required in introducing large changes throughout a great Service like the Navy. The results obtained this year have shown that a sound knowledge of long-range shooting has thoroughly permeated the Fleet. We are therefore able from the experience gained to take next year several important steps as regards both this practice and additional fittings to the ships. Every endeavour is being made to assimilate our methods to war conditions, but while we are steadily developing, there is no reason to disparage our present results, which undoubtedly afford great proof of the gunnery efficiency of our various ships and Fleets, and give a measure of their capabilities in action.

In the four principal Fleets the recording of the results was placed in the hands of an independent committee, under the Inspector of Target Practice, to ensure a uniform method of assessing the number of hits obtained by each ship.

Works.

After negotiations extending over a good many months, a site has been feued on the west shore of Loch Long for the establishment of a Torpedo Range of 7,000 yards length, and another has been purchased at Greenock for a Torpedo Factory, whence these weapons can readily be conveyed to the range for trial. The rapid increase in recent years of the speed and the range of action of the Whitehead Torpedo has rendered the existing ranges at Portsmouth and Weymouth wholly inadequate for their purpose, and a thorough survey of the coasts of the United Kingdom resulted in the selection of Loch Long as the place which would best comply with all the conditions required. Visitors to this part of Scotland need be under no apprehension that the beauties of the scenery or the convenience of access will be interfered with.

The Admiralty property at Rosyth, consisting of 1,184½ acres, with 285 acres of foreshore, was purchased in 1903–4 for the construction of a new Naval base on the east coast. In the interval, since the completion of the purchase, the Superintending Engineer appointed in charge of Rosyth has made an extensive survey of all the great Naval establishments and buildings yards at home and of some abroad, in order that plans might be drawn for the laying out of Rosyth as a first-class Naval base in such a way that any particular portion might be carried out without interference with the general scheme; the intention was to avoid the repetition of the haphazard growth of a Naval dockyard port, which the history of the old establishments at Portsmouth, Devonport, and Chatham, has proved to be so expensive in the past. The general scheme having been drawn up, the present Board of Admiralty have decided to take in hand the construction of a graving dock, closed basin, and an entrance lock, capable of accommodating the largest modern warships, with a depot for submarines and destroyers, and provision for oil fuel storage. The basin is to be 52½ acres in area, with accommodation for 11 of the largest ships along the quays, or 22 when double banked.

During the past year the preliminary borings have been completed, and detailed contract plans are now being prepared.

This part of the general scheme, for which the contract will shortly be let, is estimated to cost 3,000,000*l.* for work and 250,000*l.* for machinery—the whole to be completed in about 10 years.

The necessity for this work is apparent when it is remembered that there is no Government dockyard capable of taking ships of the *Dreadnought* class along the whole of the east coast of Great Britain.

Colonial Conference.

The appropriations in aid of the Navy Estimates which are contributed by the various self-governing Colonies are the same as in last year's Estimates. The discussions at the Conference with the Colonial Ministers last spring revealed the fact that there was a certain desire on the part of some of the Colonial Governments for the establishment of local defence flotillas in lieu of, or as supplementary to, the present money contributions to the Imperial Exchequer.

The Admiralty, while not desiring to withdraw from the existing agreements and arrangements, recognised that it was only natural that the Colonies should sooner or later desire to have defence forces of their own, and consequently we announced our readiness to meet the wishes of the Colonial Governments as far as possible, and to consider any alternative schemes which they might put forward.

The Prime Minister of the Australian Commonwealth has communicated to the Admiralty the outline of a scheme for the establishment of a local flotilla of destroyers and submarines, which is now under consideration. The Cape and Naval Governments have initiated legislation with the object of establishing divisions of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve in Cape Colony and Natal, and the Legislature of the latter Colony has passed an Act for the purpose.

Hague Conference.

A report of the conclusions of the second International Conference at the Hague has been presented to Parliament in a recent Blue Book. The action to be taken in regard to the various conventions is now engaging the consideration of the Government, and the Board of Admiralty are giving special attention to those conventions which immediately concern the operations of the Fleet, and particularly to the convention for the establishment of an International Court of Appeal in Prize cases. From a naval point of view it is important that there should be an agreement as to the principles of International Law which should govern the decisions of an International Court in matters such as contraband and blockade.

Distribution of the Fleet.

The distribution of the Fleet has undergone no material alteration. The development of the Home Fleet is steadily proceeding and by degrees approaching its desired standard of strength.

In August last two armoured cruisers were added to the First Cruiser Squadron, and 24 destroyers, forming a "Western Group" based on Portland, were placed permanently under the orders of the Commander-in-Chief of the Channel Fleet. More recently six nucleus crew destroyers have been added to this group, with the object of forming a reserve at Portland, and so rendering the group as far as possible self-contained.

The Channel Fleet has had its quota of destroyers brought up to thirty, and the Battle Squadron is being strengthened by the substitution of six of the *Bulwark* type for older vessels, so that it will in future consist of eight *King Edwards* and six *Bulwarks*.

It has recently been decided to appropriate permanently the *Shearwater* and *Algerine* for service on the West Coast of America, the *Algerine* being transferred from the China Station. These two vessels will be available for the Behring Sea patrol and also for occasional visits to the Pacific Islands.

An inter-departmental Conference. under the presidency of Vice-Admiral Sir Reginald Henderson, commanding the Coast Guard and Reserves, has been sitting to consider the general question of the protection to be afforded by the Navy to the fishery interests in the seas surrounding the British Isles, which involves also the question of Revenue protection afloat.

11th February 1908. TWEEDMOUTH.

APPENDIX IV.

MEMORANDUM OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE RELATING TO THE ARMY ESTIMATES FOR 1908–09.

TOTAL ESTIMATES.

The total of the Army Estimates for the new financial year is 27,459,000*l.*, and compares with the totals for the three preceding years as follows :—

	£.
1905–6	29,813,000
1906–7	29,796,000
1907–8	27,760,000
1908–9	27,459,000

showing a progressive reduction on the Votes of 2,354,000*l.*

	£
The average expenditure under Army Loans for the 3 years ending with 1905–6 was	2,539,000
For the 3 years ending with 1908–9 it is not expected to exceed	430,000
giving a reduction in average annual expenditure of	2,109,000

There has thus been a reduction in Votes and Loans for military expenditure, since 1905–06, of close upon 4½ millions a-year. The reduction effected in the actual expenditure under the Votes is dealt with at page 11 of this Memorandum.

The reduction actually made in the Estimates of 1908–9, as compared with those of 1907–8, is 301,000*l.* To make this reduction and at the same time to find 625,000*l.* within the reduced total, for the special charges detailed below, I have had to effect economies amounting in all to 926,000*l.* :—

	£
Initial charges of the Territorial Force	300,000
Bonus to Militiamen transferring to the Special Reserve	80,000
Increase of the Vote for Works, owing to the closing of Loan expenditure	79,000
	459,000
as well as for the continued growth of the following charges :—	
Pensions	96,000
Army Reserve	70,000
	625,000

There is also a reduction of 5,000 in the number of men to be voted. This does not include the reduction which will result from the intended withdrawal, in the course of 1908–9, of a Cavalry regiment and four Infantry battalions from South Africa, as explained at page 18 of this Memorandum.

MILITARY EXPENDITURE AND POLICY.

Military expenditure cannot profitably be considered apart from military policy. In this country, more perhaps than in any other, expenditure can be shown to depend directly on policy, in that the peace establishment of our Land Forces is conditioned by the demands which the India Office, the Colonial Office, the Foreign Office and the Admiralty make on the War Department for the maintenance of garrisons abroad. Nor is the actual peace strength of these garrisons the only factor that has to be taken into account. Their existing strength can be justified only on the assumption that we have in this country organised bodies of reserve troops with which the regiments, batteries, and battalions scattered throughout the Empire could be readily reinforced in case of emergency. If this power of reinforcement did not exist at all, or if it were seriously diminished, the demand which inevitably would arise on all sides for a material increase in the strength of our garrisons abroad could be resisted by no Government.

Our Army is a machine, the parts of which are interdependent. We cannot suddenly take from it a bit here or a bit there without diminishing the strength of the whole out of all proportion to the pecuniary saving effected, and without running the risk of throwing additional burdens on countries, such as India, which we have consistently striven in the past to help.

It is on these grounds that the policy of the Government has been to proceed cautiously, if steadily, in the endeavour to reduce cost. Violent efforts would not only produce reaction, but would prove disappointing in their results.

In order to make clear my meaning I propose, as a preliminary to the usual statement regarding the Army Estimates of the year, to briefly explain the reasons for the policy to which I have just alluded. It is one that has been pursued by every Government in this country for nearly 40 years past, and the grounds which necessitated it I will endeavour to make apparent.

MILITARY POLICY, 1815–1862.

With the close of the Napoleonic wars, a policy of dispersing our available military forces throughout the Empire was deliberately initiated. For years the bulk of the British Army practically existed on foreign service, a comparatively small portion only being retained in the United Kingdom in addition to the depots from which three garrisons in India and the Colonies were fed. The disadvantages of such a system were numerous. As long as the period of foreign service bore so large a proportion to that of service at home, the discouragement to recruiting was great; and it was difficult, if not impossible, to reduce the period of enlistment. Dispersion of the troops also prevented effective concentration of effort for any purpose, as was made clear by the bitter experiences of the Crimean War. Further, the want of any organised military force in these Islands led directly to the expenditure of millions on forts and various projects of passive defence which military opinion is now unanimous in condemning. Moreover, the presence of Regular troops in the self-governing Colonies had a distinctly deleterious effect in that it tended to prevent the Colonial Governments concerned from exerting themselves to develop their own military resources.

This point was strongly emphasized by a Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed in 1861 to consider the general question of the Colonial military establishment. The whole tenour of that Committee's report was to the effect that the responsibility and cost of the military defence of the self-governing portions of the Empire ought to be borne locally. The Committee recommended the complete withdrawal or reduction of the Imperial troops serving in the Australian Colonies, in New Zealand, and in the West Indies.

"With respect to the South African Colonies," they reported, "and all those similarly circumstanced dependencies which contain large European populations, their security against warlike tribes or domestic disturbances should be provided for, as far as possible, by means of local efforts and local organization; and the main object of any system adopted by this country should be to encourage such efforts not merely with a view to diminish Imperial expenditure, but for the still more important purpose of stimulating the spirit of self-reliance in Colonial communities."

In conclusion, the Committee submitted "The tendency of modern warfare is to strike blows at the heart of a hostile power; and it is, therefore, desirable to concentrate the troops required for the defence of the United Kingdom as much as possible, and to trust mainly to naval supremacy for securing against foreign aggression the distant dependencies of the Empire."

APPENDIX IV.

CHANGE OF POLICY AFTER 1862.

The resolution of this Committee was formally adopted by the House of Commons, and the policy then recommended has since been applied by a succession of Governments, to the advantage both of the Colonies and of the Mother Country.

Purely military and strategical reasons must also be added to those other causes which made for a policy of concentration of force rather than of dispersion.

During the first half of the 19th century, the introduction of the railway and of the electric telegraph, and the application of steam to navigation, had profoundly affected the conditions under which war would in future be waged both by sea and by land. In giving evidence before the Committee of 1861, Mr. Gladstone, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, referred to these new conditions in the following terms: "I think the change is enormous, and that, in point of fact, our present system is one founded upon a state of things and a condition of this Empire relatively to other powers which has entirely passed away. In former times, our communications with out Colonies were rare, slow, and uncertain, and it would have been very dangerous indeed to trust to the principle of supporting them from the centre; but now, on the contrary, the communications with the world in general are constant, rapid, and certain, and England is the very centre of those communications. We have enormous advantages for supporting them upon the principle of keeping our great mass of force at home, and supplying them as they may require."

In point of fact, three main causes combined to produce from 1862 onwards a complete change in the military policy of the country. There existed first of all, the notion that the great dominions beyond the sea should, as free communities, undertake the ordinary business of their own defence. In Mr. Gladstone's own words bearing on this very subject, "no community which is not primarily charged with the ordinary business of its own defence is really, or can be, in the full sense of the word, a free community. The privileges of freedom and the burdens of freedom are absolutely associated together; to bear the burdens is as necessary as to enjoy the privilege, in order to form that character which is the great ornament of all freedom itself."

Secondly, there was in many minds a clear recognition of the strategical truth, perhaps more fully realised to-day than formerly, that the defence of this Empire depends on the closest co-operation between the naval and military forces, and that such co-operation is best assured by "keeping our great mass of force at home," and in a central position. Thirdly, a real anxiety existed in the public mind on the score of home defence.

EFFECT OF THE CHANGE OF POLICY ON THE MILITARY SYSTEM.

The change in our military policy leading as it did to a diminution of the forces abroad, and consequently to some sort of equality being established between the home and the foreign establishments, paved the way for a mass of military reforms which hitherto had been rendered impracticable. Long service, the consequent absence of any reserve whatsoever, a chronic, shortage of recruits, prolonged depôt-training with its attendant disadvantages, and a total lack of real war organisation or of serious preparation for war, were all features of the military system that obtained between 1815 and 1689. Before the latter year, little or nothing had been done to remedy the grave defects in our system which the Crimean War had brought to light.

In 1866, a Royal Commission, presided over by Lord Dalhousie, could report as follows:—"We have been content to exist from hand to mouth, with no forecast for the future; no preparations for a state of war were thought of . . . . Men were enrolled and sent half-trained into the field. Recent events, however, have taught us that we must not rely in the future on having time for preparation; wars will be sudden in their commencement and short in their duration, and woe to the country which is unprepared to defend itself." In the following year, when introducing the Army Estimates, General Peel, the Secretary of State for War, referred to the appointment of this Royal Commission in the following words:—"The necessity for a Commission arose from the great difficulty experienced in procuring recruits for the Army, and, in point of fact, the question then was, and now is, whether the British Army should be allowed to collapse."

The number of military problems, therefore, which faced Mr. Cardwell when, in 1689, he became War Minister, was equalled only by the seriousness of their nature. The following is a brief summary of only some of these problems which still possess an interest for the present generation. He had to devise means—

(*a.*) To give effect to the new policy, and to concentrate the Army at home as far as this could legitimately be done.

(*b.*) To determine what relation the home establishment should in future bear to the foreign establishment.

(*c.*) To substitute short service for long service, which, year by year, was becoming more unpopular.

(*d.*) To create a Reserve.

(*e.*) To bring the Regular Army into closer touch with the Auxiliary Forces, and through them with the Nation itself.

(*f.*) To determine the role of the Auxiliary Forces themselves.

In dealing with these problems, Mr. Cardwell had to guard against any measures being taken which would tend to produce in future jealousy or want of sympathy between the Army at home and the Army abroad. If the Regular Army at home was in future to be regarded primarily as a central reserve force for Imperial purposes, it became all the more imperative that the bond of unions between it and the forces serving in India and elsewhere abroad should be maintained as close and as intimate as circumstances would admit.

After the Indian Mutiny, a Royal Commission had been assembled to enquire into the former organisation of the Indian Army and to report as to the system that was to obtain in future in that country. One question put to the Commissioners was the following: "How far the European portion of the Army should be composed of troops of the Line, taking India as part of the regular tour of service, and how far of troops raised for service in India only?" On this matter opinion was sharply divided, but the majority of the Commissioners reported strongly against the institution of a local force. The arguments they adduced are as true to-day as they were 50 years ago.

"However good," they said, "the local force of the late East India Company has proved itself to be, still it is the opinion of the majority that a local force deteriorates more than one which, by frequent relief, has infused into it fresh European notions and feelings, and a vigorous system of European discipline; and that this would more particularly be the case in a climate like that of India." . . . . "The very nature of a double army would, in a great measure, deprive the Line army of the valuable experience it would acquire in India, whilst the local army would in like manner be debarred from all the benefits of field service in Europe." . . . . "The local army of India, as now constituted, is more expensive than the Line in its non-effective charges. A double system of recruiting, the natural result of a double army, would operate most injuriously on recruiting in general, and it would be next to impossible to carry it on satisfactorily, or with good results, if worked by two distinct authorities."

In the Note appended to this Memorandum, I have expressed an opinion, formed after a good deal of consideration, on the financial meaning of a separate Army for India. I have there stated, in some detail, my grounds for believing that the change would give no relief to the British taxpayer commensurate with the loss of military strength it involves; and that it would largely increase the military charges of India.

CARDWELL SYSTEM THE OUTCOME OF THE CHANGE OF POLICY.

These, and similar considerations, could not be ignored by Mr. Cardwell and the Government to which he belonged when, in 1869, the whole question of the future organisation and system of the Regular Army came under review. The system with which Mr. Cardwell's name is now associated is, in itself, an epitome of the many measures which were taken between the years 1869 and 1872 to solve, not one or two difficult problems, but a multitude of problems which for years had been engaging the attention of the country. It is the very antithesis of that system which, in Mr. Gladstone's words, "was founded upon a state of things and a condition of this Empire relatively to other powers which has entirely passed away."

The fundamental conception of the Cardwell system is that both efficiency and economy are gained, not less for ourselves than for India and our other possessions overseas, if the drafts, which in peace are annually required for the maintenance of garrisons abroad, are trained in and are supplied by organised units like Cavalry regiments, batteries, and battalions, rather than by depots. The system of depot-training was deliberately abandoned by Mr. Cardwell and his advisers in favour of unit-training, and this decision has since been supported by every soldier of note and by every Commission and Committee which has reported on our military system during the past 30 years. In particular, the Wantage Committee in 1892 reported unanimously as follows :—

"The advantages of the system of regimental training for men destined for India over the alternative and far more expensive system of depots can hardly be over-estimated. The recruits acquire more interest in their profession, and better teaching in the higher spirit and discipline of a soldier's life. When a recruit enlists he wants to enter the Army and not a military school, and there can be no doubt that, the variety and excitement of regimental life compare favourably, in his estimation, with the routine of life at the depot. . . . The Committee have no hesitation in stating their belief that the double-battalion system is not only the most economical but also the best machinery which can at present be devised for furnishing the foreign drafts and effecting the reliefs."

If war comes the draft-producing units are, under the preent system, themselves converted into efficient fighting formations by the incorporation into them of reservists who have, as a rule, previously served for a considerable period with the Colours. When these units have been mobilized in this way, the business of training and producing drafts is then relegated to certain Reserve units which have been organised in peace for this very purpose. Practical experience has demonstrated that at least one Cavalry or Infantry unit should be maintained at home to feed each unit abroad, if a supply of properly matured drafts is to be assured annually, and if the efficiency of the feeding units themselves, for purposes both of training in peace and of mobilization for war, is to be safeguarded. Accordingly, the system aims at maintaining an equal balance between the number of Cavalry and Infantry units at home and abroad. This system, therefore, in its practical working determines not only the number of troops that must be maintained in the United Kingdom in peace, but also the size of the force that can be mobilized in an emergency for expeditionary purposes.

For many years to come, even if further reductions effected in the garrisons abroad enable us to make corresponding reductions at home, it will, as far as can be foreseen, still be necessary to maintain in this country a body of men of a greater number than is sufficient to produce on mobilization an expeditionary force of six Divisions and four Cavalry Brigades. This force is thus made up of men whom it is necessary to maintain here in their present numbers, for reasons which are wholly independent of the existence or non-existence of such a force, and very small additional expenditure is incurred by organizing them into divisions and brigades.

ESTABLISHMENTS DURING PAST TEN YEARS.

As bearing on the working of the Cardwell system, two erroneous ideas appear to be somewhat prevalent in this country. The first is that the establishment of Regular combatant troops in the United Kingdom is at the present time on a much more lavish scale than in the years which immediately preceded the South African War. The second is that, for a given sum of money, some other system would give better results than can be obtained by a strict adherence to the Cardwell system.

APPENDIX IV.

As to the first of these points, the following figures speak for themselves :—

Arm or Service. All ranks. (Regulars only.)	Establishment Abroad.		Establishment at Home.	
	1898–99.	1908–09.	1898–99.	1908–09.
Cavalary of the Line	7,341	9,264	10,929	9,620
Infantry of the Line	78,065	78,388	69,907	6,4561
All branches, including above arms, administrative services, staffs, &c. ...	121.416	126,000	132,259	135,155
Increase	4,514		2,896	

Increase on Indian Establishment	2,993
,, Colonial Establishment	1,591
,, Home and Colonial Establishment	4,487

ALTERNATIVE SCHEME TO CARDWELL SYSTEM.

The only alternative scheme to the Cardwell system that has ever been seriously mooted is that drafts for India and for Colonial garrisons should once more be supplied from sedentary depots, which from their nature could not be trained as units in peace nor be mobilized for fighting purposes in war. The fighting force maintained in the United Kingdom as a potential reserve for Indian and other oversea garrisons in times of emergency would, in such a case, be additional to the numbers mantained for drafting purposes in the depots.

Assuming that the garrisons abroad remain as at present, a comparison of the two systems presents results which are, perhaps, not always realized. These results in their financial aspect, are developed in the Note appended to this Memorandum. It will be seen that to provide the numbers for the draft-finding depots for Cavalry and Infantry, even after cutting down the peace establishments of the units relieved from draft-finding to the lowest practicable level, at least 3 regiments of Cavalry and 24 battalions of Infantry that are now maintained at home, would have to be sacrificed. In other words, our fighting efficiency would be enormously reduced and our entire military system, as it now exists, would be wrecked, and this without a penny being saved.

If, further, the Artillery, Engineers,, and Departmental Services of two Divisions and one Cavalry Brigade were abolished, there would be some saving. But for many years to come this saving would hardly exceed half a million annually, as is shown in the Appended Note.

To summarize, any departure of this nature from the existing military system would mean that, for a relatively insignificant saving, we should lose approximately one-third of the Regular force that could in present circumstances be mobilized in the United Kingdom in the event of war, many historic names of regiments would disappear from the Army List, and the results of more than 30 years of patient organisation on the lines laid down by Mr. Gladstone and Mr. Cardwell in 1872 would be wholly wasted.

Before all else, it must be constantly borne in mind that any departure from existing principles would bring us once more face to face with those very evils for which Mr. Cardwell and his contemporaries had to find a remedy.

APPENDIX IV.

DEVELOPMENT OF CARDWELL SYSTEM DURING PAST TWO YEARS.

Two years ago the present Government decided to uphold in its integrity the system initiated in 1869, and to develop it still further in accordance with the intentions of its originator.

On this decision the military legislation of last Session was based, and this decision has also determined all the recent administrative action of the War Department.

In the course of the last 2 years the forces of the Crown have been reorganised into two lines in place of three. The First Line of Regular troops is now moulded into six large Divisions and four Cavalry Brigades, with Army Troops and other services in their proper proportion. Behind these there now stands the framework of a new Special Reserve which is designed to provide for wastage in war, to man, in part, the Ammunition Columns, the want of which has kept the Artillery Service in a very defective condition, and to supplement the various ancillary Services which are requisite to make the combatant line effective. This new Reserve has been provided by bringing the old Militia, formerly an intermediate line which was in an unorganised and incomplete state, into closest touch with the Regular Army. This change is being carried out under the powers of the Territorial and Reserve Forces Act of last Session, the Army Order of 23rd December last being the instrument giving effect to the Act.

This Act also provides for the reorganisation of the Yeomanry and Volunteers into a Second Line composed of Infantry Divisions and Mounted Brigades on the same pattern as in the First Line. The purpose of this force is twofold. It is designed, in the first place, to compel any hostile Power which may attempt invasion to send a force so large that its transports could not evade our own fleets and flotillas; and in the second place, to free the Regular Army from the necessity of remaining in these Islands to fulfil the functions of home defence. A further result is to permit greater freedom to the Navy, the ships of which need not be tied to the coast, as would inevitably be the case if no military provision at all were made for the defence of these shores.

The Territorial Force is thus designed to enable both the Regular Army and the Navy to operate with greater freedom at a distance from these shores in places where the defence of British interests may require their presence, and to facilitate the co-operation of both Services as the lobes of a single brain.

Assimilation in organisation, in the system of command and in training as between the First and Second Lines, should ultimately produce such a feeling of fellowship and goodwill between the professional and the citizen forces in this country as will tend more and more to combine both together into one harmonious whole.

FUTURE REDUCTIONS.

Looking to the future, it is, I am convinced, impossible to make further diminutions in Army expenditure on a considerable scale unless we first of all reduce the number of troops serving abroad.

The policy of concentrating our forces is still being continued, and in pursuit of this policy the Government has, during the last 2 years, materially reduced our garrisons abroad, and aims at reducing them still further wherever withdrawals can safely be effected. With this object in view it has been decided to bring home from Colonial stations during the coming financial year one Cavalry regiment and four battalions of Infantry. This arrangement has the full assent of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, who is of opinion that the time has arrived when the interests of South Africa admit of some reduction of the garrison. Owing to the late date at which this decision was arrived at, and to the date of the moves being still uncertain, the Estimates of 1908–9 are based upon the existing distribution; but I expect to be able, in the course of the coming financial year, to save enough money by the withdrawal to pay the transport charges.

Owing to this proposed reduction in the Colonial establishment, the balance aimed at under the Cardwell system between the regiments and battalions at home and abroad will be attained, and a substantial saving of money should thereby be effected in future Estimates.* But, as has been already explained, reductions effected in Colonial garrisons have not been in the past, and are not likely to be in the future, actuated solely by mere considerations of economy.

None the less, the taxpayer in this country who has hitherto borne by far the greatest part of the cost (both naval and military) of Imperial defence is entitled to expect, on the military side at any rate, some diminution of his burden. He may well hope soon to reap, to some extent, the benefits accruing from the policy of the past 30 or 40 years. Not only have the self-governing Colonies, as a result of that policy, been steadily developing their own means of defence, but owing to the same policy, we have been enabled to build up in this country a real reserve force for Imperial purposes. And it is in the operations of the Cardwell system that the best hope of future economies will be found to exist. For when once a balance between units at home and abroad has been arrived at, any future reductions that can be effected abroad should give a double saving. In so far as such reductions are rendered possible owing to a certain amount of external pressure being removed, or to the rise of new protective forces within the Empire itself, the same causes that lead to the strength of the Imperial outpost line being diminished, may reasonably be held to justify a corresponding reduction being made in the strength of the Imperial Reserve.

On the other hand, there is no disguising the fact that every decrease in the strength of the troops available for Imperial purposes, whether at home or abroad, increases *pro tanto* the burden of responsibility that rests with the Territorial Forces of the Empire. Any serious weakening of the First Line must sooner or later postulate a far higher degree of efficiency and readiness than now obtain in the Second Line and if reductions in the Regular Army are carried too far demands will ultimately have to be made on the citizen forces such as hitherto have never been contemplated.

In a steady development on really scientific lines of the organisation of the Regular Army, of the Special Reserve, and of the Territorial Force, and in a rigid application, wherever possible, of the policy of concentration, lies the best hope of economy for the future.

COMPARISONS WITH EARLIER YEARS.

I now come to another subject. As throwing some light on the question whether, and by what means, it might be possible to reduce the Army Estimates to the level at which they stood before the South African War, it is instructive to compare the present Estimates with those of 1898–9. Leaving out of consideration a Supplementary Estimate of 885,000*l*., the total of the Votes for that year was 19,220,000*l*. as compared with 27,459,000*l*. for 1908–9. The increase of 8,239,000*l*. may be analysed by Votes, as follows :—

	Increase.	Decrease.
Votes for—	£	£
Pay, provisions, transport, and other charges of the Regular Army, general administration and miscellaneous services ...	4,408,000	...
Medical Establishments ...	155,000	...
Auxiliary Forces ...	1,603,000	...
Armaments, stores and clothing ...	...	32,000
Works and buildings ...	568,000	...
Repayments under Loans Acts ...	926,000	...
Non effective charges ...	611,000	...
Totals ...	8,271,300	32,000
Net increases ...	8,239,000	

---

* There are, in present circumstances, 15 regiments of Cavalry abroad to 12 at home, and 78 Line battalions abroad and 70 at home, with the result that costly expedients, such as that of the Provisional Battalion, have to be resorted to to maintain the forces abroad. Moreover, the cost of a battalion serving in South Africa is considerably greater than would be the cost of the same battalion at home.

APPENDIX IV.

The increase of 4,408,000*l.* under Regular Army and general administration is made up, roughly, as follows :—

	£
Increased cost of soldiers (mainly increase of emoluments)	1,900,000
Increased number (1,600) and cost of officers	600,000
Increased number of men (3,000)	150,000
Increased cost of transport, and of larger garrison in South Africa	350,000
Increase in Army Reserve	480,000
Increased number of horses (14,000)	450,000
Payment to India (half cost of the transport service and of the garrison of Aden)	230,000
Net increase in cost of staff, War Office educational establishments, and miscellaneous items	248,000
Total	4,408,000

These figures show how small a portion of the increase is due to the increase in the strength of the Regular Army above the level of 1898–9, and how well-nigh impossible it is to look for an early return to anything like the total of the Army Estimates of that period.

If the reduction that has been effected is measured not by the Estimates but by the actual expenditure out of the Votes, the figures are as follows :—

The actual expenditure out of Army Votes in the years 1904–5 to 1906–7, after deducting the expenditure on the Somaliland operations in 1904–5 and the special non-recurring expenditure on taking over Volunteer Loans in 1906–7, compares as follows :—

	£
1904–4	28,483,000
1905–6	28,479,000
1906–7	28,062,000

In 1907–8, as I have explained in connection with the Supplementary Estimate, savings to the extent of 350,000*l.* have been made and appropriated to the extinction of Volunteer debts, leaving for expenditure in the current year 27,410,000*l.*

It will be remembered that in my memorandum on the Estimates of 1906--7, issued shortly after the present Government took office, I announced that provision had been made in the Estimates of 1906–7 for carrying on the Army on the footing then existing for the whole year. But in the course of that year an important programme of reductions was determined upon and as far as possible carried into effect, the actual strength of the Army being reduced during the 12 months ending in March, 1907, by no less than 12,000 men, and other economies being effected in various directions. The reduction in actual expenditure must therefore be measured from the level of the years 1904–5 and 1905–6.

When the Government took office it inherited Estimates which were framed to cover proposals for reforming the organisation of the Army. It is common ground that sweeping reorganisation was necessary. Although the Government was unable to accept the plans of the late Secretary of State for War, it was none the less bound to take energetic steps to redeem the situation. The Estimates it inherited provided for expenditure on the rejected plans, and the saving of this expenditure reduced *pro tanto* the amount actually spent during the period of transition out of the sums voted by Parliament. The actual expenditure consequently could not, and did not, drop in full proportion to the decrease made in the Estimates after the period of transition was over. Moreover, the Government had unavoidable increases of large amount to cover, the growth of expenditure on the three items Army Reserve, Loan Annuities, and Pensions alone, between 1905–6 and 1907–8, amounting to over 450,000*l.*

APPENDIX IV.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE REGULAR ARMY.

The total of Vote A shows a decrease of 5,000 as compared with 1907–8, of which 1,900 arises from reduction of the supernumeraries resulting from the recent reduction of the Army. The other principal causes of the decrease are a reduction of 1,000 men in the Garrison Artillery (a further result of the revision of coast defences by the Joint Naval and Military Committee under Sir J. F. Owen), the return to India of one of the native Indian battalions from North China, and a reduction in the permanent staff of Militia units on the reorganisation of that force.

I explained in my Memorandum of last year, that in order to supply the present deficiency of trained *personnel* for ammunition columns on mobilisation, 33 batteries of Field Artillery, surplus to the requirements of the Expeditionary Force, would be converted into Training Brigades, to train Special Reservists for the purpose. The establishments of these Field batteries have been reduced by some 2,200 men, and those of the batteries in South Africa by some 200 men, on reduction to a 4-gun basis; but the 2,400 men thus set free are temporarily retained on the establishment, in accordance with the policy indicated in my Memorandum of last year, until Special Reservists have been trained to replace them.

MILITIA AND SPECIAL RESERVE.

In accordance with the anouncements made during the Session of 1907, arrangements have been made for the disbandment of 23 battalions of Militia Infantry; but, with this exception, all Militia units will train during 1908 as in 1907. At the end of the training, they will be converted into units of the Special Reserve, with the exception of the Militia Medical Corps, which will be disbanded, as the Special Reservists required to expand the *personnel* of the regular Medical Corps in war will be trained with the Territorial Force. Of the 101 remaining battalions of Infantry Militia, to be converted to Special Reserve battalions, 70 will be amalgamated with the existing depots of Line regiments, and will drill both Line and Special Reserve recruits; 4 will form a depot for Special Reserves of Rifle regiments; and 27 will form Extra Reserve battalions.

Recruiting for the Special Reserve units began on 16th January, 1908.

TERRITORIAL FORCE.

PROGRESS MADE.

The Territorial and Reserve Forces Act, 1907, provides for the formation of the Territorial Force and for the establishment of County Associations in connection with it. This Force will not come into existence until the end of the present financial year, but in the meanwhile preparations are being actively pressed forward to meet the changes for which the Act calls.

The first thing that had to be done was to set up the necessary machinery for the working of the new Act, and all the 93 County Associations required in Great Britain were incorporated before the end of January. A draft scheme drawn up by the General Staff, giving in detail the numbers and the nature of the troops which each county is to be asked to provide, has been laid before the Associations. They are at present engaged, with the assistance of the military authorities of the several Commands, in effecting such adjustments in it as, while not disturbing the total number of troops which each District is intended to provide, may be necessary to suit the capabilities of each county to raise the men. They are also being supplied with instructions regarding the financial arrangements of the new Force; regulations for the clothing of it are also about to be issued (funds will be supplied for two suits per man), and everything is being done to make the Associations familiar with the new duties which they will assume at the commencement of the coming financial year.

Side by side with this, the military organisation of the Force is being advanced. Divisional Commanders have been appointed to the 14 divisions of the Territorial

Force, and the appointments of the Brigadiers and Officers Commanding Artillery formations and their Staff Officers will be made shortly, as will those of the staffs of the Divisional Commanders. Provisional establishments for all branches of the Force have been laid down, and a scheme for training, setting forth the amount of training that will be required from the various arms under Clause 15 of the Act, has been drawn up. A pamphlet embodying the provisions of this scheme is ready for issue.

A form of attestation, to which every recruit on joining the Force will have to subscribe, has been prepared. This is necessary to meet statutory requirements. The terms of service, of extension of service, of re-engagements, and of resignation, have been drawn up. The scales of pay and of allowances have also been settled. The regulations for the Territorial Force, which are to take the place of the Yeomanry and Volunteer Regulations, are being drawn up.

With regard to matériel, the most important requirement is the guns for the new Horse and Field Artillery. The 15-pr. guns just given up by the Regular Army are being converted and mounted upon Q.F. carriages, and are being now delivered at the rate of two batteries a week. It is intended to convert altogether 536 of these guns, efficient to equip 134 batteries of four guns. The 56—4·7-inch Q.F. guns for the Heavy batteries are already in the possession of the Volunteers. Mountain guns will shortly be available; also howitzers, as soon as the Regular Howitzer batteries are rearmed. Ample stocks of ammunition are in store. A large amount of harness and other equipment for the Artillery is also ready for issue.

More than half the machine guns for the Territorial Force are already in possession of Yeomanry and Volunteer units. All the rest are ready for issue. Short rifles to re-equip the Yeomanry are ready and will be issued as soon as accoutrements (to take ammunition in chargers) have been supplied. The Lee-Enfield rifle is also under conversion to charger loading, and large numbers will soon be available for issue to the Territorial Force.

Finally, the Auxiliary Forces Department at the War Office has been reorganized. It will in future be known as the Territorial Forces Department, under a Director-General of the Territorial Force, and the department is placed directly under the Secretary of State.

FINANCIAL PROVISION FOR 1908–9.

In the Vote for Territorial Forces (Vote 4), a special sum of 300,000*l.* is included for initial charges in respect of Clothing and Equipment, to place the County Associations in a thoroughly sound financial position from the beginning, and enable them to conduct their administration without recourse to credit. I have also made what I hope is an adequate provision for the expenses of the Associations, over and above the former cost of the Yeomanry and Volunteers, the total of Vote 4 for 1908–9 standing no less than 443,000*l.* above the combined totals of Vote 4 and 5 for 1907–8.

In addition to this, other sums for the initial equipment of the new Force are included in the Estimates which, with the two sums of 439,000*l.* and 350,000*l.* for extinction of debt taken out of savings by the Supplementary Estimates of 1906–7 and 1907–8, bring the total provision for expenditure of a capital nature in starting the Territorial Force to about 1,250,000*l.*

RE-ARRANGEMENT OF VOTES.

In consequence of the union of the Imperial Yeomanry and the Volunteers to form the Territorial Force, the number of Army Votes is reduced by one, to 15. To minimize the disturbance of the familiar numbers of the Votes, the Vote for Educational Establishments (formerly Vote 11) is inserted in the vacant place as Vote 5, that being also the place held by the Educational Vote in the Navy Estimates. The form of the Votes for the new Forces (Votes 3 and 4) is specially designed to suit the needs of the year of transition, and will be simplified in the next Estimates. These arrangements have been approved by the Treasury.

APPENDIX IV.

LOAN ANNUITIES.

It will be seen, on reference to Vote 10, that there is no increase this year in the Repayments under the Barracks and Military Works Acts. The expenditure under the Military Works Loan in 1907 involves the creation of an annuity of some 35,000*l.*; but, owing to the fact that the necessary money was not borrowed until 1908, the first charge in respect of the annuity falls on the Estimates of 1909–10.

PENSIONS.

The growth of the Non-effective Votes continues, and the increase in 1908–9 is no less than 96,000*l.* Of this some 30,000*l.* is due to the normal growth of the charge for Officers' Retired Pay, and the rest to the growth of Chelsea Pensions. This latter increase arises to a large extent from the discharge to pension of abnormal numbers of non-commissioned officers and men in consequence of the reduction of the Army and of the permanent staff of the Militia; but apart from this special increase (which is, of course, more than balanced by the saving on pay) the ceaseless growth of pension charges, to be met from a reduced total of Army Votes, and with constant pressure in the direction of increased scales for this or that class of pensioner, gives rise to considerable apprehension of future difficulties.

R. B. H.

February, 1908.

INDEX

TO THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[AUTHORISED EDITION].

THIRD VOLUME OF SESSION 1908.

FEBRUARY 27—*MARCH* 12.

EXPLANATION OF ARRANGEMENT AND ABBREVIATIONS.

Bills: Read First, Second, or Third Time = 1R., 2R., 3R. [*c.*] = Commons. [*l.*] = Lords. *Amendt.* = Amendment. *Os.* = Observations. *Qs.* = Questions. *As.* = Answers. *Com.* = Committee. *Con.* = Consideration. *Rep.* = Report.

Where in the Index * is added with Reading of a Bill, or a Vote in Committee of Supply, it indicates that no Debate took place on that stage of the Bill, or on that Vote.

Subjects discussed in Committee of Supply are entered under their headings, and also under Members' Names, without reference to the actual Vote before the Committee.

Abraham, Mr. W. [Cork County, N.E]
- Devonshire Estate—Case of Mr. J. Mulcahy, *Mar. 5,* 857.
- Foot Estate—Case of P. Healy, *Mar. 11,* 1501.
- Kingston Estate—Sale Proposals, *Mar. 12,* 1715.
- Peard Estate—Case of Mrs. M. Rice, *Mar. 5,* 858.
- Purcell Estate—Case of M. Lyons, *Mar. 9,* 1079.
- Webb Estate—Case of Mrs. Kelleher, *Mar. 11,* 1500.

Acland, Mr. F. D. [Yorks, Richmond]
- Trade Disputes, Power of Chief Magistrates to call out Troops during, *Mar. 5,* 933, 934.
- Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28,* 221–225.
- Yeomanry
  - Attestation Form, New, Regulations as to Signing, *Mar. 12,* 1808.
  - Pay under New Scheme, *Mar. 12,* 1808, 1809.
- Yorkshire, North Riding—Single School Areas, *Mar. 4,* 666.

Acland-Hood, Rt. Hon. Sir A. [Somerset, Wellington]
- Army
  - Converted Gun—Exhibition of Specimen to Members, *Mar. 12,* 1734.
  - Trade Disputes, Power of Chief Magistrates to call out Troops during, *Mar. 5,* 930.

Adkins, Mr. W. R. [Lancs., S.E., Middleton]
- Education (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 6,* 1027–1031, 1034.

Admiralty
- *First Lord*—Rt. Hon. Lord Tweedmouth.
- *Financial Secretary*—Rt. Hon. E. Robertson.
- Beresford-Scott Case, Decision in.
  - *Q.* Mr. Lea; *A.* Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 9,* 1098.
- Policy—German Emperor's Letter to Lord Tweedmouth.
  - *Os.* Lord Tweedmouth, *Mar. 9,* 1072; Marquess of Lansdowne, 1072–1075; Earl Rosebery, 1075–1077.
  - *Qs.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. H. C. Lea, Mr. Ridsdale, Colonel Lockwood; *As.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 9,* 1134.
  - Statements (Mr. Asquith), *Mar. 6,* 1067.
  - *Times,* Prosecution of, Proposed.
    - *Qs.* Mr. MacNeill; *As.* Sir S. Evans, *Mar. 12,* 1768.

Africa, Central
- [*See also* Names of Places.]
- Native Labour, Recruitment proposals.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Bridgeman, Mr. Lyttelton, Captain Craig, Sir G. Parker; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 11,* 1517.

Africa, East
[*See also* Names of Places.]
British Indian Population.
Q. Sir G. S. Robertson; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Feb. 27*, 42.
Disturbances, Information as to.
Q. Sir G. S. Robertson; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Feb. 27*, 41.
Game Preserves, Opposition to.
Qs. Mr. J. C. Wason, Mr. Rees; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9.* 1108.
Jubaland Province, Administration of.
Q. Mr. Guy Baring; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9*, 1109.
Portuguese Native Labour Recruitment Negotiations.
Q. Sir B. Sheffield; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9*, 1105.
Q. Sir G. Parker; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9*, 1109.
Qs. Mr. A. S. Wilson, Mr. Goulding, Sir G. Parker; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 12*, 1739.
Qs. Mr. Lyttelton, Sir G. Parker, Mr. J. C. Wason; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 11*, 1521.
Steamship Communication with.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9*, 1100.
Under-Secretary's Visit, Reports on.
Qs. Sir H. Vincent; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Feb. 27*, 40.
Veterinary Department—Report (1906–7) Presented, *Mar. 2*, 290, 311.

Africa, South
[*See also* Names of Places.]
Customs Unification—Proposals for Conference.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9*, 1101.
Garrison—Reduction Proposals.
Q. Mr. G. Baring; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Feb. 27*, 36.

Africa, West
[*See also* Names of Places.]
San Thomé and Principé Indentured Labour Regulations.
Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 12*, 1748.

Agar-Robartes, Mr. [Cornwall, St. Austell]
Criminal Procedure—Case of F. W. Palmer, *Mar. 2*, 338.

Agricultural Education in Elementary Schools Bill
c. 2R., *Mar. 11*, 1653.

Agriculture and Fisheries, Board of
President—Rt. Hon. Earl Carrington.

Agriculture
Inspectors—Welsh Language, Regulations as to.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Sir E. Strachey, *Feb. 27*, 56.

Agriculture and Technical Instruction Department, Ireland
Vice-President—Rt. Hon. T. W. Russell.
Adulterated Foodstuffs, Power to prevent Sale of.
Q. Mr. Gwynn; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell, *Mar. 4*, 700.
Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Regulations No. 2, Presented, *Mar. 5*, 821, 846.
Filgate, Mr. W. T. S., Duties and Qualifications of.
Qs. Mr. James O'Connor, Mr. J. MacVeagh, Mr. Mooney, Mr. Clancy, Mr. P. White; *As.* Mr. T. W. Russell, *Mar. 5*, 897.

Ainsworth, Mr. J. S. [Argyll]
Fisheries—Seine Nets and Drift Nets, Use of, *Mar. 4*, 682.
Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill—Government Attitude, *Mar. 11*, 1494.

Aland Islands
Russian Occupation.
Qs. Mr. Gretton, Lord Balcarres; *As.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 12*, 1749.

Alden, Mr. P. [Middlesex, Tottenham]
Macedonia—Turkish Governor, Austro-Hungarian Attitude, *Mar. 12*, 1747.
Navy
Coal, Quantities and Prices in 1906 and 1907, *Feb. 27*, 33.
Engine-room Artificers, Promotion of, *Mar. 4*, 659.
Post Office — Consumptive Employees, Scheme for providing Sanatoria, *Feb. 27*, 54.
Refreshment Houses Act, Section 6, Operation of, *Mar. 3*, 491.

Allen, Mr. A. A. [Christchurch]
Post Office, Political Organisations, Regulations as to, *Mar. 3*, 508.
Territorial Force
Officers, Messing Allowance during Training, *Mar. 11*, 1516.
Walking-out Uniform, Pattern of, *Mar. 11*, 1516.
Volunteer Officers—Outfit Grant on Transfer, *Mar. 11*, 1517.

Ampthill, Lord
Volunteers—Long Service Cases, *Mar. 2*, 309, 310.

Ancient Monuments
Inventory of, proposed.
Qs. Mr. Horniman, Mr. MacNeill; *As.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 11*, 1552.
Ireland, *see that title.*
Royal Commissions, Proposals as to.
Q. Mr. L. Williams; *A.* Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, *Mar. 10*, 1286.

Anson, Sir W. R. [Oxford University]
Education (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R. *Mar. 6,* 1045–1052.
Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill, Grants to Voluntary Schools, System of Calculating, *Mar. 4,* 680.
Roman Catholic University Proposals—Provost's Speech at Manchester, Tenor of, *Mar. 4,* 693.

Anstruther-Gray, Major [St. Andrews Burghs]
Charitable and Reformatory Institutions, Inspection of, *Mar. 5,* 875.
Duke of York's School
  Reduction of Number of Boys on Removal, etc., *Mar. 2,* 327.
  Site, Value of and Proposals as to, *Mar. 2,* 344.
Edinburgh—Queen Victoria School, Accommodation at, *Mar. 5,* 870.
Fodder, Dangers from Import of and Proposals for Prohibiting, *Mar. 5,* 886.
Mauritius—Cyclone on 3rd inst., Particulars of, *Mar. 12,* 1738.
Merchant Shipping—First Aid Certificates of Masters and Mates, *Feb. 27,* 24; *Mar. 3,* 532; *Mar. 5,* 879.
Mines, Scottish—Fatal Accidents (1907–8), *Feb. 27,* 21.
Russo-Japanese War—British Vessels Sunk or Damaged, Progress of Negotiations, *Mar. 3,* 526.
St. Andrews Ambulance Association—Recognised Lecturers in Scotland, *Feb. 27,* 24.
Smyrna, Ransom of Mr. Abbott, Measures for Recovery, *Feb. 27,* 44.
Trade Disputes, Power of Chief Magistrates to call out Troops during, *Mar. 5,* 927.

Ardglass
Estate of Mrs. McEndoo and Mrs. Reid, Sale of.
  Q. Mr. Hayden; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 3,* 550.

Ardpatrick
Case of Mrs. B. Murphy.
  Q. Mr. Lundon; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 12,* 1711.

Armagh
Asylum—Cost of Maintenance of Insane Prisoners.
  Q. Mr. Moore; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 9,* 1087.

Armaments
Estimates for, Growth of, since 1893.
  Os. Mr. J. M. Macdonald, *Mar. 2,* 356, 357; Mr. Simon, 405.

Armaments—*cont.*
Increase in Expenditure on.
  Os. Mr. Everett, *Mar. 12,* 1836–1838; Lord Balcarres, 1839.
Reduction of Expenditure on, Proposals as to.
  Os. Mr. J. M. Macdonald, *Mar. 2,* 355–365; Sir J. Brunner, 365–368; Mr. Asquith, 369–382; Mr. Wyndham, 383–391; Mr. E. Robertson, 391–404; Mr. Simon, 404–409; Colonel Seely, 409–414; Mr. A. Lee, 415–421; Mr. J. M. Robertson, 421–430; Mr. Clynes, 430–434; Mr. Bellairs, 434–443; Sir G. Parker, 443–448; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 448–461; Mr. Haldane, 461–468.

Armstrong, Whitworth and Co.
Wages paid to Electrical Wire Workers.
  Q. Mr. Hudson; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 5,* 868.

Arnadooman Farm
Disposal of.
  Q. Mr. C. Craig; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 9,* 1084.

Army
Secretary of State—Rt. Hon. H. B. Haldane.
Parliamentary Secretary—Earl of Portsmouth.
Financial Secretary — Mr. T. R. Buchanan.
Appropriations-in-Aid, Increase in.
  Os. Mr. V. Cavendish, *Mar. 5,* 948–950.
Arms and Ammunition supplied to.
  Os. Mr. Bellairs, *Mar. 12,* 1833; Mr. Haldane, 1859.
Artillery
  Reductions in.
    Os. Viscount Midleton, *Mar. 12,* 1665–1668; Earl of Portsmouth, 1673; Earl Roberts, 1682; Sir F. Banbury, 1850; Mr. Haldane, 1857, 1858; Mr. Wyndham, 1865, 1866.
  Minute of Army Council approving—Tabling, proposed.
    Os. Viscount Midleton, *Mar. 12,* 1658, 1670, 1671; Earl of Portsmouth, 1671–1673, 1681.
  Reorganisation of.
    Os. Earl of Portsmouth, *Mar. 12,* 1673–1675.
  Reserve, Present Strength of.
    Os. Viscount Midleton, Earl of Portsmouth, *Mar. 12,* 1703.

[*cont.*

Army—*cont.*

Barrack Policy.
Os. Mr. V. Cavendish, *Mar. 5*, 948; Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1860.

Expenditure on Building and Repair (1897–1907).
Q. Mr. Gulland; *A.* Mr. Buchanan, *Mar. 11*, 1512.

Bayonet, New Pattern, Order for.
Q. Mr. A. Smith; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1717.

Cadet Corps, *see that title.*

Canteen System.
Os. Mr. Maclean, *Mar. 11*, 1613.

Cardwell System, Adherence to.
Os. Colonel Seely, *Mar. 2*, 412; Mr. Haldane, 463, 464; Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 706–708, 741; Sir C. Dilke, 736, 741–743; Mr. Wyndham, 745, 751, 752; Mr. McCrae, 754; Mr. Rees, 769; Major Dunne, *Mar. 5*, 954, 955; Mr. Wyndham, *Mar. 11*, 1598; Mr. Rees, 1601; Mr. Luttrell, 1617, 1618.

Cavalry.

Depots, Establishment of.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 728.

Distribution System.
Qs. Earl Winterton; *As.* Mr Haldane, *Mar. 5*, 869.

Divisional Cavalry recruited from Yeomanry, Abandonment of Scheme.
Os. Lord E. Talbot, *Mar. 12*, 1852, 1853; Mr. Haldane, 1852, 1855; Mr. Wyndham, 1863.

Regiments for Scotland, Decisions as to.
Os. Mr. Cochrane, *Mar. 12*, 1817, 1818.

Reorganisation Scheme.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 728.

Statistics (1908).
Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 2*, 329.

Training in Cork District.
Q. Mr. Lonsdale; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11*, 1495.

Civil Employment for Ex-Soldiers.
Os. Mr. Maclean, *Mar. 5*, 946; Mr. Whitehead, 946–948.

Colonial Garrisons, Decision as to.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 734.

Cordite

Amount destroyed and Measures taken to replace.
Os. Mr. Bellairs, *Mar. 12*, 1833, 1834; Mr. Haldane, 1857.

Defective Stores, Alleged Use of.
Qs. Mr. Mooney, Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11*, 1615.

Inquiry as to Use of Mercury, etc.
Q. Viscount Helmsley; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 5*, 870.

Report of Committee of Inquiry.
Os. Mr. Mooney, *Mar. 11*, 1614; Mr. Haldane, 1614.

Army—*cont.*

Danish System of Training, Introduction of.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 726.

Drunkenness Statistics (1897–1907).
Q. Sir G. S. Robertson; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 5*, 863.

Enfield Lock—Case of West.
Q. Colonel Lockwood; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 10*, 1293.

Q. Mr. Branch; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 10*, 1297.

Engineers

Reorganisation of.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 733, 734; Mr. A. Lee, 733.

Scheme for Improvement of Service of Surveyors.
Q. Mr. Bennett; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Feb. 28*, 212.

Q. Mr. Nield; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1719.

Expeditionary Force of 160,000 Men, Organisation of.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 709–712, 737; Sir C. Dilke, 737; Major Dunne, *Mar. 5*, 954; Colonel Sandys, *Mar. 12*, 1805; Mr. Bright, 1811; Mr. Byles, 1823.

Artillery Training Brigades.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 713, 714.

Reserve Officers.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 712.

Special Reserve

Cost of.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 715.

Organisation of.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 711, 712, 715.

Expenditure, Necessity for Reduction of.
Os. Mr. Byles, *Mar. 12*, 1821–1825; Sir W. Collins, 1851; Mr. Lea, 1853–1855.

Statistics, 1904–5 1907–8.
Os. Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 2*, 374, 378; Mr. Wyndham, 385, 386; Mr. Byles, *Mar. 4*, 765–769.

Q. Mr. Toulmin; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Feb. 28*, 204.

Furlough—Special Facilities for Men Abroad, proposed.
Q. Sir. B. Sheffield; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 10*, 1295.

General Staff, Establishment of.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1858, 1859.

Guns, Converted—Exhibition of Specimen to Members.
Q. Sir A. Acland-Hood; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1734.

Horses

Irish Breeding Scheme, Encouragement of.
Q. Mr. Lonsdale; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1551.

[*cont.*

Army—*cont.*
- Horses—*cont.*
  - Riding Horses available.
    - *Q.* Mr. Lonsdale; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Feb. 27*, 35.
  - Subsidies Paid for Breeding.
    - *Q.* Mr. Lonsdale; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11*, 1495.
  - Supply of.
    - *Os.* Mr. Lane-Fox, *Mar. 5*, 956–958; Earl of Erroll, *Mar. 12*, 1695.
- Infantry, Condition of.
  - *Os.* Viscount Midleton, *Mar. 12*, 1668; Earl of Portsmouth, 1675; Duke of Bedford, 1689–1693.
- Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Battalion—Procedure in Conveyance to Dublin.
  - *Q.* Mr. C. B. Harmsworth; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 2*, 316.
- Irish Dragoon Guards, 4th Selection of, Station for.
  - *Q.* Mr. Moore; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 2*, 331.
- Manœuvres, Results of, and Proposals for.
  - *Os.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 732, 733.
- Marines, Royal, *see that title.*
- Medical College in London, Opening of.
  - *Os.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 727.
- Mediterranean Garrisons, Reduction of.
  - *Os.* Viscount Midleton, *Mar. 12*, 1662; Lord Haversham, 1702.
- Military Law, Changes in.
  - *Os.* Sir C. Dilke, *Mar. 4*, 743, 744.
- Militia, Volunteers, Yeomanry, *see those titles.*
- Musketry Policy.
  - *Os.* Mr. Courthope, *Mar. 12*, 1826–1829.
- Officers
  - Colonial Staff Officers, Exchange System.
    - *Os.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 743.
  - Examinations, Standard of.
    - *Os.* Mr. Bennett, *Mar. 11*, 1586.
  - Eyesight, Regulations as to.
    - *Q.* Mr. Raphael; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1716.
  - Foreign and Oriental Languages, Facilities for acquiring.
    - *Os.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 723, 724; Mr. Rees, 723, 772.
  - Pay of.
    - *Os.* Mr. Guy Baring, *Mar. 5*, 960; Mr. Lupton, 964; Earl of Erroll, *Mar. 12*, 1697.
  - Pensions, Reduction of, proposed.
    - *Os.* Mr. Lupton, *Mar. 5*, 964, 965.
  - Promotion from the Ranks.
    - *Os.* Mr. Lane-Fox, *Mar. 5*, 956; Mr. C. E. Price, 958; Mr. Lupton, 964; Mr. Bennett, *Mar. 11*, 1588; Mr. Seddon, *Mar. 12*, 1813–1815; Mr. Haldane, 1814; Mr. Cochrane, 1815.

Army—*cont.*
- Officers—*cont.*
  - Shortage in Supply of.
    - *Os.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 716; Mr. Lambton, *Mar. 5*, 907–914; Mr. Lane-Fox, 956; Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 11*, 1565; Mr. Bennett, 1583–1588; Mr. Rees, 1602.
  - Territorial Force, *see that title.*
  - Training, Alterations in Present System.
    - *Os.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 719–724; Col. Kenyon-Slaney, 759, 760; Mr. Seddon, 763; Mr. Lambton, 774; Major Dunne, *Mar. 5*, 955; Mr. Guy Baring, 958–960.
  - Universities and Public Schools, Recruiting from.
    - *Os.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 716–719; Mr. Bennett, *Mar. 11*, 1587; Viscount Midleton, *Mar. 12*, 1665; Earl of Erroll, 1698; Mr. A. S. Wilson, *Mar. 12*, 1782; Mr. Cochrane, 1820, 1821; Sir F. Banbury, 1848; Mr. Haldane, 1849, 1861.
- Organisation of.
  - *Os.* Mr. Wyndham, *Mar. 11*, 1590, 1591; Colonel Sandys, *Mar. 12*, 1803–1805, 1807; Mr. Wyndham, 1864–1867.
- Pay, Increase in.
  - *Os.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 724.
- Pensions
  - Cases of D. Harvey and P. Brady and T. McAuley.
    - *Qs.* Mr. Farrell; *As.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 5*, 863.
  - System of Reckoning on Transfer of Service.
    - *Os.* Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, *Mar. 11*, 1611, 1612; Mr. Maclean, 1612.
- Period of Service, Disadvantages of Short Service.
  - *Os.* Earl of Portsmouth, *Mar. 12*, 1675–1680.
- *Personnel*, Reduction of, proposed.
  - *Os.* Mr. Luttrell, *Mar. 11*, 1616–1621; Mr. Byles, 1621; Mr. Bright, *Mar. 12*, 1810–1812; Sir F. Banbury, 1846–1848; Mr. Lupton, 1868–1873.
- Pimlico Clothing Factory Assistant Inspector, delay in appointing.
  - *Q.* Mr. Watt; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 5*, 871.
- Plain-Clothes Regulations, Extension of, to Colour-Sergeants.
  - *Os.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 727. Colonel J. Phillips, *Mar. 5*, 955.
- Punishments, Alterations in Regulation as to.
  - *Os.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 727.
- Recruiting Statistics.
  - *Os.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 725.

[*cont.*

Army—*cont.*

Reductions effected.
Os. Mr. Wyndham, *Mar. 2,* 385, 386; Mr. Haldane, 385; Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4,* 735, 752; Mr. Wyndham 752; Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, 759; Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 11,* 1556, 1557, 1566; Mr. Wyndham, 1591, 1592; Viscount Midleton, *Mar. 12,* 1661, 1662, 1664; Earl of Erroll, 1695, 1696, 1697; Viscount Hardinge, 1699; Lord Haversham, 1702, 1703; Mr. Cochrane, 1816; Mr. Hunt, 1631.

Report for 1907 of Inspector-General of the Forces as to Training and Efficiency of the Troops, etc.—Tabling.
Os. Viscount Midleton, *Mar. 12,* 1659, 1668, 1670; Earl of Portsmouth, 1681; Lord Ribblesdale, 1694.

Reserve

Special Reserve, *see under Sub-heading* Territorial Force.

Strength of.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4,* 728; Mr. Wyndham, 728; Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 11,* 1555, 1556; Duke of Bedford, *Mar. 12,* 1689–1692; Lord Haversham, 1703.

Rifles

Lee Enfield

Converted—Position of Swivel-lug.
Q. Mr. Courthope; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4,* 662.

Slings for.
Q. Mr. Courthope; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Feb. 27,* 31.

Muzzle Velocity.
Q. Mr. G. H. Faber; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11,* 1497.

Savings Bank—Statement (1906–7) Presented, *Mar. 2,* 291, 311.

Soldiers

Barrack Accommodation.
Os. Mr. Maclean, *Mar. 5,* 945.

Civil Rights and Social Condition of.
Os. Mr. Maclean, *Mar. 5,* 944.

Consumption, Treatment of Soldiers suffering from.
Os. Mr. Summerbell, *Mar. 5,* 960–963.

Date of Tabling Report.
Q. Colonel Seely; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 2,* 329.

Report by War Office Presented, *Mar. 6,* 990; *Mar. 9,* 1070.

Sanitoria, Grant for Provision of.
Q. Colonel Seely; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 2,* 328.

Detention in lieu of Imprisonment.
Os. Mr. Maclean, *Mar. 5,* 944.

Staff College—Proposals for Increase of Students.
Q. Mr. H. Beach; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12,* 1718.

Army—*cont.*

Stores

Decrease in Expenditure on.
Os. Earl of Erroll, *Mar. 12,* 1697, 1698.

Maintenance of Efficient Reserve of.
Os. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 11,* 1557.

Strength of
Os. Mr. Lupton, *Mar. 5,* 966; Viscount Middleton, *Mar. 12,* 1658–1670; Viscount Hardinge, 1699–1701.

Return Presented, *Mar. 3,* 473, 490.

Submarine Mining Work, Decision as to.
Q. Mr. J. D. White; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 2,* 312.

Temperance, Steps taken to Promote.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4,* 727.

Territorial Force (*see also titles* Militia, Volunteers, Yeomanry.)

Advisory Council, Scope of, etc.
Qs. Mr. Fell, Lord Balcarres; *As.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 2,* 330.

Areas where Regiments Overlap.
Os. Viscount Helmsley, *Mar. 12,* 1834, Mr. Haldane, 1834, 1856.

Artillery

Field

Drivers, Training Proposals for.
Os. Sir C. Dilke, *Mar. 11,* 1170; Mr. Belloc, 1573; Mr. A. S. Wilson, *Mar. 12,* 1785.

Guns for.
Q. Sir G. Doughty; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4,* 663.

Organisation of, as a Fighting Force.
Os. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 11,* 1558–1561; Sir C. Dilke, 1567–1571; Mr. Belloc, 1572–1575; Mr. Haldane, 1575–1580; Sir H. Vincent, 1581; Mr. Wyndham, 1594, 1595.

Organisation and Training Proposals.
Os. Sir C. Dilke, *Mar. 4,* 739, 740; Mr. Wyndham, 746, 753; Earl Roberts, *Mar. 12,* 1683–1687; Lord Wenlock, 1701.

Attestation Form, Terms of.
Os. Earl of Dartmouth, *Mar. 2,* 295; Mr. McCrae, *Mar. 4,* 756, 757.

Army—*cont.*
- Territorial Force—*cont.*
  - Attestation Form—*cont.*
    - Amendment Proposals.
      - *Q.* Mr. Courthope; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4,* 662.
      - *Q.* Mr. Gretton; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4,* 663.
    - Cost of Printing, etc.
      - *Qs.* Sir H. Vincent; *As.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 2,* 328.
    - Revised Forms Presented, *Mar. 11,* 1437, 1488.
      - *Os.* Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 11,* 1564, 1565; Sir H. Vincent, 1582; Mr. Haldane, 1582; Mr. A. S. Wilson, *Mar. 12,* 1785.
      - *Q.* Mr. H. P. Pease; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12,* 1717.
  - Brigadier-Colonels, Duties and Pay of.
    - *Os.* Sir H. Vincent, *Mar. 11,* 1582, 1583; Mr. Haldane, 1582, 1583.
  - Church Parade on April 5th, Proposals as to.
    - *Os.* Lord Newton, *Mar. 2,* 305–308; Earl of Portsmouth, 308; Earl of Dartmouth, 308.
  - City of London Corps, Organisation of.
    - *Os.* Sir F. Banbury, *Mar. 12,* 1848, 1856; Mr. Haldane, 1856.
  - Clothing, Calling in for Valuation.
    - *Os.* Earl of Dartmouth, *Mar. 2,* 295.
  - Colour-Sergeants, Decision as to.
    - *Q.* Earl Winterton; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 5,* 870.
  - Conditions of Service.
    - *Os.* Mr. Seddon, *Mar. 4,* 764, 765.
  - Cost of.
    - *Os.* Mr. Wyndham, *Mar. 2,* 389; Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4,* 730–732; Mr. Wyndham, 730, 731, 746, 747; Mr. McCrae, 755, 756; Sir H. Vincent, *Mar. 11,* 1580; Mr. A. S. Wilson, *Mar. 12,* 1781.
  - County Associations
    - Financial Position of.
      - *Os.* Earl of Dartmouth, *Mar. 2,* 294; Mr. V. Cavendish, *Mar. 5,* 951–954; Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 11,* 1564.
    - Military Representatives, Power to co-opt Members as.
      - *Os.* Earl of Dartmouth, *Mar. 2,* 294; Earl of Portsmouth, 301.

Army—*cont.*
- Territorial Force—*cont.*
    - Recruiting Methods permissible to.
      - *Qs.* Mr. G. Roberts, Earl Winterton, Mr. A. Chamberlain; *As.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 3,* 518.
    - Relations with the War Office.
      - *Os.* Earl of Dartmouth, *Mar. 2,* 296; Earl of Portsmouth, 303.
    - Schemes and List of Members Presented, *Mar. 6,* 990; *Mar. 9,* 1071.
    - Secretaries
      - Number Appointed.
        - *Q.* Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 2,* 327.
      - Remuneration of.
        - *Os.* Earl of Dartmouth, *Mar. 2,* 296, 297, 302; Earl of Portsmouth, 302; Mr. Rees, *Mar. 11,* 1601.
  - Cyclists, Proposals for.
    - *Q.* Mr. Partington; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Feb. 27,* 35.
    - *Q.* Mr Layland-Barratt; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11,* 1498.
  - Decorations, Decision as to.
    - *Os.* Mr. A. S. Wilson, *Mar. 12,* 1785.
  - Employees in Dockyards, Eligibility of.
    - *Os.* Marquess of Winchester, *Mar. 2,* 299; Lord Tweedmouth, 300.
  - Enlistment into the Regular Army from Regulations as to.
    - *Os.* Mr. Wyndham *Mar. 11,* 1597.
  - Government Employees, Eligibility of.
    - *Q.* Mr. W. T. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12,* 1718.
    - *Qs.* Mr. Courthope; *As.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 12,* 1752.
  - Guns, Provision of.
    - *Qs.* Earl of Dartmouth, *Mar. 2,* 295, 296; Earl of Portsmouth, 303, 304; Earl Fortescue, 304; Duke of Richmond and Gordon, 304; Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 11,* 1561–1564, 1578; Sir C. Dilke, 1568; Mr. Belloc, 1573, 1574; Mr. Haldane, 1576–1578; Mr. Cochrane, *Mar. 12,* 1819, 1820; Mr. Haldane, 1819; Lord Balcarres, 1840.
  - Home Defence, Arrangements for.
    - *Q.* Mr. Courthope; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11,* 1499.
  - Horses, Source of Supply.
    - *Os.* Mr. A. S. Wilson, *Mar. 12,* 1785; Mr. Haldane, 1861.

[*cont.*

Army—*cont.*
Territorial Force—*cont.*
Lords-Lieutenant, Political Position of.
Os. Mr. Mackarness, *Mar. 12*, 1829; Mr. Haldane, 1862, 1863, 1872; Mr. Wyndham, 1863; Mr. Gretton, 1872.
Mobilisation Scheme.
Q. Mr. Courthope; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11*, 1499.
Officers
Conditions of joining.
Os. Mr. Gretton, Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1873.
Messing Allowance during Training.
Q. Mr. A. Allen; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11*, 1516.
Position of Officers of Disbanded Units.
Os. Earl of Dartmouth, *Mar. 2*, 293, 301; Earl of Portsmouth, 300.
Special Reserve
Conditions of Enrolment.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*. 724; Mr. C. Warner, 724; Mr. C. Warner, *Mar. 5*, 963; Mr. Wyndham, *Mar. 11*, 1596, 1597.
Line Commissions for.
Q. Mr. Maclean; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Feb. 27*, 34.
Unattached, Training Facilities for.
Q. Mr. C. H. T. Corbett; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 10*, 1294.
Organisation of.
Os. Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, *Mar. 11*, 1609, 1601.
Progress made with.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 729.
Promotion to Non-commissioned Rank, System of.
Os. Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5*, 831; Earl of Portsmouth, 837, 838.
Quarter-masters, Position of
Os. Mr. Rees, *Mar. 11*, 1600.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 663.
Recruiting Regulations.
Os. Earl of Dartmouth, *Mar. 2*, 295.
Re-engagement, Terms of
Q. Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Haldane. *Mar. 2*, 330.
Regimental Sergeant-Majors and Bandmasters, Rank of.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 10*, 1295.

Army—*cont.*
Territorial Force—*cont.*
Representation on Army Council, proposed.
Os. Mr. McCrae, *Mar. 4*, 758.
Return, Date of Tabling.
Os. Viscount Midleton, Earl of Portsmouth, *Mar. 2*, 310.
Separation Allowances, Extension to Privates, proposed.
Os. Mr. Rees, *Mar. 4*, 773; Mr. Rees, *Mar. 11*, 1601; Mr. A. S. Wilson, *Mar. 12*, 1784.
Sergeant-Instructors, Allowances for.
Os. Mr. V. Cavendish, *Mar. 5*, 952.
Sergeant-Majors, Granting Rank of Warrant Officers to, proposed.
Os. Mr. Rees, *Mar. 11*, 1600.
Special Reserve
Constitution of.
Q. Mr. Cochrane; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 9*, 1098.
Officers, *see under subheading* Officers.
Old Soldiers, Eligibility of.
Os. Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5*, 830, 837; Earl of Portsmouth, 837.
Retired Regular Non-commissioned Officers enlisting, Bounties for.
Os. Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5*, 830; Earl of Portsmouth, 836, 837.
Training, Period of.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1862.
Transfer to Regular Army, Conditions of.
Q. Mr. A. Lee; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11*, 1498.
Value of, in Time of War.
Os. Mr. Wyndham, *Mar. 11*, 1593, 1594, 1597–1599.
Training of.
Os. Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, *Mar. 4*, 761.
Leave of Absence from Training, Application for.
Q. Mr. V. Cavendish; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 5*, 871.
Manuals.
Os. Viscount Helmsley, *Mar. 12*, 1835.
Regulations, etc., Circulation of, Copies of.
Q. Mr. Gretton; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1718.
Travelling Allowances.
Os. Mr. V. Cavendish, *Mar. 5*, 951.

[*cont.*

Army—*cont.*
Territorial Force—*cont.*
Value of as a Fighting Force.
Os. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 11*, 1558; Mr. Wyndham, 1593; Colonel Kenyon-Slaney, 1608, 1609.; Colonel Sandys, *Mar. 12*, 1805-1807; Mr. Hunt, 1832.

Walking-out Uniform, Pattern of.
Q. Mr. A. Allen; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11*, 1516.

Welsh Counties, Schemes for—Creation of Administrative Districts, proposed.
Os. Mr. Rees, *Mar. 11*, 1599, 1600; Sir J. Herbert, *Mar. 12*, 1786–1793, 1797; Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1793–1798; Mr. Guest, 1795, 1801–1803; Sir C. Dilke, 1798.

Trade Disputes, Power of Chief Magistrate to call out Troops during.
Os. Mr. Wardle, *Mar. 5*, 914–920; Mr. G. Roberts, 920–924; Mr. Haldane, 924–930, 938; Major Anstruther-Gray, 927; Sir C. Dilke, 928; Mr. J. Warde, 929; Sir A. Acland-Hood, 930; Mr. Atherley-Jones, 931–932, 934; Colonel Lockwood, 933; Mr. Acland, 933, 934,; Mr. W. Redmond, 934–936; Mr. Gladstone, 936; Captain Craig, 938–941; Sir F. Banbury, 941; Mr. T. L. Corbett, 942; Mr. Moore, 943.

Committee to consider, Terms of Reference.
Os. Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 5*, 937; Mr. Wyndham, 937, 942; Mr. Haldane, 938.

Venereal Diseases, Decrease in.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 727; Mr. Seddon, 764.

Waltham Abbey

Discharges from.
Q. Mr. Staveley-Hill; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11*, 1515.

Wage Reductions since 1906.
Q. Mr. Staveley-Hill; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1731.

Wastage, Decrease in.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 725; Mr. Seddon, 764; Earl of Portsmouth, *Mar. 12*, 1680.

Woolwich Arsenal, *see that title.*

Works—Abolition of Loan System.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1859, 1860; Mr. A. Lee, 1860; Mr. Lupton, 1868.

Army Estimates
Civil Superannuation, Compassionate Allowances, etc.—£167,000, *Com.*, *Mar. 12*, 1874.

Half-Pay, Retired Pay and other Non-Effective Charges — £1,743,000, *Com.*, *Mar. 12*, 1874.

Increase in since 1895.
Os. Mr. Mackarness, *Mar. 12*, 1830.

Land Forces (185,000), *Com.*, *Mar. 11*, 1554.

Pay — £9,422,000, *Com.*, *Mar. 12*, 1779, 1846.

Pensions — £1,782,000, *Com.*, *Mar. 12*, 1874.

Statement (Mr. Haldane), *Mar. 4*, 706–737.

Vote I., Opportunity for General Discussion on.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11*, 1614; Mr. A. Lee, Mr. Chairman, 1615.

Works Loans, Annuity Chargeable for.
Q. Mr. Holt; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Feb. 28*, 211.

Ash Wednesday
Adjournment of House of Lords.
O. Earl of Crewe, *Mar. 3*, 488.

Ashbourne, Lord
Municipal Representation Bill, 2R., *Mar. 3*, 480–482.

Poisons and Pharmacy Bill, 2R., *Mar. 5*, 823–825.

Ashtown, Lord
Glenaheiry Outrage
Public Inquiry proposed.
Qs. Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. Byles; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 10*, 1326.
Qs. Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. Moore, Captain Craig, Earl Winterton, Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. Gordon, Mr. Long; *As.* Mr. Birrell, Mr. Cherry, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 11*, 1535.

Report of District Inspector Preston, etc., Presented, *Mar. 10*, 1238, 1282.

Asquith, Rt. Hon H. H.—*Chancellor of the Exchequer* [Fife, E.]
Admiralty Policy—German Emperor's Letter to Lord Tweedmouth, *Mar. 6*, 1067; *Mar. 9*, 1135, 1136.

Ancient Monuments, Inventory of, proposed, *Mar. 11*, 1552.

Armaments, Reduction of Expenditure on, Proposals as to, *Mar. 2*, 369–382.

Army
Expenditure 1904–5–1907–8, *Mar. 3*, 374, 378.

Territorial Force, Eligibility of Government Employees, *Mar. 12*, 1752.

Asquith, Rt. Hon. H. H.—*cont.*
Business of the House
Course of, *Mar. 2,* 354; *Mar. 4,* 705; *Mar. 5,* 902; *Mar. 12,* 1774.
Notice given of, *Mar. 10,* 1325.
Children—Government Department to look after Interests of, proposed, *Mar. 10,* 1305.
Children Bill, Second Reading, Date of taking, *Mar. 9,* 1132.
Civil Service—Naval and Military Service—Counting towards Pension, *Mar. 3,* 512.
Coinage and Currency—Union of Money—Metal-producing Countries, Proposals for, *Mar. 9,* 1094.
Death Duties on Licensed Property, Payments on, *Mar. 2,* 354; *Mar. 4,* 661; *Mar. 10,* 1305.
Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill.
Allocation of Time for, *Mar. 2,* 354.
Grant, Equivalent for Scotland and Ireland, proposed, *Feb. 27,* 68.
Factory and Workshops—Parliamentary Discussion of Subject proposed, *Mar. 2,* 352.
Gambling in Futures — Foreign Anti-Gambling Legislative Proposals, *Mar 9,* 1095.
Income Tax
Glebe Buildings, Provision as to, *Mar. 2,* 321.
Payment Half-yearly, proposed, *Mar. 3,* 528.
Indian Frontier, Troops required for Defence of, *Mar. 2,* 380.
King Edward's Foreign Tour—Attendance of Minister of the Crown, *Mar. 9,* 1133.
Land Purchase Stock, Cause of Fall in Price, *Feb. 27,* 67.
Licensing Bill, *Intro., Feb. 27,* 73–98, 121, 122.
Central Licensing Commission—Tenure of Office by Members, *Mar. 9,* 1134.
Proposals as to, *Mar. 2,* 354.
Second Reading, Date of taking, *Mar. 12,* 1752.
Liquor Traffic
Employment Statistics, *Mar. 5,* 901.
Income-tax, Assessment for, *Mar. 12,* 1752, 1753.
Mail Service to Hong Kong, Terms of Renewal of Contract, *Mar. 12,* 1754.
Navy
Battleships of "Dreadnought" type, relative Strength in, of Great Britain and Germany in 1911–12, *Mar. 10,* 1337, 1338.

Asquith, Rt. Hon. H. H.—*cont.*
Navy—*cont.*
Chatham Dockyard—Eligibility of Employees to join Territorial Force, *Mar. 12,* 1752.
Estimates, Vote A., Opportunity for Discussion, *Mar. 9,* 1230.
Expenditure, 1904–5, 1907–8, *Mar. 2,* 372–374.
Shipbuilding Programme — Annual Communication to Foreign Powers, Offer as to, *Mar. 9,* 1133.
Two-Power Standard, Maintenance of, *Mar. 10,* 1336.
Parliamentary Relations between Lords and Commons, Proposals for dealing with, *Mar. 4,* 704; *Mar. 12,* 1773.
Patriotic Fund, Royal—Case of Mrs. Evans, *Mar. 5,* 900, 901.
Plural Voting Bill, Proposals as to, *Mar. 5,* 902.
Public Trustee—Vote, Charges included in, *Mar. 12,* 1730.
Solicitors, Annual Fee payable, *Mar. 3,* 529.
Sugar
Brewing, Quantity used in (1906–7), *Feb. 28,* 208.
Refining in Bond, Regulations as to, *Mar. 5,* 857.
Taxation—Surveyors, Clerks, Decision as to, *Mar. 5,* 852.
Tobacco Dealers' Licences, Graduation of, proposed, *Mar. 2,* 315.

Athenry
Police Huts, Number of and Cost of Extra Police.
Qs. Mr. Duffy; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 2,* 324, 325.

Atherley-Jones, Mr. L. [Durham, N.W.]
Trade Disputes, Power of Chief Magistrates to call out Troops during, *Mar. 5,* 931–932, 934.
Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28,* 280.

Attorney-General—*Sir W. S. Robson.*

Attorney-General for Ireland—*Rt. Hon. R. R. Cherry.*

Australia
[*See also* Names of States.]
Naval Contribution, etc., Arrangement as to.
Qs. Mr. W. Redmond; *As.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 5,* 866.

Avebury, Lord
Municipal Representation Bill, 2R., *Mar. 3,* 486–488.

Balcarres, Lord [Lancashire, N., Chorley]
- Aland Islands—Russian Occupation, *Mar. 12*, 1749.
- Armaments, Increase in Expenditure on, *Mar. 12*, 1839.
- Army—Territorial Force
  - Advisory Council, Scope of, etc., *Mar. 2*, 330.
  - Guns, Type to be supplied, *Mar. 12*, 1840.
- Coastguard, Policy as to, *Mar. 9*, 1360.
- Education (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 6*, 1031–1034.
- Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill—Grant, Amount and Allocation of, *Mar. 9*, 1121, 1122.
- Inverliever Estate— Afforestation, Control of, *Mar. 11*, 1526.
- Merionethshire School Teachers' Salaries, *Mar. 5*, 883.
- Navy
  - Cordite, Provision for Storage of and Loss incurred by Destruction of Unfit Stores, *Mar. 10*, 1361, 1362; *Mar. 12*, 1732.
  - Range Finder, Estimate for, *Mar. 10*, 1362; *Mar. 12*, 1732.
  - Refrigerating Machinery for Magazines, *Mar. 10*, 1361.
- Yeomanry, Pay under New Scheme, *Mar. 12*, 1808.

Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. [City of London]
- Admiralty's Policy—German Emperor's Letter to Lord Tweedmouth, *Mar. 9*, 1134.
- Armaments, Reduction of Expenditure on, proposed, *Mar. 2*, 448–461.
- Business of the House, Course of, *Mar. 2*, 354; *Mar. 5*, 902; *Mar. 12*, 1773.
- Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill—Grant, Amount, and Allocation of, *Mar. 9*, 1121; *Mar. 12*, 1765.
- Indian Frontier, Troops required for Defence of, *Mar. 2*, 452, 453.
- Licensing Bill, *Intro.*, *Feb. 27*, 90, 98–108.
- Navy
  - Battleships
    - "Dreadnought" Type, Relative Strength in, of Great Britain and Germany in 1911–12, *Mar. 9*, 1179–1182; *Mar. 10*, 1335.
    - Strength in, *Mar. 9*, 1178, 1179.
  - Estimates
    - Criticisms on, *Mar. 3*, 601, 602.

Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J.—*cont.*
- Navy—*cont.*
  - Home Fleet
    - Constitution of and Readiness for War, *Mar. 3*, 599, 600.
    - Refit, Vessels Undergoing and manned with Nucleus Crews, *Mar. 9*, 1174.
    - Strength of, *Mar. 9*, 1172–1174.
  - Rosyth, Policy as to, *Mar. 9*, 1175–1176.
  - Shipbuilding
    - Comparative Speed of Building in Great Britain and Foreign Countries, *Mar. 9*, 1180.
    - Expenditure on, under New Programme, *Mar. 9*, 1143, 1144.
    - Programme, 1908–9, *Mar. 9*, 1179–1182.
  - Stores, Provision of and Expenditure on, *Mar. 9*, 1147.
  - Torpedo Boat Destroyers
    - Comparative Strength in, of Great Britain and Germany, *Mar. 9*, 1177, 1178.
    - Construction Policy, *Mar. 3*, 608.
  - Torpedoes, Reduction in Estimate for, *Mar. 3*, 601.
  - Two-Power Standard, Maintenance of, *Mar. 2*, 452, 453, 454.

Balfour Estate
- Case of J. Gore.
  - *Q.* Mr. P. White; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 4*, 698.

Balfour of Burleigh, Lord
- Land Values (Scotland) Bill—Date of proceeding with, *Feb. 27*, 17.
- Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 11*, 1451–1462.

Ballachulish
- Postal Name for.
  - *Q.* Mr. Wardle; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 2*, 339.

Ballinagar
- Outrage at House of J. Minogue.
  - *Qs.* Captain Craig, Mr. J. Roche; *As.* Mr. Birrell, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 11*, 1543.

Ballinalee
- Catholic School, Windows Broken at.
  - *Q.* Mr. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1530.
- Protestant School Teacher, Name, etc., of.
  - *Q.* Mr. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1546.

Ballinamore
- Railway Level Crossing, Supervision of.
  - *Q.* Mr. C. MacVeigh; *A.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 4*, 704.

Ballinamore and Ballyconnell Canal
Rate payable by County Council.
Q. Mr. V. Kennedy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5*, 891.

Ballintubber
Intimidation Case—Remarks of Mr. Rice.
Qs. Mr. Hayden, Capt. Craig; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 10*, 1320.

Ballybricken
Cattle Drive on 26th February, Information as to.
Q. Capt. Craig; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1528.

Ballyquaide Glebe
Sum paid for—Grant to Mr. R. Pearson, etc.
Q. Mr. Delany; *A.* Mr. Cherry, *Feb. 28*, 211.

Ballyseedy Estate
Cases of T. O'Connor and W. O'Neill.
Q. Mr. T. O'Donnell; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 9*, 1095.

Banbury, Sir F. [City of London]
Agricultural Education in Elementary Schools Bill, 2R., *Mar. 11*, 1654.
Army
- Artillery, Objections to Reduction of, *Mar. 12*, 1850.
- Officers—Public Schools and Universities as a Source of Supply, *Mar. 12*, 1848.
- *Personnel*, Reduction of, proposed, *Mar. 12*, 1846–1848.
- Territorial Force—City of London Corps, Organisation of, *Mar. 12*, 1848, 1856.
- Trade Disputes, Power of Chief Magistrates to call out Troops during, etc., *Mar. 5*, 941.

Indian Army, Strength of, Necessity for Maintaining, *Mar. 12*, 1849.
Japan—Anglo-Japanese Treaty, Maintenance of, *Mar. 9*, 1201.
Local Authorities (Admission of the Press) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 10*, 1435.
Navy—*Personnel*, Reduction in, proposed, *Mar. 9*, 1201–1204.
Peterborough—Boon, Prosecution of, for Cruelty to Horse, *Mar. 12*, 1757.
Post Office—Political Organisations, Regulations as to, *Mar. 3*, 540, 541.
Small Holdings Bill, 2R., *Mar. 11*, 1655.

Bankruptcy Courts
Ireland—Annual Returns Presented, *Feb. 28*, 202; *Mar. 2*, 291.

Baring, Mr. G. [Isle of Wight]
Africa, South—Garrison, Reduction Proposals, *Feb. 27*, 36.

Baring, Mr. G. V. [Winchester]
Africa, East—Jubaland Province, Administration of, *Mar. 9*, 1109.
Army Officers
- Pay of, *Mar. 5*, 960.
- Training, Alterations in Present System, *Mar. 5*, 958–960.

Parisian Octroi Duty on Bread Stuffs, *Mar. 9*, 1115.

Barnard, Mr. E. B. [Kidderminster]
Grocers' Licences in 1905, *Mar. 6*, 991.
Licensing Bill, *Intro.*, *Feb. 27*, 196–199.
- Districts, Alterations proposed in, *Mar. 6*, 991.

Barnes, Mr. G. N. [Glasgow, Blackfriars]
Asiatics on British Ships, Cause of Death of certain Men, *Mar. 3*, 503.
Navy
- *Personnel*, Reduction in, proposed, *Mar. 9*, 1213–1219.
- Two-Power Standard, Maintenance of, *Mar. 9*, 1218.

Barra, Island of
Exodus of Crofters to Vatersay, *see* Vatersay.

Barrie, Mr. H. T. [Londonderry, N.]
Liquor Traffic
- Irish Licensing Statistics, *Mar. 11*, 1551.
- Scottish Licensing Statistics, *Mar. 11*, 1525.

Basutoland
Annual Report Presented, *Mar. 9*, 1070, 1078.

Beach, Mr. M. H. [Gloucester, Tewkesbury]
Army
- Cadet Battalion Officers, Position of, under New Scheme, *Mar. 12*, 1731.
- Staff College—Proposals for Increase of Students, *Mar. 12*, 1718.

Fodder, Dangers from Import of, and Proposals for Prohibiting, *Mar. 5*, 885.
London County Council General Powers Bill, 2R., *Mar. 5*, 970.
Milk Supply—Legislative Proposals, *Mar. 5*, 970.
Militia Officers—Uniform Grant on Transfer, *Mar. 11*, 1515.

Beauly and Ness Rivers
Estuary, Area of.
Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 11*, 1526.

Beaumont, Mr. H. [Sussex, Eastbourne]
Convents—Sweating and Cruelty, Allegations as to, *Feb. 27*, 45.

Bedford, Duke of

Army

Infantry, Condition of, *Mar. 12*, 1689–1693.

Reserve, Strength of, *Mar. 12*, 1689–1692.

Beef Trust

Correspondence with in 1903—Tabling proposed.

Q. Mr. Morton; *A.* Mr. J. A. Pease, *Mar. 12*, 1768.

Belfast

Harbour Commissioners' Contracts, Allocation of.

Qs. Mr. J. Devlin; *As.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 10*, 1283.

Post Office

Sub-offices, Notice Plates supplied to.

Q. Mr. Sloan; *A.* Capt. Norton, *Feb. 27*, 68.

Temporary Clerks in.

Q. Mr. Sloan; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Feb.* 27, 21.

Queen's College, Grants to.

Q. Capt. Craig; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1527.

Technical Instruction, Increase of Accommodation for, proposed.

Q. Mr. Sloan; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1551.

Westbourne National Schools, Information as to.

Q. Mr. Sloan; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5*, 859.

Belfast Corporation Bill

c. 2R., *Feb. 27*, 146.

Bellairs, Mr. C. [Lynn Regis]

Armaments, Reduction of Expenditure on, proposed, *Mar. 2*, 434–443.

Army

Arms and Ammunition supplied to, *Mar. 12*, 1833.

Cordite, Amount destroyed and Measures taken to Replace, *Mar. 12*, 1833, 1834.

Navy

Armoured Ships, 1909, Publication of Designs, proposed, *Mar. 3*, 605.

Attachés at Foreign Courts, Qualifications required of, *Mar. 3*, 517.

Battleships

Classification of, *Mar. 9*, 1161.

"Dreadnought" Type, Relative Strength in, of Great Britain and Germany, in 1911–12, *Mar. 9*, 1159.

Strength in, *Mar. 9*, 1159.

Unarmoured Ends, Policy as to, *Mar. 9*, 1166.

Bellairs, Mr. C.—*cont.*

Navy—*cont.*

Cruisers, Strength in, of Great Britain and Germany, *Mar. 9*, 1163.

Estimates

Appendix No. 8 and Tables showing Nucleus Crews, Omission of, *Mar. 11*, 1517.

Date of Printing, *Mar. 2*, 326.

Material, Sum proposed for, *Mar. 2*, 326.

Guns

Reserve, *Mar. 10*, 1294.

Small Guns, Advantage of, *Mar. 9*, 1162, 1163.

Mechanician and Boy Artificers—Abolition of Training Establishments proposed, *Feb. 27*, 32.

Personnel, Reduction in, proposed, *Mar 9*, 1204.

Refrigerating Machinery for Magazines, *Mar. 9*, 1155.

Repairs, Provision for, *Mar. 9*, 1158.

Shipbuilding

Armoured Cruiser, Type decided on, *Mar. 9*, 1158, 1186.

Comparative Speed of Building in Great Britain and Foreign Countries, *Mar. 9*, 1159, 1160.

Designs, Preparation of, *Mar. 9*, 1096.

"Speedwell" Steamboat, Loss of, *Mar. 5*, 865, 866.

Torpedo Boat Destroyers

Comparative Strength in, of Great Britain and Germany, *Mar. 3*, 586; *Mar. 9*, 1156, 1157.

Number under Repair in December 1906, etc., *Mar. 9*, 1096.

Two-Power Standard, Maintenance of, *Mar. 2*, 435.

Belloc, Mr. H. V. P. R. [Salford, S.]

Army—Territorial Force

Artillery, Field

Drivers, Training Proposals for, *Mar. 11*, 1573.

Organisation of as a Fighting Force, *Mar. 11*, 1572–1575.

Guns, Type to be supplied, *Mar. 11*, 1573, 1574.

Natal Public Debt, Amount of, *Mar. 9*, 1106.

Belper, Lord

Municipal Representation Bill, 2R., *Mar. 3*, 477–480.

Benn, Sir J. W. [Devonport]

Rosyth Works, Use of British Granite proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1393.

Bennett, Mr. E. N. [Oxfordshire, Woodstock]
- Army
  - Engineer Services—Scheme for Improvement of Service of Surveyors, *Feb. 28*, 212.
  - Officers
    - Examinations, Standard of, *Mar. 11*, 1586.
    - Promotion from the Ranks, *Mar. 11*, 1588.
    - Shortage in Supply of, *Mar. 11*, 1583–1588.
    - Universities and Public Schools as a Source of Supply, *Mar. 11*, 1587.
- Main Roads—Incidence of Charge for Maintaining, *Mar. 9*, 1116.

Beri-Beri
- Scientific Inquiry into, Proposals for.
  Qs. Mr. Cooper; *As.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 5*, 855.

Berne Convention as to Women's Night-work
- Adhesion to, by Colonies.
  Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 3*, 522.

Bevan Estate
- Sale of.
  Q. Mr. Lundon; *A.* Mr. Cherry, *Mar. 12*, 1771.

Bewdley
- Parliamentary Election—New Member sworn, *Mar. 3*, 553.

Bexhill
- Postal Facilities.
  Q. Mr. Courthope; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 11*, 1524.

Bignold, Sir A. [Wick Burghs]
- Moray Firth — Procedure in Cases of "Benaigen" and "Bangkok," *Mar. 12*, 1721.

Billingsgate
- Post Office—Provision of Additional Accommodation for Staff.
  Q. Mr. Hay; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Feb. 28*, 209.

Birmingham
- County Court, Perjury committed in—Remarks of Judge Bray.
  Q. Mr. T. F. Richards; *A.* Sir W. Robson, *Feb. 27*, 60.

Birrell, Rt. Hon. A.—*Chief Secretary for Ireland* [Bristol, N.]
- Ardglas—Estate of Mrs. McEndoo and Mrs. Reid, Sale of, *Mar. 3*, 550.
- Ardpatrick—Case of Mrs. B. Murphy, *Mar. 12*, 1712.

Birrell, Rt. Hon. A.—*cont.*
- Armagh Asylum—Cost of Maintenance of Insane Prisoners, *Mar. 9*, 1087.
- Army Horses—Irish Breeding Scheme, *Mar. 11*, 1551.
- Arnadooman Farm, Disposal of, *Mar. 9*, 1085.
- Arterial Drainage, Proposals for, *Mar. 10*, 1321.
- Athenry, Police Huts, Number of and Cost of extra Police, *Mar. 2*, 324, 325.
- Balfour Estate—Case of J. Gore, *Mar. 4*, 698.
- Ballinagar, Outrage at House of J. Minogue *Mar. 11*, 1544.
- Ballinalee
  - Catholic School, Windows broken at *Mar. 11*, 1530.
  - Protestant School Teacher, Name, etc. of, *Mar. 11*, 1546.
- Ballinamore and Ballyconnell Canal—Rate payable, *Mar. 5*, 891.
- Ballintubber Intimidation Case—Remarks of Mr. Rice, *Mar. 10*, 1320.
- Ballybricken, Cattle Drive on 26th February Information as to, *Mar. 11*, 1529.
- Ballyseedy Estate—Cases of T. O'Connor and W. O'Neill, *Mar. 9*, 1095.
- Belfast
  - Queen's College, Grants to, *Mar. 11*, 1528.
  - Technical Instruction, Accommodation for, *Mar. 11*, 1552.
  - Westbourne National Schools, Information as to, *Mar. 5*, 860.
- Boycotting Statistics, *Mar. 3*, 515.
- Brown Estate, Sale Proposals, *Mar. 2*, 324.
- Butler Minor's Estate, Sale of, *Mar, 10*, 1321.
- Carntall School, Decision as to Closing, *Mar. 11*, 1545.
- Carrickfergus Estate
  - Case of M'Kaig, *Mar. 5*, 859.
  - Sale Proposals, *Mar. 5*, 861.
- Castle Lambert Estate, Sale Proposals, *Mar. 2*, 323.
- Cavan
  - County Lieutenant and Magistrates, Date of appointing, *Mar. 10*, 1324, 1325.
  - Evicted Tenants
    - Instructions to Inspectors, *Mar. 12*, 1713.
    - Reinstatements effected, *Mar. 5*, 891.
- Cismona, Stacks knocked down, etc., *Mar. 9*, 1086.

[*cont.*

Birrell, Rt. Hon. A.—*cont.*

- Cloughjordan, Cattle-driving Prosecution, Procedure in, *Mar. 11*, 1532.
- Cloncurra School House, Delay in Erecting, *Mar. 10*, 1323.
- Clounty Stone-throwing Case—Conduct of Police, *Mar. 3*, 514.
- Colthurst Estate, Sale Proposals, etc., *Mar. 9*, 1081.
  - Case of Mr. J. Hegarty, *Mar. 11*, 1548–1550.
- Condition of Ireland—Application of English Pistols Act, etc., *Mar. 4*, 685.
- Congested Districts Board
  - Castlerea Centre, Cost of, *Mar. 9*, 1082.
  - Funds available for Work of, *Mar. 4*, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691.
  - Funds available to, *Mar. 5*, 893, 894.
- Constabulary Fund, Position of, *Mar. 4*, 694, 695.
- Contempt of Court—Limitation of Jurisdiction of Judge, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1419–1423.
- Conyngham Estate—Case of Mrs. M. Bell, *Mar. 2*, 348.
- Cooldorihy Estate, Sale of, *Mar. 5*, 895.
- Cooper Estate, Sale Proposals—Cases of J. McGrath and T. Barry, *Mar. 4*, 665.
- Croagh—Case of J. Hurley, *Mar. 5*, 862.
- Crofton Estate, Sale of, *Mar. 11*, 1531.
- Crookenden and Casey Estate Sale Negotiations, *Mar. 5*, 891.
- Crown Jewels, Loss of, Public Inquiry proposed, *Mar. 11*, 1533, 1534.
- Cullenagh, Cattle Drive on 3rd inst., *Mar. 11*, 1543.
- Devonshire Estate—Case of Mr. J. Mulcahy, *Mar. 5*, 858.
- Dublin Metropolitan Police
  - Cost of Upkeep, Objections to Levying on the Rates, etc., *Mar. 11*, 1637–1642.
  - Inquiry into, proposed, *Mar. 11*, 1642.
- Education
  - Bi-lingual Programme, Adoption of, *Mar. 11*, 1529, 1530.
  - Compulsory Attendance—Legislation to improve existing Act, proposed, *Mar. 3*, 492.
  - Cookery Instruction, Provision for, *Mar. 4*, 696, 697.
  - Grant, Increase, Proposals as to, *Mar. 2*, 322.

Birrell, Rt. Hon. A.—*cont.*

- Education—*cont.*
  - Inspectors
    - Central Office Inspector, *Mar. 11*, 1547.
    - Grading of, *Feb. 27*, 27.
    - Horses and Cars, Provision of, *Feb. 27*, 27.
  - National Board
    - Meetings of, (1906–7), *Mar. 2*, 314; *Mar. 11*, 1546.
    - Senior Secretary, Duties of, *Mar. 11*, 1548.
  - National School Teachers
    - Students of 1898 and 1899, Salaries of, *Mar. 3*, 546.
    - Transition Teachers, Claims of. *Mar. 9*, 1096; *Mar. 10*, 1293.
  - School Building Grants and Plans, *Mar. 10*, 1290.
- Enniskillen Labourers' Cottages Scheme, Delay in, *Mar. 12*, 1714.
- Evictions
  - Cases Pending—Government Attitude, *Mar. 5*, 890.
  - Return, Date of Tabling, *Mar. 10* 1322.
- Faucett Estate—Case of H. Hanly, *Mar. 3*, 514.
- Foot Estate—Case of P. Healy, *Mar. 11* 1501.
- Galway
  - Condition of—Report of Mr. Horne, *Mar. 4*, 685.
  - Hospital—Rate for Upkeep, *Mar. 3* 513.
- Gledstane Estate—Case of J. Gorman. *Mar. 5*, 894.
- Glenaheiry Outrage, Public Inquiry proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1326, 1327; *Mar. 11*, 1536, 1540, 1541.
- Goodall Estate, Sale Proposals, *Mar. 10* 1326.
- Gort, Firing Outrages, Information as to *Mar. 9*, 1084.
- Gough Estate, Outrage at Houses o Macnamara and Monaghan, *Mar. 3* 547, 548.
- Grangemore Cattle Raid, Information as to *Mar. 3*, 548.
- Headford Police Force, Cause for Increase in, *Mar. 6*, 993.
- Housing and Town Planning Bill, Extension to Ireland, proposed, *Mar. 9*, 1086.
- Kearney Estate—Case of Luke Caffrey, *Mar. 5*, 847.
- Kilbradern—Case of Scanlon Family, *Mar. 11*, 1502.

[*cont.*

Birrell, Rt. Hon. A.—*cont.*
- Kilbride—Case of A. O'Connor, *Mar. 5*, 889.
- Kilnalick—Case of Mary Coyle, *Mar. 9*, 1088.
- Kingston Estate, Sale Proposals, *Mar. 12*, 1715.
- Kingwilliamstown—Case of E. O'Riordan, *Mar. 4*, 664.
- Lambert Minors Estate, Sale Proposals, *Mar. 2*, 323.
- Land Commission—Duties and Qualifications of Mr. Mullaly, *Mar. 11*, 1534.
- Leader Estate—Case of C. Rahilly, *Mar. 11*, 1550.
- Limavady Urban District Council Contracts, Alleged Irregularities in, *Mar. 3*, 513.
- Lisburn Registrar, Appointment of, *Mar.* 10, 1322.
- Local Authorities, Audit of Accounts, Charges for, *Mar. 3*, 545, 546.
- Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1902, Byelaws under Section 15, *Mar. 5*, 861.
- Longan Estate—Evicted Tenants, Reinstatement of, *Mar. 11*, 1500.
- Longford
  - Condition of—Cause for Employment of extra Police, *Mar. 11*, 1532.
  - Land Commission Sitting, Date of, *Mar. 5*, 889.
  - United Irish League Threats against Graziers, *Mar. 3*, 548, 549.
- Lough George—Assault on Mrs. Greated's Servant, *Mar. 4*, 693.
- Magistrates, Resident, Qualifications of, *Mar. 3*, 547, 552.
- Maynooth College, Grants to, *Mar. 11*, 1528.
- Millstreet Labourers Acts Inquiry, Cause for Delay in, *Mar. 4*, 697.
- Moneytigue, Sale Proposals, *Mar. 2*, 324.
- Mount Bellew—Labourers' Cottages Applications, Decision as to, *Mar. 2*, 349; *Mar. 4*, 696.
- O'Malley Estate, Sale Proposals, *Mar. 2*, 324.
- Pakenham Estate, Sale Proposals, *Mar. 3*, 550.
- Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act, 1881—Constabulary Authorities consulted before Withdrawal of, *Mar. 4*, 684.
- Peard Estate—Case of Mrs. M. Rice, *Mar. 5*, 858.
- Purcell Estate—Case of M. Lyons, *Mar. 9*, 1079.
- Railways, Delays on certain Lines, Correspondence with Vice-Regal Commission as to, *Mar. 11*, 1542, 1543.
- Rathdrum, Land not Registered, Loss to Ratepayers by, *Feb. 27*, 26.

Birrell, Rt. Hon. A.—*cont.*
- Rathowen, Disturbance at Mr. Bond's House, *Mar. 9*, 1087.
- Roman Catholic University Proposals—Provost's Speech at Manchester, Tenor of, *Mar. 4*, 692, 693.
- Royal University—Students entering for Examination in 1907, *Mar. 12*, 1713.
- Sands Estate, Untenanted Lands, Sale of, *Mar. 5*, 862.
- Shaftesbury Estate, Case of Mr. McKaig, etc., *Mar. 11*, 1545.
- Shelton Estate, Sale of, *Mar. 11*, 1502.
- Stacpoole Estate—Case of Lennon Girls, *Mar. 5*, 890.
- Strabane Labourers' Cottages, Proposals for Erecting, *Mar. 12*, 1714.
- Tipperary Magistrates, Additional, Necessity for, *Mar. 10*, 1293.
- Tuberculosis Prevention (Ireland) Bill Provisions of, *Mar. 2*, 322.
- Tully—Grazing Land of Mr. Bond, Purchase of, *Mar. 11*, 1531.
- Tyrone Lieutenancy, Holder of, *Mar. 3*, 550.
- Ventry Estate, Sale of, *Mar. 10*, 1324.
- Vereker Estate, Claims of M. Hartnett and J. Collins, *Mar. 11*, 1502.
- Waterford
  - Evicted Tenants—Progress made with Reinstatements, *Mar. 2*, 347, 348.
  - Land, Proposals for Compulsory Acquisition of, *Mar. 2*, 347.
  - Untenanted Land offered for Purchase, *Mar. 2*, 347.
- Webb Estate—Case of Mrs. Kelleher, *Mar. 11*, 1501.

Births
- General Abstract Presented, *Mar. 9*, 1071, 1078.
- Irish Statistics (1907).
  - *Q.* Mr. J. D. White; *A.* Mr. Cherry, *Feb. 27*, 30.

Black Currant Mite
- Ireland—Order Presented, *Mar. 5*, 821, 846.

Black Scab
- Measures taken to Check.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Rees; *As.* Mr. Whiteley, *Mar. 2*, 344.

Blackburn Corporation Bill
- c. 2R.* *Mar. 5*, 988.
- Milk Clauses—Instruction to Committee, *Mar. 5*, 988.

Blaydon and Ryton Water (Transfer) Bill
- c. 2R.* *Mar. 9*, 1077.

Bognor Gas Light and Coke Company Bill
l. 2R.* *Mar. 5*, 817.

Boland, Mr. J. P. [Kerry, S.]
Congested Districts Board, Funds available for Work of, *Mar. 4*, 691.
Trade Marks Act, Rules under, *Mar. 9*, 1113.

Bolton
Post Office—Pay of Telegraphists.
Q. Mr. Gill; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 9*, 1093.

Bottomley, Mr. H. W Hackney, S.]
British South Africa Chartered Company, Terms of issue of fresh Capital, *Feb. 27*, 60.
Census—Adult Male Population and Number of Voters in 1905, *Feb. 27*, 44.
Licensing Bill, *Intro.*, *Feb. 27*, 124–132.
Post Office—Lottery Literature, Transmission of, *Mar. 12*, 1706.

Bowerman, Mr. C. W. [Deptford]
Hampstead Borough Council Officials—Vaccination Regulations, *Mar. 9*, 1115.

Bowles, Mr. G. S. [Lambeth, N.]
Naval Shipbuilding Programme—Annual Communication to Foreign Powers, Offer as to, *Mar. 9*, 1133.

Brace, Mr. W. [Glamorgan, S.]
Asiatics on British Ships, Cause of Death of certain Men, *Mar. 3*, 494.
Coal Mines—Accidents, Rescue Apparatus, Proposals as to, *Mar. 10*, 1308.

"Bramley"
Crew, Complaints by.
Q. Mr. J. H. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 11*, 1490.

Bramsdon, Mr. T. A. [Portsmouth]
Business of the House, Notice given of, *Mar. 10*, 1325.
Navy
Badges, Conditions of Supply, *Mar. 10*, 1341.
Dis-rating, Powers of Commanders, *Mar. 10*, 1340.
Dockyards, Establishment, Proposals as to, *Mar. 9*, 1097.
Engineer Officers, *Status* of, *Mar. 10*, 1341–1347.
Estimates, Vote A, Opportunity for Discussion, *Mar. 9*, 1229, 1234.
Reforms effected, *Mar. 10*, 1338, 1339.

Branch, Mr. J. [Middlesex, Enfield]
Army—Enfield Lock, Case of West, *Mar. 10*, 1297.

Breaches of Bye-laws Bill
c. 1R.* *Mar. 5*, 903.

Bread
Price, Causes of Increase in.
Os. Sir J. Leese, *Mar. 4*, 774–783; Colonel Seely, 783–786; Mr. Goulding, 786; Earl Winterton, 793–797; Mr. Essex, 797–799; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 799–807; Mr. Lloyd-George, 807–812.

Brereton Collieries
Coppice Pit Disaster—Proposals for Inquiry, etc.
Q. Mr. Albert Stanley; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 3*, 529.

Bridgeman, Mr. W. C. [Shropshire, Oswestry]
Africa, Central—Native Labour Recruitment Proposals, *Mar. 11*, 1517, 1518, 1519.
Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill
Contracted-out Schools — Teachers' Service, Counting of, *Mar. 11*, 1495.
Teachers, Effect on Demand for, *Mar. 12*, 1765.
Merionethshire School Teachers' Salaries, *Mar. 5*, 883.

Bright, Mr. J. A. [Oldham]
Army
Expeditionary Force of 160,000, *Mar. 12*, 1811.
Personnel, Reduction of, proposed, *Mar. 11*, 1810–1812.

Bristol
Postal Telegraph Staff, Pay of.
Q. Mr. W. T. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Feb. 28*, 203

Bristol Tramways Bill
l. 2R.* *Mar. 10*, 1237.

British South Africa Chartered Company
Terms of Issue of Fresh Capital.
Qs. Mr. B. S. Straus, Mr. Bottomley; *As.* Sir W. Robson, *Feb. 27*, 59.

Brodie, Mr. H. C. [Surrey, Reigate]
Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28*, 276–279.

Brown Estate
Sale Proposals.
Q. Mr. Duffy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar 2*, 324.

Brunner, Mr. J. F. L. [Lancashire, S.W., Leigh]
Liverpool Corporation Bill, 2R., *Mar. 12*, 1845.

Brunner, Rt. Hon. Sir J. T. [Cheshire, Northwich]
- Armaments, Reduction of Expenditure on, Proposals as to, *Mar. 2,* 365–368.
- Navy — Two-Power Standard, Maintenance of, *Mar. 2,* 365–367.

Bryce, Mr. J. A. [Inverness Burghs]
- Belfast Corporation Bill, 2R., *Feb. 27,* 167.
- Coastguard, Policy as to, *Mar. 9,* 1362.
- Criminal Procedure—Case of Joseph Hume, Petition sent for Inverness, *Feb. 27,* 61.
- Marble Arch, Clock at Lodge, Re-erection of, *Mar. 12,* 1766.

Buchanan, Mr. T. R.—*Financial Secretary, War Office* [Perthshire]
- Barracks — Expenditure on Building and Repairs (1897–1907), *Mar. 11,* 1512.

Bull, Sir W. J. [Hammersmith]
- Edinburgh — Walker Trustees, Fees demanded by, *Feb. 27,* 25; *Mar. 9,* 1094.

Burglary
- Cases in Metropolitan Police Area.
  - *Q.* Mr. Menzies; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 2,* 337.

Burns, Rt. Hon. J.—*President of the Local Government Board* [Battersea]
- Feeble-minded Children — Inclusion in Scope of Royal Commission, proposed, *Mar. 3,* 511.
- Government Departments — Conference to devise Means for Exchange of Workmen to regulate Hours of Work proposed, *Mar. 10,* 1314.
- Hampstead Borough Council Officials—Vaccination Regulations, *Mar. 9,* 1116.
- Harpenden Sewerage Scheme, Inquiry as to, *Mar. 6,* 992.
- Housing of the Working Classes—Legislative Proposals, *Mar. 9,* 1117; *Mar. 11,* 1494.
- Local Authorities' Accounts — Action to be taken on Report of Committee, *Mar. 5,* 856.
- London County Council General Powers Bill, 2R., *Mar. 5,* 978–982.
- Main Roads — Incidence of Charge for maintaining, *Mar. 9,* 1117.
- Milk Supply—Legislative Proposals, *Mar. 5,* 978–982; *Mar. 9,* 1117.
- Milton Sewage Rate, Representations against, *Mar. 2,* 339.
- Notification of Births Act, Local Authorities adopting, *Feb. 27,* 26.
- Registration of Births Act, Borough Council Resolutions, Approval of, *Feb. 27,* 25.
- Unemployed
  - Operative Stone-Masons' Society, Unemployment among, *Feb. 27,* 52.
  - Relief Works—sanction to Loans, *Mar. 3,* 533.

Burns, Rt. Hon. J.—*cont.*
- Unemployed Workmen Bill, Facilities for, *Feb. 27,* 52, 53.
- Vaccination, Expenditure from Rates since 1895, *Mar. 5,* 877.
- Education—Yorkshire, West Riding
  - Appeal Case, Decision in, *Mar. 10,* 1313.
  - Loans, Payments on, *Mar. 12,* 1756.

Business of the House
- Course of.
  - *Qs.* Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 2,* 354; Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 4,* 705; Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 5,* 902; Mr. A. J. Balfour, Mr. Asquith, Mr. A. Chamberlain, *Mar. 12,* 1773.
- Notice given of.
  - *Q.* Mr. Bramsdon; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 10,* 1325.

Butcher, Mr. S. H. [Cambridge University]
- Education (Local Authorities') Bill, 2R., *Mar. 6,* 1059–1062.

Butler Minors Estate
- Sale of.
  - *Q.* Mr. W. Redmond; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 10,* 1321.

Butter
- Milk-Blended
  - List of approved Names, Presented, *Feb. 27,* 3.
  - Regulations as to Sale of.
    - *Qs.* Mr. O'Shaughnessy; Mr. Byles; *As.* Mr. J. A. Pease, *Mar. 9,* 1124.

Buxton, Rt. Hon. S. C.—*Postmaster-General* [Tower Hamlets, Poplar]
- Ballachulish, Postal Name for, *Mar. 2,* 340.
- Belfast, Temporary Clerks in, *Feb. 27,* 22.
- Bexhill Postal Facilities, *Mar. 11,* 1524.
- Billingsgate, Provision of Additional Accommodation for Staff, *Feb. 28,* 209.
- Bolton, Pay of Telegraphists, *Mar. 9,* 1093.
- Bristol Telegraph Staff, Pay of, *Feb. 28,* 203.
- Hull Post Office—Pay of Webster, *Mar. 5,* 881.
- Inland Revenue Stamps, Revenue derived from, *Mar. 11,* 1524.
- Lottery Literature, Transmission of, *Mar. 12,* 1706.
- Mail Service
  - China Mails, Route for, *Mar. 12,* 1757.
  - Hong-Kong—Revenue from Trans-Canadian Route, *Mar. 11,* 1523.
  - Irish Mail Service Subsidy, *Mar. 2,* 350, 351.
  - Registered Letters sent by "Celtic," Cause for Non-delivery of, *Mar. 9,* 1092.

[*cont.*

Buxton, Rt. Hon. S. C.—*cont.*
- Minor Offences, Punishment for, *Mar. 10*, 1287.
- Monaghan Post Office, Cause for Delay in Erection, *Mar. 5*, 851.
- Navan Postal Facilities, *Mar. 5*, 896.
- Newcastle—Case of Mr. W. E. Patrick, *Mar. 12*, 1758.
- Neyland, Telephone Extension to, proposed, *Mar. 12*, 1757.
- Penny Postage with France, proposed, *Mar. 11*, 1523.
- Peterborough—Boon, Prosecution of, for Cruelty to Horse, *Mar. 12*, 1758.
- Political Organisations, Regulations as to, *Mar. 3*, 509, 537, 358, 539, 540, 541, *Mar. 12*, 1759.
- Post Office Savings Bank, Circular, Display of, *Mar. 11*, 1510.
- Postal Orders, Payment through Bank—Loss sustained by Mr. P. White, etc., *Mar. 12*, 1705.
- Postmen
  - New Scale of Pay for, *Mar. 2*, 339.
  - Rural Duties of, *Mar. 11*, 1525.
  - Vacancies available, *Mar. 4*, 667.
- Rathgar—Case of M. Kelly, *Mar. 3*, 493.
- Sub-engineers—Promotion System, *Mar. 5*, 851.
- Telegraph Service
  - Messengers
    - Adult Night, Application of Hobhouse Scheme to, *Mar. 11*, 1524.
    - Over Age, Appointments available for, *Mar. 4*, 659.
  - Soldiers, System of Employing, *Mar. 11*, 1509.
  - Technical Telegraphy—Telegraphists eligible for Increment, *Mar. 10*, 1287.
- Telephone Service—Irish Extension Proposals, *Mar. 5*, 895.
- Vaccination of Officials, Regulations as to, *Mar. 12*, 1711.
- Wolverhampton Postal Telegraph Office, Pay in, *Mar. 12*, 1710.

Byles, Mr. W. P. [Salford, N.]
- Army
  - Expeditionary Force of 160,000, *Mar. 12*, 1823.
  - Expenditure, *Mar. 4*, 765–769; *Mar. 12*, 1821–1825.
  - *Personnel*, Reduction of, proposed, *Mar. 11*, 1621.
- Butter, Milk-blended, Regulations as to Sale of, *Mar. 9*, 1125.
- Debt, Imprisonment for, Statistics for 1907, *Mar. 12*, 1754.

Byles, Mr. W. P.—*cont.*
- Defence of the Empire, Provision for, *Mar. 4*, 765–769.
- Glenaheiry Outrage, Public Inquiry proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1327.
- Hamstead Colliery Disaster, Information as to, *Mar. 10*, 1308.
- Matches, Phosphorus
  - Deaths from use of in 1907, *Mar. 9* 1111.
  - White or Yellow, Restrictions on Use of, *Mar. 9*, 1112.
- Patriotic Fund, Royal—Case of Mrs. Evans, *Mar. 5*, 900, 901.

Cabs
- Privilege System—Petitions sent from Wimbledon and Clapham Junction.
  - *Q.* Mr. Wiles; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Feb. 27*, 44.

Cadet Corps
- Proposals as to.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Rees, *Mar. 11*, 1601, 1602; Mr. Haldane, 1602.
  - Officers, Position of, under New Scheme.
    - *Q.* Mr. H. Beach; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1731.

Camborne Water Bill
- *c.* 1R *. *Mar. 5*, 843.

Campbell, Rt. Hon. J. H. M. [Dublin University]
- Contempt of Court—Limitation of Jurisdiction of Judges, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1415–1418, 1422.

Campbell-Bannerman, Rt. Hon. Sir H.—*Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury* [Stirling Burghs]
- Ancient Monuments—Proposals as to Royal Commissions, *Mar. 10*, 1286.
- Edinburgh—Fees demanded by Walker Trustees, *Mar. 2*, 325.
- Gambling in Futures, Proposals for Restricting, *Mar. 5*, 848.
- Irish Valuation System, Revision of, proposed, *Mar. 6*, 990.

Camperdown, Earl of
- Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 11*, 1442–1451.

Canada
- Education Rates, System of Applying.
  - *Qs.* Mr. W. Redmond, Lord R. Cecil. Mr. J. Redmond; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9*, 1118.
- Quebec Battlefields, Preservation of.
  - *Q.* Sir G. Parker; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 11*, 1522.

Carlile, Mr. E. H. [Herts, St. Alban's]
  Dewsbury—Application of Hinchcliffe Bequest, *Mar. 12,* 1762.
  Education (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 6,* 1064.
  Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill—Definition of Religious Instruction, *Mar. 3,* 535, 536.
  Loch Long, Torpedo Range, *Mar. 10,* 1392.
  Navy Spirit Ration, Discontinuance of in favour of Money Allowance, proposed, *Mar. 3,* 616, 617.
  Religious Instruction—Number of Children Withdrawn since 1902, *Mar. 3,* 535.
  Yorkshire—West Riding
    Education Loans, Payments on, *Mar. 12,* 1756.
    Schools, Accommodation in, *Mar. 12,* 1732, 1763, 1764.

Carmarthen
  (West) Parliamentary Election—New Member Sworn, *Feb. 27,* 69.

Carnarvonshire
  Slate Quarry Accidents in 1907.
    Q. Mr. E. Davies; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 10,* 1291.

Carntall
  School, Decision as to Closing.
    Q. Mr. Sloan; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11,* 1545.

Carrickfergus
  Harbour Loan—Remission of Balance.
    Qs. Mr. J. MacVeagh; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 9,* 1130.
    Q. Col. M'Calmont, Mr. J. MacVeagh; *As.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 10,* 1319.

Carrickfergus Estate
  Case of M'Kaig.
    Q. Mr. Sloan; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5,* 858.
  Sale Proposals.
    Q. Mr. Sloan; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5,* 861.

Carrington, Earl.—*President of the Board of Agriculture*
  Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 10,* 1262–1268.

Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir E. H. [Dublin University]
  Licensing Bill, *Intro., Feb. 27,* 180–190.

Castle Lambert Estate
  Sale Proposals.
    Q. Mr. Duffy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 2,* 323.

Castlereagh, Lord [Maidstone]
  Naval Stores—Reserve at certain Ports, *Mar. 11,* 1510.

Cattle
  Diseased Animals exposed for Sale, Safeguards against.
    Q. Mr. J. C. Wason; *A.* Sir E. Strachey, *Feb. 27,* 57.
  Diseases
    For Particular Diseases *see* their Names, *as* Glanders, etc.
    Basis of Diagnosis.
      Q. Sir W. J. Collins; *A.* Sir E. Strachey, *Feb. 28,* 210.
  Scottish Inspections in 1906 and 1907.
    Q. Mr. Watt; *A.* Mr. Sinclair; *Mar. 12,* 1721.

Cavan
  County Lieutenant and Magistrates, Date of Appointing.
    Qs. Mr. V. Kennedy, Mr. Moore, Mr. Lane-Fox; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 10,* 1324.
  Evicted Tenants
    Instructions to Inspectors.
      Q. Mr. V. Kennedy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 12,* 1712.
    Reinstatements effected.
      Q. Mr. V. Kennedy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5,* 891.

Cavendish, Rt. Hon. V. C. W. [Derbyshire, W.]
  Army
    Appropriations-in-Aid, Increase in, *Mar. 5,* 948–950.
    Barrack Policy, *Mar. 5,* 948.
    Territorial Force
      County Associations, Financial Position of, *Mar. 5,* 951–954.
      Leave of Absence from Training, Applications for, *Mar. 5,* 871.
      Sergeant Instructors, Allowances for, *Mar. 5,* 952.
      Travelling Allowances, *Mar. 5,* 951.
  London County Council General Powers Bill, 2R., *Mar. 5,* 982.
  Milk Supply—Legislative Proposals, *Mar. 5,* 982.
  Volunteers Financial Liabilities, Estimate for, *Mar. 5,* 950.

Cawdor, Earl
  Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Acts Amendment Bill, 2R., *Feb. 27,* 14–16.

Cawley, Sir F. [Lancashire, Prestwich]
  Income-Tax—Abatement on Income of £690, *Mar. 10,* 1299.

Cecil, Lord R. [Marylebone, E.]
- Canadian Education Rates, System of Applying, *Mar. 9*, 1118.
- Education
  - Non-Provided Schools—Number in Single-School Areas, *Feb. 27*, 56.
  - Single-School Parishes, Information as to, *Mar. 12*, 1765.
  - Teachers' Parchment Certificates, Cause for Delay in issuing, *Mar. 12*, 1761, 1762.
- Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill—Amount and Allocation of Grant under, *Mar. 9*, 1121, 1122; *Mar. 12*, 1764.
- House of Lords, Proposed Abolition of, *Mar. 12*, 1773.
- Swansea Education Dispute—Present Position, *Mar. 9*, 1117, 1118; *Mar. 12*, 1766.
- Transvaal Mine Labour—Use of Compounds, *Mar. 9*, 1103.

Cecil, Mr. E. [Aston Manor]
- Madagascar Native Labour, Recruitment Proposals, *Mar. 9*, 1105.

Census
- Adult Male Population and Number of Voters in 1905.
  - *Q.* Mr. Bottomley; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Feb. 27*, 44.

Chairman and Deputy - Chairman — Rulings
- Army Estimates
  - Point of Order could not be raised till Question had been put, *Mar. 11*, 1625.
  - Vote I., Opportunity for General Discussion on, *Mar. 11*, 1615.
- Closure, Reflections on, were not in order, *Mar. 12*, 1822.
- Irrelevant Matter, *Mar. 9*, 1171, 1206; *Mar. 10*, 1349, 1352.
- Navy Estimates—Matter relevant to and Division on Amendment, *Mar. 9*, 1213, 1218, 1220, 1223, 1226.

Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. A. [Worcestershire, E.]
- Bread—Causes of Increase in Price, *Mar. 4*, 799–807.
- Business of the House, Course of, *Mar. 12*, 1774.
- Edinburgh—Fees demanded by Walker Trustees, *Mar. 2*, 325.
- Fodder, Dangers from Import of and Proposals for Prohibiting, *Mar. 5*, 887.

Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. A.—*cont.*
- Navy
  - Battleships
    - Comparative Strength of Great Britain and Germany, *Mar. 3*, 576.
    - "Dreadnought" Type—Relative Strength of Great Britain and Germany in 1911–12, *Mar. 9*, 1187, 1189.
  - Cruiser Programme, *Mar. 3*, 574.
  - Portsmouth Dockyard Lock, Expenditure on, *Mar. 3*, 579.
  - Rosyth Works
    - Date of Readiness for use, *Mar. 3*, 579, 599.
    - Policy as to, *Mar. 3*, 577–579; *Mar. 10*, 1392.
  - Shipbuilding
    - Comparative Speed of Building in Great Britain and Foreign Countries, *Mar. 9*, 1189, 1190.
    - Expenditure, *Mar. 3*, 579; *Mar. 9*, 1144; *Mar. 9*, 1184.
  - Stores, Surplus of and Reduced Expenditure on, *Mar. 3*, 580, 581, 598.
  - Strength
    - Comparison with Germany, *Mar. 9*, 1187–1191.
    - Policy, Criticisms on, *Mar. 3*, 574.
  - Torpedo Boat Destroyers—Construction Policy, *Mar. 3*, 575.
- Navy Estimates, Criticisms on, *Mar. 3*, 580; *Mar. 9*, 1190.
  - Vote A., Opportunity for Discussion, *Mar. 9*, 1228, 1229.
- Post Office, Regulations as to Political Organisations, *Mar. 3*, 539.
- Territorial Force, County Associations, Recruiting Methods Permissible to, *Mar. 3*, 519.
- Wheat Prices on the Continent, *Mar. 4*, 803–805.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster
- *Rt. Hon. Sir H. Fowler.*

Chancellor of the Exchequer
- *Rt. Hon. H. H. Asquith.*

Channing, Sir F. A. [Northants, E.]
- Education
  - Rural Evening and Secondary Schools, Curriculum of, *Mar. 11*, 1503, 1504.
  - Training Colleges, Provision for Rural School Work Instruction in, *Mar. 12*, 1727.
- Railway Relations with State—Nature of Inquiry, *Mar. 4*, 677.

Chaplin, Rt. Hon. H. [Surrey, Wimbledon]
- Foot-and-Mouth Disease
  - Fodder Import Restrictions, Scope of, *Mar. 3*, 543 ; *Mar. 5*, 885.
  - Prevention of Irish Outbreak, *Mar. 5*, 899.
- Foreign Beef Trusts, Operations of—Inquiry proposed, *Mar. 3*, 510.

Character Note Bill
- *c.* 1R*, *Feb. 27*, 73.

Charities
- (*See Names of Counties, etc.*)

Cherry Rt. Hon. R. R.—*Attorney-General for Ireland* [Liverpool, Exchange]
- Ballyquaide Glebe, Sum Paid for—Grant to Mr. R. Pearson, etc., *Feb. 28*, 211.
- Bevan Estate, Sale of, *Mar. 12*, 1772.
- Births—Irish Statistics (1907), *Feb. 27*, 30.
- Constabulary—Legislative Proposals, *Feb. 27*, 63.
- Contempt of Court—Limitation of Jurisdiction of Judges, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1406–1401, 1416.
- Criminal Procedure—Persons Summoned under 34 Edward III., Legislative Proposals to Permit Examination of Witnesses by, *Mar. 5*, 856.
- Education
  - Necessitous Districts, School Building Grants in, *Feb. 27*, 66.
  - Primary Education Grant, Proposals for, *Feb. 27*, 66.
  - School Building Grants and Plans, *Feb. 27*, 64.
- Galway, Condition of—Proposals for Tabling Inspector's Report, *Feb. 27*, 63.
- Glenaheiry Outrage—Public Inquiry proposed, *Mar. 11*, 1539.
- Hely Estate—Case of J. Brennan, *Feb. 28*, 210.
- Inny Valley—Grating in Mill-race, Floods likely to be Caused by, *Mar. 12*, 1771.
- Local Government Act, 1898—Disqualification for Election on Irish Public Bodies, Provisions as to, *Mar. 9*, 1130.
- Motor Speed Limit—Applications from Local Authorities, *Feb. 27*, 65.
- Mountbellow Land Commission Cases, Hearing of, *Feb. 27*, 65.
- Mullingar Rural Council—Notices Served on Labourers, *Feb. 27*, 62, 63.
- Poor Law Relief Expenditure (1905-6), *Feb. 27*, 30.
- Shaftesbury Estate, Situation on, *Feb. 27*, 29.

Cheshire Lines Committee Bill
- *c.* 2R.* *Mar. 2*, 311.

Chief Secretary for Ireland
- *Rt Hon A Birrell*

Children
- Government Department to look after Interests of, proposed.
  - *Q.* Mr. Gulland ; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 10*, 1305.
- Juvenile Offenders, *see that title.*

Children Bill
- Proposals as to.
  - *Q.* Mr. H. J. Tennant ; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Feb. 27*, 50.
- Provisions of.
  - *Q.* Mr. Nield ; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 12*, 1754.
- Second Reading, Date of taking.
  - *Q.* Mr. Wedgwood ; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 9*, 1132.

China
- Che-Kiang Railway Loan, Agreement as to.
  - *Q.* Mr. Mitchell-Thomson ; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 10*, 1304.
- Railway Extension West of Liao River—Japanese Attitude.
  - *Q.* Sir G. Parker ; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 3*, 527.
- Tientsin British Post Office, Decision as to.
  - *Q.* Mr. Nuttall ; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 12*, 1737.

China and Earthenware
- *See* Earthenware and China.

Church Estates Commission
- Report (1907–8) Presented, *Mar. 9*, 1071, 1078.

Churchill, Rt. Hon. W. L. S.—*Under-Secretary for the Colonies* [Manchester, N. W.]
- Africa, Central—Native Labour Recruitment Proposals, *Mar. 11*, 1518, 1519.
- Africa, East.
  - British Indian Population, *Feb. 27*, 42.
  - Disturbances, Information as to, *Feb. 27*, 41.
  - Game Preserves, Opposition to, *Mar. 9*, 1108, 1109.
  - Jubaland Province, Administration of, *Mar. 9*, 1109.
  - Portuguese Native Labour Recruitment Negotiations, *Mar. 9*, 1105, 1110 ; *Mar. 11*, 1521, 1522 ; *Mar. 12*, 1739, 1740.
  - Steamship Communication with, *Mar. 9*, 1100, 1101.
  - Under-Secretary's Visit, Reports on, *Feb. 27*, 40, 41.
- Africa, South, Customs Unification—Proposals for Conference, *Mar. 9*, 1101.
- Berne Convention as to Women's Night-work, Adhesion to, by Colonies, *Mar. 3*, 523.

[*cont.*

Churchill, Rt. Hon. W. L. S.—*cont.*
- Canada
  - Education Rates, System of applying, *Mar. 9,* 1118, 1119.
  - Quebec Battlefields, Preservation of, *Mar. 11,* 1522.
- China—Tientsin British Post Office, Decision as to, *Mar. 12,* 1738.
- Congo Free State—Condition of Affairs in Lado enclave, *Mar 2,* 334, 335.
- Emigrants' Information Office, Grant for, *Mar. 12,* 1721.
- Madagascar, Native Labour Recruitment Negotiations, *Mar. 2,* 335; *Mar. 4,* 670, 671; *Mar. 9,* 1101, 1102; 1105, 1110; *Mar. 12,* 1743, 1744.
- Mauritius, Cyclone on 3rd inst., Particulars of, *Mar. 12,* 1738.
- Natal
  - Dinizulu, Trial of—Charges and Procedure, *Feb. 27,* 42; *Mar. 3,* 524; *Mar. 4,* 673, 674; *Mar. 9,* 1107, 1108; *Mar. 10,* 1303; *Mar. 11,* 1519.
    - Telegram from Colonial Office, Circumstances of sending, *Mar. 12,* 1744.
  - Financial Position, *Mar. 9,* 1107.
  - Martial Law
    - Proposals for continuing, *Mar 2,* 336
    - Responsibility for proclaiming, etc., *Mar 4,* 672.
  - Public Debt, Amount of, *Mar. 9,* 1106.
- New Hebrides Native Labour
  - Report of High Commissioners and Regulations, Tabling of, *Mar. 11,* 1520.
  - Statistics (1907–8), *Mar. 9,* 1099.
- Nigeria
  - Game Preservation, *Mar. 10,* 1303.
  - Land Tenure Systems, Assimilation of, *Mar. 2,* 335.
  - Land Tenure and Taxation in the North—Presentation of Sir P. Girouard's Memoranda, *Mar. 9,* 1101.
- Nyassaland
  - British Indians, in *Mar. 4,* 668.
  - Resources, Proposals for Advertising, *Mar 9,* 1100.
- South African War—Case of Lydenburg Estates, *Mar. 4,* 665.
- Transvaal
  - Chinese Labour
    - Conditions of Employment on Expiry of Ordinance, *Mar. 11,* 1520.
    - Importation on same Terms as Kaffir Labour proposed, *Mar. 12,* 1741.
    - Retention of, proposed, *Mar. 9,* 1104, 1105.
    - Statistics (1906 and 1908), *Mar. 4,* 669.

Churchill, Rt. Hon. W. L. S.—*cont.*
- Transvaal—*cont.*
  - Civil Service—Compensation on Discharge, *Mar. 2,* 336.
  - Mine Labour.
    - Compounds, Use of, *Mar. 9,* 1103, 1104; *Mar. 12,* 1741, 1742.
    - Conditions of employing, *Mar. 5,* 874, 875.
    - Import of Labourers, Negotiations for, *Mar. 9,* 1105.
    - Mortality among Labourers, *Mar. 12,* 1742, 1743, 1746.
  - Native Labour
    - Comparison with Chinese, *Mar. 12,* 1745.
    - Medical Inspector, Retirement of, *Mar. 12,* 1746, 1747.
    - Nationality of Mine Employees, *Mar. 12,* 1739.
- Trinidad Indentured Labour, Conditions of employing, *Mar. 10,* 1302.
- Uganda
  - Game Preservation in, *Mar. 3,* 523; *Mar. 4,* 671, 672.
  - Railway
    - Accounts, *Mar. 3,* 523.
    - Expenditure on, *Mar. 12,* 1707.

Cismona
- Stacks knocked down, etc.
  - *Q.* Mr. C. Craig; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 9,* 1085.

Civil Service
- Naval and Military Service—Counting towards Pension, proposed.
  - *Q.* Sir H. Kimber; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 2,* 316.
  - *Q.* Sir H. Kimber; A. Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 3,* 512.
- Second Division Clerks—Pay under New Scheme.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Field; *As.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 2,* 317.

Civil Service Estimates
- Copy Presented, *Mar. 2,* 311.
- Irish Proportion of certain Votes.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Hazleton; *As.* Mr. Runciman, Mr. Gladstone, Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 12,* 1723.
- Vote on Account Presented, *Mar. 4,* 658.

Clancy, Mr. J. J. [Dublin Co., N.]
- Agriculture Department—Duties, etc., of Mr Filgate, *Mar. 5,* 899.
- Fodder Importation, Danger from, *Mar. 4,* 703.

Clinton, Lord
Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 10*, 1274–1278.

Cloch Point
Land Purchased and Re-sold by War Office.
Q. Mr. J. D. White; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1731.

Cloncurra
School House, Delay in Erecting.
Q. Mr. T. O'Donnell; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 10*, 1323.

Cloughjordan
Cattle-Driving Prosecution, Procedure in.
Q. Mr. Hogan; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1532.

Clounty
Stone-Throwing Case—Conduct of Police.
Q. Mr. Duffy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 3*, 514.

Clyde
Beam Trawling, Hardship Imposed by Prohibition of.
Q. Mr. Cochrane; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 5*, 887.

Clynes, Mr. J. R. [Manchester, N.E.]
Armaments, Reduction of Expenditure on proposed, *Mar. 2*, 430–434.

Coal Mines
Accidents
Number in 1907 — Regulation of Winding-Speeds, etc.
Q. Mr. W. E. Harvey; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 2*, 337.
Report as to certain Collieries Presented, *Mar. 10*, 1237, 1282.
Rescue Apparatus, Proposals as to.
Qs. Dr. Hazel, Mr. Brace; *As.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 10*, 1308.
Enginemen's Hours of Labour—Case of H. Jenkinson.
Q. Mr. Snowden; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Feb. 27*, 48.

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill
Postponement of proposed.
Qs. Mr. Watt, Captain Craig, Mr. W. E. Harvey, Mr. J. Ward, Mr. George Faber; *As.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 10*, 1310.
Proposals as to.
Q. Mr. Smeaton; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Feb. 27*, 45.

Coastguard Service
Amalgamation with Customs Waterguard Department, Proposals for.
Q. Mr. Wilkie; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 11*, 1489.

Coastguard Service—*cont.*
Duties now carried on by Coastguards, Arrangements for on Reduction.
Q. Mr. Summerbell; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Feb. 27*, 33.
Q. Sir T. Esmonde; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 2*, 320.
Q. Mr. G. Faber; *A.* Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 3*, 516.
Future of—Report of Departmental Committee.
Os. Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 3*, 554; Mr. C. Craig, 587; Colonel Seely, 592–594.
Life-saving Duties.
Os. Colonel Seely, *Mar. 3*, 593, 594; Mr. Lambert, 594.
Policy as to.
Os. Mr. Mitchell-Thomson, *Mar. 9*, 1164; Mr. Lambert, 1187; Colonel Seely, 1230; Mr. Soares, *Mar. 10*, 1354–1356; Colonel Seely, 1359, 1360; Lord Balcarres, 1360; Mr. A. Bryce, 1362; Sir J. Kennaway, 1363; Mr. E. Robertson, 1370; Mr. Fell, 1370–1372; Colonel Seely, 1372.
Reduction Proposals.
Q. Mr. H. Morgan; *A.* Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 2*, 327.

Cochrane, Mr. T. H. [Ayrshire, N.]
Army
Cavalry Regiments for Scotland, Decision as to, *Mar. 12*, 1817, 1818.
Officers
Promotion from the Ranks, *Mar. 12*, 1815.
Public Schools and Universities as a Source of Supply, *Mar. 12*, 1820, 1821.
Reductions effected, *Mar. 12*, 1816.
Territorial Force
Guns, Type to be supplied, *Mar. 12*, 1819, 1820.
Special Reserve, Constitution of, *Mar. 9*, 1098, 1099.
Clyde — Prohibition of Beam-Trawling, *Mar. 5*, 887.
South African War—Royal Artillery Batteries sent, *Mar. 9*, 1098.

Coinage and Currency
Union of Money-Metal-Producing Countries, Proposals for.
Q. Mr. Field; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 9*, 1094.

Colchester, Lord
Municipal Representation Bill, 2R., *Mar. 3*, 485.

Collings, Rt. Hon. J. [Birmingham, Bordesley.]
Agricultural Education in Elementary Schools Bill, 2R., *Mar. 11*, 1653.
Small Holdings Bill, 2R., *Mar. 11*, 1655.

Collins, Sir W. J. [St. Pancras, W.]
Army Expenditure, Necessity for Reduction of, *Mar. 12*, 1851.
Cattle Diseases — Basis of Diagnosis, *Feb. 28*, 210.
Education (Provision of Meals) Act, 1906, Local Authorities adopting, *Feb. 27*, 26.
Malta Fever — Cases (1905–7), *Mar. 4*, 668.
Notification of Births Act, Local Authorities adopting, *Feb. 27*, 25.
Swine Fever—Result of Investigations, *Mar. 10*, 1291.

Colonial Office
Secretary of State—Rt. Hon. Earl of Elgin.
Under-Secretary—Rt. Hon. W. L. S. Churchill.

Colonies and Protectorates
[For Particular Colonies, etc., *see their Names.*]
Annual Report Presented, *Mar. 9*, 1070, 1078.
Miscellaneous Reports Presented, *Mar. 2*, 290, 311.

Colthurst Estate
Case of Mr. J. Hegarty.
Qs. Mr. Sheehan; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1548.
Sale Proposals, etc.
Q. Mr. Sheehan; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 9*, 1081.

Colwich
Saville's Crossing, Erection of Footbridge at.
Q. Mr. Ellis; *A.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 9*, 1114.

Committees
Standing—Minutes of Proceedings, etc., Printing and Circulation of, Ordered *Mar. 9*, 1137.
Standing Committees and Chairman's Panel—Members nominated, *Feb. 27*, 69; *Feb. 28*, 287.

Condon, Mr. T. J. [Tipperary, E.]
Tipperary Magistrates, Additional, Necessity for, *Mar. 10*, 1292.

Congested Districts Board (Ireland)
Castlerea Centre, Cost of,
Q. Mr. C. Craig; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 9*, 1082.
Funds available for Work of.
Qs. Mr. J. Redmond, Mr. Dillon, Mr. W. O'Brien, Mr. Moore, Mr. Boland; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 4*, 686.
Qs. Mr. J. MacVeagh, Mr. Hayden; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5*, 892.

Congo Free State
Additional Act to Treaty of Cession, Effect of.
Q. Sir G. Parker; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 12*, 1748.
British Subjects, Rights of.
Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 5*, 871.
Koffie, James, Case of.
Q. Mr. Mitchell-Thomson; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 5*, 872.
Lado Enclave, Condition of Affairs in.
Qs. Mr. Fell, Mr. J. C. Wason; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 2*, 334.
Papers, Proposals for Circulating.
Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 5*, 872.

Constabulary, Royal Irish
[See *also* Names of Places.]
Fund, Position of.
Qs. Mr. Sloan; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 4*, 694.
Legislative Proposals.
Q. Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Cherry, *Feb. 27*, 63.

Convents
Sweating and Cruelty, Allegations as to.
Qs. Mr. Beaumont, Mr. T. L. Corbett; *As.* Mr. Gladstone, *Feb. 27*, 45.

Conway and Colwyn Bay Joint Water Board Bill
*c. Rep.**, *Mar. 12*, 1704.

Conyngham Estate
Case of Mrs. M. Bell.
Q. Mr. C. MacVeagh; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 2*, 348.

Cooldorihy Estate
Sale of.
Q. Mr. Sheehan; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5*, 894.

Cooper, Dr. G. [Southwark, Bermondsey]
Asiatics in British Ships—Cause of Death of certain Men, *Mar. 3*, 507, 508.
Beri-Beri, Scientific Inquiry into, Proposals for, *Mar. 5*, 855, 856.
London County Council General Powers Bill, 2R., *Mar. 5*, 983.
Milk Supply—Legislative Proposals, *Mar. 5*, 983.

Cooper Estate
Sale Proposals—Case of J. McGrath and T. Barry.
Q. Mr. Lundon; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 4*, 664.

Corbett, Mr. C. H. [Sussex, East Grinstead]
Army—Territorial Force Officers, Unattached, Training Facilities for. *Mar. 10*, 1294.
Volunteer Disbanded Units—Disposal of Officers, *Mar. 3*, 516.

Corbett, Mr. T. L. [Down, N.]
Convents, Allegations of Sweating and Cruelty in, *Feb. 27*, 46.
Land Purchase Stock—Cause of Fall in Price, *Feb. 27*, 67.
Linen, Irish Hand-woven, Protection of, *Mar. 4*, 702.
Navy—*Personnel*, Reduction in, proposed, *Mar. 9*, 1217.
Parliamentary Procedure—Motion for Adjournment, *Mar. 5*, 656.
Trade Disputes, Power of Chief Magistrates to call out Troops during, etc., *Mar. 5*, 942.

Cotton, Sir H. J. S. [Nottingham, E.]
India
Assam and Eastern Bengal—Police Appointments, *Feb. 27*, 38.
Calcutta High Court, Proposals for Partitioning, *Mar. 2*, 331.
Handcuffing of Political Prisoners, *Feb. 27*, 38.
Viceroy's Executive Council, Vacancy on, *Mar. 12*, 1720.
Whipping Act—Amendment Proposals, *Feb. 27*, 38; *Mar. 11*, 1512.
Zakka Khel
Application of Clause 55 of Act of 1858, *Mar. 2*, 332.
Territory, Location of, *Mar. 4*, 661.
Opium—Duty on Indian Exports at certain Ports, *Feb. 27*, 51.

Courthope, Mr. G. L. [Sussex, Rye]
Army
Musketry Policy, *Mar. 12*, 1826–1829.
Rifles—Lee-Enfield
Converted—Position of Swivel-lug, *Mar. 4*, 662.
Slings for, *Feb. 27*, 31.
Territorial Force
Attestation Form—Amendment Proposals, *Mar. 4*, 662.
Government Employees, Eligibility of, *Mar. 12*, 1752.
Home Defence, Arrangements for, *Mar. 11*, 1499.
Mobilisation Scheme, *Mar. 11*, 1499.
Bexhill Postal Facilities, *Mar. 11*, 1524.
Chatham Dockyard—Eligibility of Employees to join Territorial Force, *Mar. 12*, 1733, 1752.
Foot-and-Mouth Disease
Fodder Import Restrictions, Scope of, *Mar. 3*, 542, 543, 544.
Origin of Outbreak in 1885, *Mar. 3*, 542.

Courthope, Mr. G. L.—*cont.*
Inland Revenue Stamps, Revenue derived from, *Mar. 11*, 1524, 1525.
London County Council General Powers Bill, 2R., *Mar. 5*, 966–970.
Post Office
Political Organisations, Regulation as to, *Mar. 3*, 540.
Postmen, Rural, Duties of, *Mar. 11*, 1524.
Rifle Clubs, War Office Grant of Ammunition to, *Mar. 4*, 661.
Uganda
Game Preservation in, *Mar. 3*, 523.
Railway Accounts, *Mar. 3*, 523.

Courtney, Lord
Municipal Representation Bill, 2R., *Mar. 3*, 474.

Cox, Mr. H. [Preston]
Education—Cost per Head, *Mar. 2*, 320.
Egypt—Cost of British Army of Occupation, *Mar. 11*, 1498.
Natal Public Debt, Amount of, *Mar. 9*, 1106.
Post Office Mail Service to Hong Kong
Contract, Terms of Renewal of, *Mar. 12*, 1753.
Revenue from Trans-Canadian Route, *Mar. 1*, 1523.
Sugar—Quantity used in (1906–7) Brewing, *Feb. 28*, 207.
Uganda Railway Accounts, *Mar. 3*, 523.
West Indies Inter-Colonial Mail Service, Payment for, *Mar. 10*, 1298.

Craig, Captain J. [Down, E.]
Africa, Central—Native Labour Recruitment Proposals, *Mar. 11*, 1518.
Ballinagar—Outrage at House of J. Minogue, *Mar. 11*, 1543, 1544.
Ballintubber Intimidation Case—Remarks of Mr. Rice, *Mar. 10*, 1320.
Ballybricken Cattle Drive on 26th February, Information as to, *Mar. 11*, 1528.
Belfast—Grants to Queen's College, *Mar. 11*, 1527.
Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, Postponement of, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1310.
Condition of Ireland — Application of English Pistols Act, etc., *Mar. 4*, 685.
Crown Jewels, Loss of—Public Inquiry proposed, *Mar, 11*. 1534.
Cullenagh Cattle Drive on 3rd inst., *Mar. 11*, 1543.
Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill—Religious Instruction Provisions, *Mar. 5*, 882, 883.
Galway, Condition of—Report of Mr. Horne, *Mar. 4*, 685.

[*cont.*

Craig, Captain J.—*cont.*
- Gough Estate—Outrage at Houses of Macnamara and Monaghan, *Mar. 3*, 547.
- Glenaheiry Outrage—Public Inquiry proposed, *Mar. 11*, 1536.
- Grangemore Cattle Raid, Information as to, *Mar. 3*, 548.
- Greenwich Hospital Age Pensions, Number of Men available for, *Mar. 3*, 517, 518.
- Linen, Irish Hand-woven, Protection of, *Mar. 4*, 702.
- Longford United Irish League, Threats against Graziers, *Mar. 3*, 548, 549.
- Lough George—Assault on Mrs. Greated's Servant, *Mar. 4*, 693.
- Marines, Reduction in Strength of, *Mar. 9*, 1220–1222.
- Maynooth College, Grants to, *May 11*, 1527, 1528.
- Mullingar Rural Council—Notices served on Labourers, *Feb. 27*, 63.
- Parliamentary Procedure—Motion for Adjournment, *Mar. 3*, 656.
- Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act, 1881, Constabulary Authorities consulted before Withdrawal of, *Mar. 4*, 684.
- Railway Delays on Certain Lines, Correspondence with Vice-Regal Commission as to, *Mar. 11*, 1542, 1543.
- Royal University—Students entering for Examination in 1907, [*Mar. 12*, 1713.
- Trade Disputes, Power of Chief Magistrates to call out Troops during, etc., *Mar. 5*, 938–941.
- Union Jacks Presented to School Children, Speech made by Lord Roseberry—Printing of Speech, proposed, *Feb. 27*, 55.

Craig, Mr. C. C. [Antrim, S.]
- Arnadooman Farm, Disposal of, *Mar. 9*, 1084.
- Cismona—Stacks knocked down, etc., *Mar. 9*, 1085.
- Coastguard, Future of—Report of Departmental Committee, *Mar. 3*, 587.
- Congested Districts Board—Cost of Castlerea Centre, *Mar. 9*, 1082.
- Contempt of Court—Limitation of Jurisdiction of Judges, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1426.
- Cullenagh—Cattle Drive on 3rd inst., *Mar. 11*, 1543.
- Dublin Metropolitan Police—Cost of Upkeep, Objections to levying on the Rates, etc., *Mar. 11*, 1652.
- Galway, Condition of—Proposals for Tabling Inspector's Report, *Feb. 27*, 63.
- Gort Firing Outrages, Information as to, *Mar. 9*, 1083, 1084.
- Longford United Irish League, Threats against Graziers, *Mar. 3*, 549.

Craig, Mr. C. C.—*cont.*
- Navy
  - Cruiser Programme, *Mar. 3*, 591.
  - Dockyard Accommodation for Ships of "Dreadnought" Type, *Mar. 3*, 592.
  - Home Fleet
    - Constitution of and Readiness for War, *Mar. 3*, 590, 591.
    - Strength of, *Mar. 10*, 1349, 1350.
  - *Personnel*, Reduction in, proposed, *Mar. 9*, 1205.
  - Shipbuilding Programme, 1908–1909, *Mar. 3*, 588.
  - Two-Power Standard, Maintenance of, *Mar. 3*, 589; *Mar. 10*, 1347–1439.
- Railway Communication Cords, Occasions for using, *Mar. 5*, 880.

"Craigisla"
- Crew, Complaints by.
  - *Q.* Mr. J. H. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 11*, 1491.

Cremer, Sir W. R. [Shoreditch, Haggerston]
- Naval Shipbuilding Programme—Annual Communication to Foreign Powers, *Mar. 9*, 1132.
- Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28*, 270–276.

Crewe, Earl of—*Lord President of the Council*
- Ash Wednesday—Adjournment of House of Lords, *Mar. 3*, 488.
- Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Acts Amendment Bill, 2R., *Feb. 27*, 12–14.
- India—Zakka Khel Expedition, *Mar. 2*, 291.
- Land Values (Scotland) Bill, Date of proceeding with, *Feb. 27*, 17.
- Municipal Representation Bill, 2R., *Mar. 3*, 474.
- Poisons and Pharmacy Bill, 2R., *Mar. 5*, 821, 825.

Crimean War
- Case of A. McCormick.
  - *Q.* Mr. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 5*, 862.
- Veterans in United Kingdom—Number receiving Pensions, etc.
  - *Q.* Mr. Haworth; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 3*, 515.

Criminal Procedure
- Faulkner, W. and F., Case of.
  - *Q.* Mr. Rowlands; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 6*, 991.
- Hume, Joseph, Case of—Petition sent for Inverness.
  - *Q.* Mr. Bryce; *A.* Mr. Sinclair *Feb. 27*, 61.

[*cont*

Criminal Procedure—*cont.*
  Palmer, F. W., Case of.
    Q. Mr. Agar-Robartes; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 2*, 338.
  Persons summoned under 34 Edward 3—Legislative Proposals to permit Examination of Witnesses.
    Q. Mr. Mooney; *A.* Mr. Cherry, *Mar. 5*, 856.

Croagh
  Case of J. Hurley.
    Q. Mr. O'Shaughnessy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5*, 862.

Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Acts Amendment Bill
  l. 2R., *Feb. 27*, 3.

Crofton Estate
  Sale of.
    Q. Mr. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1531.

Crookenden and Casey Estate
  Sale Negotiations.
    Q. Mr. V. Kennedy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5*, 891.

Crooks, Mr. W. [Woolwich]
  Woolwich Arsenal Reduction Policy, Dangers of, *Mar. 11*, 1603–1607.

Crosfield, Mr. A. H. [Warrington]
  Liverpool Corporation Bill, 2R., *Mar. 12*, 1842.

Crossley, Mr. W. J. [Cheshire, Altrincham]
  Liquor Licences—Statistics for County Boroughs, Return as to, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1290.

Cullenagh
  Cattle Drive on 3rd inst.
    Qs. Capt. Craig, Mr. C. Craig, Mr. Kilbride; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1543.

Cunard Agreement
  [*See under* Merchant Shipping and Post Office]

Curran, Mr. P. [Durham, Jarrow]
  Merchant Shipping Rates—Fixing of Maximum, proposed, *Mar. 4*, 660.
  Post Office, Regulations as to Political Organisations, *Mar. 3*, 540.
  Railway Relations with the State—Nature of Inquiry, *Mar. 4*, 677.
  War Office Clothing Contracts—Wages paid by Contractors, *Mar. 10*, 1296.

Curzon of Kedleston, Lord
  Persia, Railway Concessions in—Autograph Letter of Shah in March, 1899, *Mar. 2*, 292.

Dangerous Performances Acts
  Extension to Women proposed.
    Q. Mr. Lea; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 9*, 1112.

Dartford Gas Bill
  c. 2R *, *Mar. 9*, 1077.

Dartmouth, Earl of
  Army—Territorial Force
    Attestation Form, Terms of, *Mar. 2*, 295.
    Church Parade on April 5th, Proposals as to, *Mar. 2*, 308.
    Clothing, Calling in for Valuation, *Mar. 2*, 295.
    County Associations
      Financial Position of, *Mar. 2*, 294.
      Military Representatives, Power to co-opt Members as, *Mar. 2*, 294.
      Relations with the War Office, *Mar. 2*, 296.
      Secretaries, Remuneration of, *Mar. 2*, 296, 297, 302.
    Guns, Provision of, *Mar. 2*, 295, 296.
    Officers of Disbanded Units, Position of, *Mar. 2*, 293, 301.
    Recruiting Regulations, *Mar, 2*, 295.

Davies, Mr. E. W. [Carnarvonshire, Eifion]
  Carnarvonshire, Slate Quarry Accidents in 1907, *Mar. 10*, 1291.
  Dog Licence Exemptions in Carnarvon, *Mar. 5*, 876.
  Small Holdings—Purchase Money, Repayment of, *Mar. 11*, 1507.

Davies, Mr. T. [Fulham]
  Foot-and-Mouth Disease
    Cattle Steamers from infected Ports, Disinfection of, *Mar. 9*, 1123, 1124.
    Raw Hides, Offal, etc., Danger from Importing, *Mar. 9*, 1123.

Death Certificates (Charges) Bill
  c. 1R *, *Mar. 4*, 705.

Death Duties
  Licensed Property
    Payments on.
      Qs. Sir H. Kimber; *As.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 2*, 354; *Mar. 4*, 660.
    Valuation of.
      Q. Mr. George Faber; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 10*, 1305.

Deaths
General Abstract, Presented, *Mar. 9*, 1071, 1078.

Debt, Imprisonment for
Amendment of Law, Proposals for.
Qs. Mr. Maclean, Mr. Pickersgill; *As.* Mr. Gladstone, *Feb. 27*, 49.

Statistics for 1907.
Qs. Mr. Pickersgill, Mr. Byles; *As.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 12*, 1754.

Defence of the Empire
Mine-fields, Decision as to.
Os. Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5*, 833; Earl of Portsmouth, 840.

Provision for.
Os. Mr. Wyndham, *Mar. 4*, 747–753; Mr. Byles, 765–769.

Delany, Mr. W. [Queen's County, Ossory]
Ballyquaide Glebe, Sum paid for—Grant to Mr. R. Pearson, etc., *Feb. 28*, 211.

Education—Compulsory Attendance Legislation to improve existing Act proposed, *Mar. 3*, 491.

Hely Estate—Case of J. Brennan, *Feb. 28*, 210.

Derby Gas Bill
c. *R p.*, *, *Mar. 12*, 1704.

Devlin, Mr. J. [Belfast, W.]
Asiatics on British Ships, Cause of Death of certain Men, *Mar. 3*, 502.

Belfast Harbour Commissioners' Contracts, Allocation of, *Mar. 10*, 1283, 1284, 1285.

Belfast Corporation Bill, 2R., *Feb 27*, 147–155, 158.

Devonshire Estate
Case of Mr. J. Mulcahy.
Q. Mr. W. Abraham; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5*, 857.

Dewar, Sir J. A. [Inverness]
Vatersay, Island of, Situation on—Proposals for Tabling Papers, *Mar. 2*, 345.

Dewsbury
Hinchcliffe Bequest, Application of.
Q. Mr. Carlile; *A* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 12*, 1762.

Dickinson, Mr. W. H. [St. Pancras, N.]
Education—Non-provided Schools, London Expenditure on Structural Alterations, *Mar. 11*, 1502.

Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir C. W. [Gloucester, Forest of Dean]
Army
  Cardwell System, Adherence to, *Mar. 4*, 736, 741–743.
  Cavalry Statistics (1908), *Mar. 2*, 329.
  Expeditionary Force of 160,000 Men, Organisation of, *Mar. 4*, 737.
  Military Law, Changes in, *Mar. 4*, 743, 744.
  Territorial Force
    Artillery
      Field
        Drivers, Training Proposals for, *Mar. 11*, 1170.
        Organisation of as a Fighting Force, *Mar. 11*, 1567–1571.
      Training Proposals, *Mar. 4*, 739, 740.
    Guns, Type to be supplied, *Mar. 11*, 1568.
    Welsh Counties, Schemes for—Creation of Administrative District, proposed, *Mar. 12*, 1798.
  Trade Disputes, Power of Chief Magistrates to call out Troops during, *Mar. 5*, 928.
Berne Convention as to Women's Night-work—Adhesion to, by Colonies, *Mar. 3*, 522.
Congo Free State
  British Subjects, Rights of, *Mar. 5*, 871.
  Papers, Proposals for Circulating, *Mar. 5*, 872.
India—Zakka Khel Expedition, Conditions of Cessation of Operations, *Mar. 2*, 333.
Navy
  Rosyth, Policy as to, *Mar. 3*, 571–574, 578; *Mar. 10*, 1378—1381.
  Strength, Policy as to, Criticisms on, *Mar. 3*, 369, 370.
  Submarine Mines, Decision as to, *Mar. 3*, 571, 572.
  Works, Expenditure on, *Mar 10*, 1379.
San Thomé and Principé Indentured Labour Regulations, *Mar. 12*, 1748.

Dillon, Mr. J. [Mayo, E.]
Congested Districts Board, Funds available for Work of, *Mar. 4*, 686.

Dockyards, Naval
See under Navy.

Dog Licences
Exemptions in Carnarvon.
Q. Mr. E. Davies; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 5,* 876.

Donegal
Whaling Stations, Proposals for establishing.
Qs. Mr. Morton, Mr. H. Law; *As.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 4,* 677.
Qs. Mr. C. MacVeigh; Mr. J. C. Wason; *As.* Mr. T. W. Russell. *Mar. 4.* 699.
Q. Mr. C. MacVeigh; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 11,* 1494.

Donelan, Captain A. J. C. [Cork, E.]
Ordnance Survey — Royal Engineers, Charge on Vote for Pay of, *Feb. 27,* 22.
Rosyth—Use of British Granite, proposed, *Mar. 10,* 1294.

Doughty, Sir G. [Great Grimsby]
Territorial Force—Guns for Field Artillery, *Mar. 4,* 663.

Down
(West) Parliamentary Election—New Writ issued, *Mar. 2,* 310.

Dublin
Crown Jewels, Loss of, *see under* Ireland.
Metropolitan Police
Cost of Upkeep, Objections to levying on the Rates, etc.
Qs. Mr. Meagher, *Mar. 11,* 1625–1630, 1639; Mr. J. P. Nannetti, 1630–1633; Mr. T. Harrington, 1633; Mr. Gordon, 1634; Mr. Kettle, 1635–1637; Mr. Birrell, 1637–1642; Mr. J. Redmond, 1642–1644; Mr. Long, 1644–1646; Mr. T. M. Healy, 1646–1648; Mr. Moore, 1648–1652; Mr. C. Craig, 1652.
Inquiry into, proposed.
Qs. Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11,* 1642; Mr. J. Redmond, 1642; Mr. Long, 1644.

Dublin and South Eastern Railway Bill
c. 2R.* *Mar. 9,* 1077.

Duffy, Mr. W. J. [Galway, S.]
Athenry, Police Huts, Number of and Cost of Extra Police, *Mar. 2,* 324, 325.
Brown Estate, Sale Proposals, *Mar. 2,* 324.
Castle Lambert Estate, Sale Proposals, *Mar. 2,* 323.
Clounty, Stone-throwing Case—Conduct of Police, *Mar. 3,* 514.
Faucett Estate—Case of H. Hanly, *Mar. 3,* 514.

Duffy, Mr. W. J.—*cont.*
Galway Hospital—Rate for Upkeep, *Mar. 3,* 513.
Gough Estate, Outrage at Houses of Macnamara and Monaghan, *Mar. 3,* 548.
Lambert Minors Estate, Sale Proposals, *Mar. 2,* 323.
Moneytigue, Sale Proposals, *Mar. 2,* 323.
O'Malley Estate, Sale Proposals, *Mar. 2,* 324.

Duke of York's School
Reduction of Number of Boys on Removal, etc.
Q. Mr. Hart-Davies; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Feb. 27,* 34.
Qs. Major Anstruther-Gray; *As.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 2,* 327.
Site, Value of and Proposals as to.
Qs. Major Anstruther-Gray, Sir H. Vincent; *As.* Mr. Harcourt, *Mar. 2,* 344.
Qs. Sir H. Vincent, Mr. Trevelyan; *As.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 9,* 1088.
Q. Mr. Horniman; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11,* 1497.

Dumbarton
Sewage Disposal into River Leven.
Q. Mr. R. Duncan; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 9,* 1126.

Duncan, Mr. C. [Barrow-in-Furness]
Asiatics on British Ships, Cause of Death of certain Men, *Mar. 3,* 496.
Navy
Mechanician and Boy Artificers—Abolition of Training Establishments proposed, *Feb. 27,* 32.
Reserve—Engine-room Artificers, Certificates held by, *Feb. 27,* 32.
Warrant Rank, Decision as to Extension of, *Feb. 27,* 31.

Duncan, Mr. R. [Lanark, Govan]
Dumbarton—Sewage Disposal into River Leven, *Mar. 9,* 1126.
New York Unemployed—Practice as to Out-of-work Benefit, *Mar. 3,* 530.
Post Office—Political Organisations, Regulations as to, *Mar. 3,* 540.

Dungeness Bay
Lug Worms removed by French Fishermen.
Q. Mr. L. Hardy; *A.* Sir E. Strachey, *Feb. 27,* 22.

Dunne, Major E. M. [Walsall]
Army
Cardwell System, *Mar. 5,* 954, 955.
Expeditionary Force of 160,000 Men, Organisation of, *Mar. 5,* 954.
Officers
Training, Alterations in Present System, *Mar. 5,* 955.

Durness

Crofters, Grazing Land available for.
Qs. Mr. Morton; *As.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 2*, 346.

Earthenware and China

Special Rules, Revision of.
Q. Mr. J. Ward; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 10*, 1307.

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) (No. 2) Bill

c. Order for Second Reading—Bill Withdrawn, *Feb. 27*, 71.

Ecclesiastical Assessments (Scotland) (No. 3) Bill

c. 1R.*, *Mar. 2*, 355.

Ecclesiastical Commission

Report Presented, *Mar. 3*, 474, 490.

Edinburgh

Queen Victoria School, Accommodation at.
Q. Major Anstruther-Gray; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 5*, 870.

Walker Trustees, Fees demanded by.
Qs. Sir W. Bull; *As.* Mr. Runciman, *Feb. 27*, 25; *Mar. 9*, 1094.
Q. Mr. A. Chamberlain; *A.* Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, *Mar. 2*, 325.

Education, Board of

President—Rt. Hon. R. McKenna.

Parliamentary Secretary—Mr. T. Lough.

Education (England and Wales)

[*For* Particular Places, *see their Names.*]

Accommodation Provided in Schools.
Q. Mr. Forster; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 5*, 884.

Attendance Officers, Powers and Duties of.
Q. Mr. G. Roberts; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 3*, 534.

Corporal Punishment, Restrictions on.
Qs. Mr. Wedgwood, Mr. Lupton; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 2*, 343.

Cost per Head.
Q. Mr. Cox; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 2*, 320.
Q. Mr. W. Pearce; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 11*, 1495.

Council Schools

Power of Local Authorities to Reimpose Fees.
Q. Mr. A. Hutton; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 11*, 1506.

Statistics.
Q. Mr. Forster; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 5*, 883.

Defective Children, Schools for—List Presented, *Mar. 5*, 846; *Mar. 9*, 1070.

Devolution in County Areas—Report Presented, *Feb. 28*, 202; *Mar. 2*, 290.

ducation (England and Wales)—*cont.*

London County Council Syllabus (Order 115–161) Presented, *Mar. 6*, 990; *Mar. 9*, 1070.
Q. Mr. Partington; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 3*, 533.
Qs. Sir F. Powell; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 5*, 882.

Medical Inspection, Defrayment of Cost of.
Q. Sir F. Powell; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 5*, 883.

Non-provided Schools

Exchequer Grants during 1907.
Qs. Sir E. Sassoon; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 4*, 679.

Expenditure by Local Authorities in 1907.
Q. Sir E. Sassoon; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 2*, 342.

London Expenditure on Structural Alterations.
Q. Mr. Dickenson; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 11*, 1502.

Number in Single School Areas.
Q. Lord R. Cecil; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Feb. 27*, 56.
Q. Sir H. Kimber; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 2*, 340.

Voluntary Schools Built since 1890.
Q. Mr. Henry; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 4*, 679.

Religious Instruction—Number of Children Withdrawn since 1902.
Q. Mr. Partington; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 3*, 533.
Qs. Mr. Carlile; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 3*, 535.

Rural Evening and Secondary Schools, Curriculum of.
Qs. Sir F. Channing; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 11*, 1503, 1504.

Schools—Fire Safeguards.
Q. Mr. Wedgwood; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 9*, 1120.

Secondary Schools

Conditions of obtaining Grants under New System.
Q. Sir P. Magnus; *A.* Mr McKenna, *Mar. 12*, 1762.

Supplementary Regulation Presented, *Mar. 4*, 658; *Mar. 5*, 820.

Single School Parishes, Information as to.
Q. Lord R. Cecil; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 12*, 1765.

Teachers

Parchment Certificates, Cause for Delay in issuing.
Q. Lord R. Cecil; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 12*, 1761.

Salaries—Conditions in Code.
Q. Mr. F. E. Smith; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Feb. 27*, 55.

[*cont.*

Education (England and Wales)—*cont.*

Training Colleges—Provision for Instruction in Rural School Work.
Q. Sir F. Channing; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 12,* 1727.

Union Jacks Presented and Speech made by Lord Rosebery—Printing of Speech, proposed.
Qs. Captain Craig; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *Feb. 27,* 55.

West Riding Appeal Case, Decision in.
Q. Mr. Lane-Fox; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Mar. 10,* 1313.

Education (Ireland)

[*For* Particular Places, *see their Names.*]

Bi-lingual Programme, Adoption of.
Qs. Mr. T. O'Donnell, Mr. Moore; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11,* 1529.

Compulsory Attendance—Legislation to improve existing Act, proposed.
Q. Mr. Delany; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 3,* 491.

Cookery Instruction, Provision for.
Qs. Mr. Moore; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 4,* 696.

Grant—Proposals as to Increase.
Q. Sir T. Esmonde; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 2,* 322.

Inspectors

Cause for Employment at Central Office.
Q. Mr. O'Shaughnessy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11,* 1547.

Grading of.
Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Feb. 27,* 27.

Horses and Cars, Provision of.
Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Feb. 27,* 26.

National Board

Meetings of (1906–7).
Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 2,* 313.
Q. Mr. O'Shaughnessy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11,* 1546.

Senior Secretary, Duties, etc., of.
Q. Mr. O'Shaughnessy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11,* 1547.

National School Teachers

Salaries, Provision for Increase in.
Q. Mr. J. Redmond; *As.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 12,* 1772.

Students of 1898 and 1899, Salaries of.
Q. Mr. J. MacVeagh; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 3,* 546.
Q. Mr. T. O'Donnell; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 9,* 1095.
Q. Colonel McCalmont; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 10,* 1293.

Necessitous Districts, School Building Grants in.
Q. Mr. N. Murphy; *A.* Mr. Cherry, *Feb. 27,* 66.

Education (Ireland)—*cont.*

Primary Education Grant, Proposals for.
Q. Mr. N. Murphy; *A.* Mr. Cherry, *Feb. 27,* 66.

School Building Grants and Plans.
Q. Mr. John O'Connor; *A.* Mr. Cherry, *Feb. 27,* 64.
Q. Mr. Field; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 10,* 1290.

Teachers' Pension Fund, Proposals as to.
Q. Mr. N. Murphy; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Feb. 27,* 67.

Technical Schools, Repayments for Building.
Q. Mr. Field; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell, *Mar. 4,* 666.

Education, Scotland

Vice-President of the Council—Rt. Hon. J. Sinclair.

[*For* Particular Places, *see their Names.*]

Code of Regulations for Day Schools (1908), Presented, *Feb. 27,* 3, 19.

Education Bill

c. 1R.* *Feb. 27,* 72.

Education (Local Authorities) Bill

c. 2R., *Mar. 6,* 994.

Education (Provision of Meals) Act

Amendment, proposed.
Qs. Mr. O'Grady; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 3,* 534.

Local Authorities adopting.
Q. Sir W. J. Collins; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Feb. 27,* 26.

Education (School Attendance) Bill

l. 1R.* *Mar. 12,* 1658.

Edwards, Mr. A. C. [Denbigh District)

Northamptonshire

Muzzling Order, Scope of, *Mar. 11,* 1508.

Rabies Outbreak—Result of Post-mortem, *Mar. 11,* 1508.

Railways—Speed of 5 p.m. Train from Hastings, *Mar. 5,* 880.

Women's Enfranchisement, 2R., *Feb. 28,* 261–265.

Edwards, Mr. E. [Hanley]

Asiatics on British Ships—Cause of Death of certain Men, *Mar. 3,* 503.

Egypt

British Army of Occupation

Cost of.
Q. Mr. Cox; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11,* 1498.

Reduction Proposals.
Q. Mr. Kettle; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 12,* 1749.

[*cont.*

Egypt—*cont.*
General Assembly Resolutions, Lord Cromer's Attitude towards.
Q. Dr. Rutherford; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 3,* 525.

Moustafa Kamal Pasha's Funeral, Attendance of Students at.
Qs. Mr. Kettle; *As.* Sir E. Grey, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 12,* 1751.

School Sports, Date of holding.
Q. Mr. Kettle; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 12,* 1750.

University, Establishment of, proposed.
Q. Dr. Rutherford; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 3,* 525.

Election of Aldermen in Municipal Boroughs Bill
c. 1r.* *Mar. 9,* 1137.

Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill
Allocation of Time for.
Q. Mr. Lyell; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 2,* 353.

Clause 1, Subsections (1) and (2), Effect of.
Q. Mr. Stuart-Smith; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 10,* 1292.

Contracted-out Schools.
Control of.
Q. Mr. Lane-Fox; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 10,* 1314.

Furniture, Ownership of.
Qs. Lord E. Talbot, Mr. J. Redmond; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 12,* 1760.

Scholarships Schemes, Application of.
Qs. Sir E. Sassoon; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 9,* 1120.

Teachers' Service, Counting of.
Q. Mr. Bridgeman; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 11,* 1495.

Enactments affected by—Circulation of Print proposed.
Q. Mr. S. Wortley; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 2,* 342.

Grant

Amount and Allocation of.
Qs. Mr. P. Pease, Mr. A. J. Balfour, Lord R. Cecil, Lord Balcarres; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 9,* 1121.
Qs. Lord R. Cecil, Sir E. Sassoon, Mr. A. J. Balfour; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 12,* 1764.

Equivalent for Scotland and Ireland, proposed.
Q. Mr. Kettle, Mr. Mitchell-Thomson; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Feb. 27,* 68.

System of Calculating.
Qs. Sir W. Anson; *As.* Mr. M. McKenna, *Mar. 4,* 680.

Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill—*cont.*
Religious Instruction
Definition of.
Qs. Mr. Carlile; *As.* Mr. McKenna, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 3,* 535.
Provisions as to.
Q. Captain Craig; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 5,* 882.
Section 3, Subsection 3, Interpretation of.
Q. Mr. Myer; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 2,* 342.
Teachers, Effect on Demand for.
Q. Mr. Bridgeman; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 12,* 1765.
Voluntary Transferred Schools, Provision as to.
Qs. Sir E. Sassoon; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 9,* 1119.

Eleven O'Clock Rule
Suspension of—*Motion* (Mr. G. Whiteley), *Mar. 4,* 816.

Elgin and Kincardine, Earl of—*Secretary of State for the Colonies*
Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, 2r., *Mar. 11,* 1462–1469.

Ellis, Rt. Hon. J. E. [Nottingham, Rushcliffe
Colwich—Erection of Footbridge at Saville's Crossing, *Mar. 9,* 1114.

Licensing Bill.

Proposals as to, *Mar. 2,* 354.

Second Reading, Date of Taking, *Mar. 12,* 1752.

Natal—Trial of Dinizulu, *Feb. 27,* 42; *Mar. 3,* 524.

Emigration and Immigration
Emigrants' Information Office, Grant for.
Q. Mr. Hazleton; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 12,* 1721.

Emmott, Mr. A.—*Chairman of Committees* [Oldham]

Belfast Corporation Bill, 2r., *Feb. 27,* 163–165.

Enniskillen
Labourers' Cottages Scheme, Delay in.
Q. Mr. V. Kennedy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 12,* 1713.

Erroll, Earl of
Army

Horses—Source of Supply, *Mar. 12,* 1695.

Officers

Pay of, *Mar. 12,* 1697.

Public Schools and Universities as a Source of Supply, *Mar. 12,* 1698.

Reductions effected, *Mar. 12,* 1695–1697.

Stores, Decrease in Expenditure on, *Mar. 12,* 1697, 1698.

Erskine, Mr. D. C. [Perthshire, W.]
Exports and Imports—Statistics (1902–1907), *Mar. 5*, 848.

Esmonde, Sir. T. G. [Wexford, N.]
Coastguard, Duties now carried on by, Arrangements for continuing, *Mar. 2*, 320.
Education Grant—Proposals as to Increase, *Mar. 2*, 322.
Tuberculosis Prevention (Ireland) Bill, Provision of, *Mar, 2*, 322,

Essex, Mr. R. W. [Gloucestershire, Cirencester]
Bread—Causes of Increase in Price, *Mar, 4*, 797–799,
Wheat Cultivation within the Empire, Encouragement of, proposed, *Mar. 4*, 797,

Estimates
Reductions during last Ten Years.
Q. Mr, Walker; *A.* Mr, Runciman, *Mar, 3*, 492.

Evans, Sir S. T.—*Solicitor-General* [Glamorgan, Mid.]
German Emperor's Letter to Lord Tweedmouth, *Mar. 12*, 1769.
Licensing Bill, *Intro., Feb. 27*, 190–196.

Everett, Mr. R. L. [Suffolk, Woodbridge]
Armaments, Increase in Expenditure on, *Mar. 12*, 1836–1838.
Education (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 6*, 1035.

Eversley, Lord
Municipal Representation Bill, 2R., *Mar. 3*, 482–485.

Explosions
Dyke & Co.—Report on Explosion of Cartridges Presented, *Mar. 12*, 1658, 1705.

Exportation of Horses Bill
c. 1R.* *Mar. 12*, 1776.

Exports and Imports
Food Imports in 1906.
Q. Mr. Menzies; *A.* Sir E. Strachey, *Mar. 9*, 1091.
Statistics (1902–1907).
Q. Mr. Erskine; *A.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 5*, 848.

Faber, Mr. G. D. [York]
Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, Postponement of, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1311.
Coastguard Duties in saving Life, Proposals for carrying out, *Mar. 3*, 516.
Death Duties on Licensed Property, Valuation of, *Mar. 10*, 1305.
Liquor Traffic—Income Tax Assessment, *Mar. 12*, 1753.

Faber, Mr. G. H. [Boston]
Army Rifles—Muzzle Velocity, *Mar. 11*, 1497.

Factories and Workshops
Accidents, Non-fatal—Special Inquiries in 1907.
Q. Mr. A. Henderson; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 5*, 852.
Charitable and Reformatory Institutions, Inspection of.
Qs. Mr. H. J. Tennant, Major Anstruther-Gray; *As.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 5*, 875.
Children Employed as Half-timers.
Q. Mr. Gill; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 11*, 1511.
Inspectors
Examination Subjects.
Q. Mr. Jowett; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 3*, 529.
Home Department Staff, Work of.
Q. Mr. H. J. Tennant; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Feb. 27*, 20, 46.
Increase, Proposals for.
Q. Mr. J. R. Macdonald; *A* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 2*, 337.
Qualifications required of.
Q. Mr. Jowett; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 10*, 1306.
Returns, Procedure in making.
Q. Mr. Hedges; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 3*, 530.
Parliamentary Discussion of Subject, proposed,
Q. Mr. J. R. Macdonald; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar 2*, 352.

Factors Act (1889) Amendment Bill
c. 1R.* *Feb. 27*, 72.

Fardell, Sir T. G. [Paddington, S.]
Local Authorities' Accounts—Action to be taken on Report of Committee, *Mar. 5*, 856.
Volunteer Officers—Rank on Transfer to Territorial Force, *Mar. 12*, 1730.

Farrell, Mr. J. [Longford, N.]
Army Pensions—Cases of D. Harvey, P. Brady and T. McAuley, *Mar. 5* 863.
Ballinalee
Catholic School, Windows broken at, *Mar. 11*, 1530.
Protestant School Teacher, Name, etc., of, *Mar. 11*, 1546.
Crimean War—Case of A. McCormick, *Mar. 5*, 862.
Crofton Estate, Sale of, *Mar. 11*, 1531.
Evictions pending—Government Attitude, *Mar. 5*, 890.
Kilbride—Case of A. O'Connor, *Mar. 5*, 889.

[*cont.*

Farrell, Mr. J.—*cont.*
Longford
Condition of—Cause for Employment of Extra Police, *Mar. 11*, 1531, 1532.
Land Commission Sitting, Date of, *Mar. 5*, 889.
Stacpoole Estate—Case of Lennon Girls, *Mar. 5*, 890.
Telephone Extension in Ireland, *Mar. 5*, 895.
Tully—Grazing Land of Mr. Bond, Purchase of, *Mar. 11*, 1531.

Fatal Accidents (Damages) Bill
c. 1R*, *Mar. 9*, 1137.

Faucett Estate
Case of H. Hanly.
Q. Mr. Duffy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 3*, 514.

Feeble-minded Persons
Children — Inclusion in Scope of Royal Commission, proposed.
Q. Mr. H. R. Mansfield; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Mar. 3*, 511.

Fell, Mr. A. [Great Yarmouth]
Army Territorial Force Advisory Council, Scope of, etc., *Mar. 2*, 330.
Coastguard, Policy as to, *Mar. 9*, 1370–1372.
Congo Free State—Condition of Affairs in Lado Enclave, *Mar. 2*, 334.
France—Parisian Octroi Duty on Bread Stuffs, *Mar. 9*, 1115.
India—Restrictions on Englishmen settling in Kashmir, *Mar. 2*, 332.
Morocco—British Government Responsibility for Safety of Kaid Sir H. Maclean, *Feb. 27*, 42, 43; *Mar. 12*, 1751.
Smyrna—Ransom of Mr. Abbott, *Feb. 27*, 43.
Transvaal Mine Labour
Chinese Labour, Retention of, proposed, *Mar. 9*, 1104, 1105.
Conditions of employing, *Mar. 5*, 873, 874, 875.
Mortality among Labourers, *Mar. 12*, 1746.
Native Labour
Comparison with Chinese, *Mar. 12*, 1745.
Medical Inspector, Retirement of, *Mar. 12*, 1746.
Wheat—Price in 1907, Charges included in, *Feb. 27*, 23.

Fenwick, Mr. C. [Northumberland, Wansbeck]
Asiatics on British Ships, Increase in Number employed—Inquiry into working of Act of 1906, etc., proposed, *Mar. 3*, 618–625.

Ferens, Mr. T. R. [Hull, E.]
Navy Spirit Ration—Discontinuance in Favour of Money Allowance, proposed, *Mar. 3*, 609–611.

Field, Mr. W. [Dublin, St. Patrick]
Civil Service Second Division Clerks—Pay under New Scheme, *Mar. 2*, 317.
Coinage and Currency—Union of Money-Metal-Producing Countries, *Mar. 9*, 1094.
Education
School Building Grants and Plans, *Mar. 10*, 1290.
Technical Schools, Repayments for Building, *Mar. 4*, 666.
Fodder, Dangers from Import of and Proposals for Prohibiting, *Mar. 4*, 666.
Gambling in Futures
Foreign Anti-Gambling Legislative Proposals, *Mar. 9*, 1089, 1094.
Proposals for Restricting, *Mar. 5*, 848.
Gibraltar Local Audit Arrangement, *Mar. 1*, 1283.
Railway Relations with the State—Scope of Inquiry, *Mar. 9*, 1090.
Valuation System, Revision of, proposed, *Mar. 6*, 990.
Works Board, Use of Irish Building Materials by, *Mar. 10*, 1289.

First Commissioner of Works
Rt. Hon. L. Harcourt.

First Lord of the Admiralty
Lord Tweedmouth.

First Lord of the Treasury
Rt. Hon. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

Fiscal Policy
Food Taxation, Policy as to.
Qs. Sir J. Leese, *Mar. 4*, 775; Earl Winterton, 791.

Fisheries
Scotland
Fishery Grounds, Measures for Protection of.
Qs. Captain Waring, Mr. Watt; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 4*, 681.
Seine Nets and Drift Nets, Use of.
Qs. Mr. Watt, Mr. Ainsworth, Mr. Younger; *As.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 4*, 682.
Q. Mr. Watt; *As.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 5*, 888.

Fitzmaurice, Lord.—*Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs*
Persia, Railway Concessions in—Autograph Letter of Shah in March, 1899, *Mar. 2*, 292.

Fletcher, Mr. J. S. [Hampstead]
Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28*, 250–252.

Flynn, Mr. J. C. [Cork, N.]
Irish Cottage Industries, Protection of, *Mar. 9*, 1132.
Kingwilliamstown—Case of E. O'Riordan, *Mar. 4*, 664.
Natal—Trial of Dinizulu, *Mar. 11*, 1519.

Fodder
Imported, Precautions against Danger of Infection from.
Q. Mr. Hayden; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell, *Mar. 2*, 351.
Q. Mr. Field; *A.* Sir E. Strachey, *Mar. 4*, 666.
Q. Mr. Clancy: *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell, *Mar. 4*, 703.
Qs. Mr. Chaplin, Mr. Verney, Mr. H. Beach, Major Anstruther-Gray, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, Mr. Lane-Fox, Mr. A. Chamberlain; *As.* Mr. J. A. Pease, *Mar. 5*, 385.
Date of Prohibitory Order.
Q. Mr. Wiles; *A.* Sir E. Strachey, *Mar. 9*, 1092.
Restrictions—Scope of Order.
Qs. Mr. Courthope, Mr. O'Shaughnessy, Mr. Chaplin; *As.* Mr. J. A. Pease, *Mar. 3*, 542.

Foot Estate
Case of P. Healy.
Q. Mr. W. Abraham; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1501.

Foot and Mouth Disease
Cattle Steamers from infected Ports, Disinfection of.
Qs. Mr. T. Davies; *As.* Mr. J. A. Pease, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 9*, 1123.
Ireland, Measures for preventing Outbreak in.
Q. Mr. Chaplin; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell, *Mar. 5*, 899.
Origin of Outbreak in 1885.
Q. Mr. Courthope; *A.* Mr. J. A. Pease, *Mar. 3*, 542.
Raw Hides, Offal, etc., Danger from Importing.
Q. Mr. T. Davies; *A.* Mr. J. A. Pease, *Mar. 9*, 1123.

Foreign Office
Secretary of State—Rt. Hon. Sir E. Grey.
Under-Secretary—Lord Fitzmaurice.

Forster, Mr. H. W. [Kent, Sevenoaks]
Education
Accommodation in Schools, *Mar. 5*, 884.
Council Schools, Number of, etc., *Mar. 5*, 883.
Siberia—Deaths of J. Blenkinsop and E. A. Ditchfield, *Mar. 5*, 873.

Fortescue, Earl
Army, Territorial Force, Guns, Provision of, *Mar. 2*, 304.

Forth and Clyde Canal
Widening of, proposed.
Qs. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 10*, 1384; Mr. Pirie, 1388.

France
Parisian Octroi Duty on Bread Stuffs.
Qs. Mr. Fell, Mr. Guy Baring; *As.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 9*, 1115.

"Frankby"
Chinese Crew, Incendiarism by.
Q. Mr. J. H. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 11*, 1489.

Friendly Societies
Transfer, Regulations as to.
Q. Mr. Nannetti; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 12*, 1767.

Fruit Growers (Scotland) Bill
c. 1R.* *Mar. 10*, 1328.

Galway
Condition of—Inspector's Report, Proposals for Tabling.
Q. Mr. C. Craig; *A.* Mr. Cherry, *Feb. 27*, 63.
Q. Captain Craig; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 4*, 685.
Report Presented, *Feb. 28*, 202; *Mar. 2*, 290.
Hospital—Rate for Upkeep.
Q. Mr. Duffy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 3*, 513.
Wood Quay, Loss of Life from.
Q. Mr. Gwynn; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 2*, 349.

Gambling in Futures
Foreign Anti-Gambling Legislative Proposals.
Q. Mr. Field; *A.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 9*, 1089.
Q. Mr. Field; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 9*, 1094.
Proposals for restricting.
Q. Mr. Field; *A.* Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, *Mar. 5*, 848.

Gardner, Mr. E. [Berkshire, Wokingham]
- London County Council General Powers Bill, 2R., *Mar. 5*, 986.
- Milk Supply—Legislative Proposals, *Mar. 5*, 986.

Geological Survey and Museum
- Report (1906) Presented, *Mar. 10*, 1237, 1282.

Gibbs, Mr. G. A. [Bristol, W.]
- Liquor Traffic—Income-tax, Assessment for, *Mar. 12*, 1752, 1753.
- Milk Supply—Warranty with Consignments from Farmers, Hardships inflicted by demanding, *Mar. 11*, 1508.

Gibraltar
- Docks, Capacity of.
  - *Q.* Mr. L. Lever; *A.* Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 9*, 1096.
- Local Audit Arrangements.
  - *Q.* Mr. Field; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 10*, 1283.

Gill, Mr. A. H. [Bolton]
- Bolton Post Office—Pay of Telegraphists, *Mar. 9*, 1093.
- Factories—Children employed as Half-timers, *Mar. 11*, 1511.

Gladstone, Rt. Hon. H. J.—*Secretary of State for the Home Department* [Leeds, W.]
- Brereton Collieries—Coppice Pit Disaster, Proposals for Inquiry, etc., *Mar. 3*, 529.
- Burglary Cases in Metropolitan Police Area, *Mar. 2*, 337.
- Cabs—Privilege System, Petitions sent from Wimbledon and Clapham Junction, *Feb. 27*, 44.
- Carnarvonshire Slate Quarry, Accidents in 1907, *Mar. 10*, 1291.
- Census—Adult Male Population and Number of Voters in 1905, *Feb. 27*, 46.
- Children Bill, Proposals as to, *Feb. 27*, 50.
  - Provisions of, *Mar. 12*, 1754.
- Civil Service Estimates—Irish Proportion of certain Votes, *Mar. 12*, 1726.
- Coal Mines—Accidents, Rescue Apparatus, Proposals as to, *Mar. 10*, 1308.
- Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill
  - Postponement of, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1310, 1311.
  - Proposals as to, *Feb. 27*, 45.
- Collieries
  - Accidents in 1907—Regulations of Winding-speeds, etc., *Mar. 2*, 337.
  - Enginemen's Hours of Labour—Case of H. Jenkinson, *Feb. 27*, 48.

Gladstone, Rt. Hon. H. J.—*cont.*
- Convents—Sweating and Cruelty, Allegations as to, *Feb. 27*, 45, 46.
- Criminal Procedure
  - Faulkner, W. and J., Case of, *Mar. 6*, 991.
  - Palmer, F. W., Case of, *Mar. 2*, 338.
- Dangerous Performances Act, Extension to Women, proposed, *Mar. 9*, 1113.
- Debt, Imprisonment for
  - Amendment of Law, Proposals for, *Feb. 27*, 50.
  - Statistics for 1907, *Mar. 12*, 1754.
- Dog Licence Exemptions in Carnarvon, *Mar. 5*, 877.
- Earthenware and China, Special Rules, Revision of, *Mar. 10*, 1307.
- Factories and Workshops
  - Accidents, Non-fatal—Special Inquiries in 1907, *Mar. 5*, 852.
  - Charitable and Reformatory Institutions, Inspection of, *Mar. 5*, 875, 876.
  - Children employed as Half-timers, *Mar. 11*, 1511.
  - Inspectors
    - Examination Subjects, *Mar. 3*, 530
    - Home Department Staff, Work of, *Feb. 27*, 20, 46.
    - Increase, Proposals for, *Mar. 2*, 338.
    - Qualifications required of, *Mar. 10*, 1306.
    - Returns, Procedure in making, *Mar. 3*, 530.
- Hamstead Colliery Disaster, Information as to, *Mar. 9*, 1113; *Mar. 10*, 1308, 1309; *Mar. 12*, 1755.
- Infant Life Protection Act, Special Inspectors appointed under, *Feb. 27*, 21.
- Insurance—Gambling in Lives, Remarks of Judge Hans Hamilton, *Feb. 27*, 48.
- Juvenile Offenders, Age for sending to Reformatories, *Mar. 9*, 1110.
- Licensing Bill, Districts, Alterations proposed in, *Mar. 6*, 991.
- Liquor Traffic
  - Compensation Money paid in 1906, *Mar. 9*, 1112.
  - Grocers' Licences in 1905, *Mar. 6*, 992.
  - Population and On-Licences in Rural and Urban Districts—Return proposed, *Mar. 9*, 1080.
- Man, Isle of, Reform of Constitution, Decision as to, *Mar. 9*, 1093.

[cont.

Gladstone, Rt. Hon. H. J.—*cont*
Matches, Phosphorus
  Deaths from, use of in 1907, *Mar. 9*, 1111.
  White or Yellow, Restrictions on Use of, *Mar. 9*, 1112.
Mines
  Inspectors in Wales, Language Qualifications, *Mar. 4*, 676.
  Scottish—Fatal Accidents (1907–8), *Feb. 27*, 21.
Probation of Offenders Act, Rules, Tabling of, *Mar. 9*, 1110.
Refreshment Houses Act, Section 6, Operation of, *Mar. 3*, 491.
Trade Disputes, Power of Chief Magistrates to call out Troops during, etc., *Mar. 5*, 936.
  Committee to Consider, Terms of Reference, *Mar. 5*, 937.
Usworth Colliery Accident—Bravery of M. Howarth, *Feb. 27*, 49.
Vaccination Act
  Breaches of—Imprisonments since 1873, *Mar. 5*, 852, 876.
  Prosecutions under (1906 and 1907), *Mar. 3*, 511.
Vehicles, Accidents caused by—Returns furnished, *Mar. 9*, 1111.
Washington Glebe Colliery, Inquest, Proposals for, *Mar. 12*, 1755.
Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28*, 241–245.
Workmen's Compensation, Bankruptcy of Employer, Remedy against, *Mar. 4*, 675.

Glanders
Mallein Test, Use of.
  Qs. Col. Walker; *As.* Mr. J. A. Pease, *Mar. 3*, 541.

Gledstane Estate
Case of J. Gorman.
  Q. Mr. C. MacVeigh; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5*, 894.

Goodall Estate
Sale Proposals.
  Q. Mr. Hayden; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 10*, 1325.

Gooseberry Mildew
Ireland—Order Presented, *Mar. 5*, 821, 846.

Gordon, Mr. J. [Londonderry, S.C.]
Contempt of Court—Limitation of Jurisdiction of Judges, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1425.
Dublin Metropolitan Police, Cost of Upkeep, Objections to Levying on the Rates, etc., *Mar. 11*, 1634.
Glenaheiry Outrage, Public Inquiry proposed, *Mar. 11*, 1539.

Gort
Firing Outrages, Information as to.
  Qs. Mr. C. Craig; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 9*, 1083.

Gosport Gas Bill
c. *Rep.* Mar. 9*, 1077.

Gough Estate
Outrage at Houses of Macnamara and Monaghan.
  Qs. Captain Craig, Mr. Duffy; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 3*, 547.

Goulding, Mr. [Worcester]
Africa, East—Native Labour Recruitment for Transvaal Mines, *Mar. 12*, 1740.
Bread—Price, Causes of Increase in, *Mar. 4*, 786.
Wheat—Cultivation of within the Empire, Encouragement of, proposed, *Mar. 4*, 786–791.

Government Departments
Conference of Heads to Devise Means for Exchange of Workmen to Regulate Hours of Work, proposed.
  Q. Mr. J. Ward; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Mar. 10*, 1313.

Grangemore
Cattle Raid, Information as to.
  Q. Captain Craig; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 3*, 548.

Grant, Mr. C. [Warwickshire, Rugby]
Liverpool Corporation (Streets and Buildings) Bill, Referring to Police and Sanitary Committee, *Mar. 5*, 844, 845.

Great Western Railway (Superannuation Scheme) Bill
l. Rep. Mar. 11*, 1437.

Greenock
Admiralty Land, Rateable Value of.
  Q. Mr. J. D. White; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Feb. 28*, 209.

Greenwich Hospital
Age Pensions, Number of Men available for.
  Qs. Captain Craig; *As.* Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 3*, 518.
Case of S. H. Andrews.
  Q. Mr. Ridsdale; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Feb. 27*, 33.

Greenwood, Mr. G. [Peterborough]
Natal—Martial Law, Proposals for continuing, *Mar. 2*, 336; *Mar. 4*, 672.

Gretton, Mr. J. [Rutland]
- Aland Islands, Russian Occupation, *Mar. 12,* 1749.
- Army—Territorial Force
  - Attestation Form, Amendment Proposals, *Mar. 4,* 663.
  - Lords-Lieutenant, Political Position of, *Mar. 12,* 1872.
  - Officers, Conditions of joining, *Mar. 12,* 1873.
  - Training Regulations, etc., Circulation of Copies of, *Mar. 12,* 1718.
- India—Zakka Khel Expedition, Agreement with Afridi Tribes, Tabling of, *Mar. 12,* 1737.
- Navy
  - "Dreadnought," Test of, *Mar. 12,* 1729.
  - Home Fleet, Composition of and Number of Vessels taking part in Manœuvres, *Mar. 11,* 1510, 1511.

Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E.—*Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs* [Northumberland, Berwick]
- Aland Islands, Russian Occupation, *Mar. 12,* 1749.
- China
  - Che-Kiang Loan, Agreement as to, *Mar. 10,* 1304.
  - Railway Extension West of Liao River—Japanese Attitude, *Mar. 3,* 527.
- Congo Free State
  - Additional Act to Treaty of Cession, Effect of, *Mar. 12,* 1749.
  - British Subjects, Rights of, *Mar. 5* 871.
  - Koffie, James, Case of, *Mar. 5,* 873.
  - Papers, Proposals for circulating, *Mar. 5,* 872.
- Egypt
  - British Army of Occupation, Reduction Proposals, *Mar. 12,* 1750.
  - General Assembly Resolutions, Lord Cromer's Attitude towards, *Mar. 3,* 525.
  - Moustafa Kamal Pasha's Funeral, Attendance of Students at, *Mar. 12,* 1751.
  - School Sports, Date of holding, *Mar. 12,* 1750.
  - University, Establishment of, proposed, *Mar. 3,* 525.
- Liberia—Deaths of J. Blenkinsop and E. A. Dickfield, Circumstances of, *Mar. 5,* 873.
- Macedonia—Turkish Governor, Austro-Hungarian Attitude, *Mar. 12,* 1747.

Grey, Rt. Hon. Sir E.—*cont.*
- Morocco—Kaid Sir H. Maclean, British Government Responsibility for Safety of, *Feb. 27,* 43; *Mar. 12,* 1752.
- Russo-Japanese War—British Vessels Sunk or Damaged, Progress of Negotiations, *Mar. 3,* 527.
- San Thomé and Principé Indentured Labour Regulations, *Mar. 12,* 1748.
- Siam—Government Negotiations with, *Mar. 5,* 873; *Mar. 12,* 1748.
- Smyrna—Ransom of Mr. Abbott, Measures for Recovery, *Feb. 27,* 43, 44.
- Soudan Campaign Prisoners—Place of Detention and Restrictions, etc., *Mar. 3,* 526.
- Spain—Carthagena Acting Vice-Consul's Refusal to supply Inventory of Effects of John Riddle, *Mar. 12,* 1751.
- Trade Marks, Protection of British Marks in the Far East, *Mar. 12.* 1748.

Greystones Gas Bill
- *c.* Second Reading and Bill withdrawn, *Mar. 10,* 1281.

Guest, Mr. J. C. [Cardiff District]
- Army—Territorial Force, Welsh Counties, Schemes for—Creation of Administrative District, proposed, *Mar. 12,* 1795, 1801–1803.
- Railways—Shunting Accidents, Prevention of, *Mar. 12,* 1756.
- Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28,* 279.

Guinness, Mr. W. [Bury St. Edmunds]
- London County Council General Powers Bill, 2R., *Mar. 5,* 971–978.
- Milk Supply—Legislative Proposals, *Mar. 5,* 972–978.
- Transvaal Native Labour—Nationality of Mine Employees, *Mar. 12,* 1738, 1739.

Gulland, Mr. J. W. [Dumfries Burghs]
- Army barracks, Expenditure on Building and Repairs, (1897–1907), *Mar. 11,* 1512.
- Children—Government Department to look after Interests of, proposed, *Mar. 10,* 1305.
- House of Commons—Indicator in Lobby to show Speaker and Subject in House of Lords, proposed, *Mar. 10,* 1315.
- Infant Life Protection Act, Special Inspectors appointed under, *Feb. 27,* 21.
- Juries—Scottish Justices of the Peace, Liability of, *Mar. 4,* 680.
- Milk Supply—Scottish Inspection System, Improvement of, *Mar. 9,* 1126.

[*cont.*

Gulland, Mr. J. W.—*cont.*
- Navy
  - Social Institutes in Scottish Ports, Establishment of, proposed, *Mar. 3,* 606.
  - Spirit Ration, Discontinuance of in favour of Money Allowance, proposed, *Mar. 3,* 606–609.
  - Victualling Committee, Recommendations of, *Mar. 3,* 606.
- Nith River, Fishery Season, Extension of, *Mar. 12,* 1769.
- Poor Law, Organs for Poorhouses, Provision of, *Mar. 4,* 683.

Gwynn, Mr. S. L. [Galway]
- Agriculture Department — Adulterated Foodstuffs, Power to prevent Sale of, *Mar. 4,* 700.
- Galway—Wood Quay, Loss of Life from, *Mar. 2,* 349.
- Milk Supply—Skim Milk, Evils arising from use of, *Mar. 4,* 700, 701.
- Potatoes, Spraying, Value of, etc., *Mar. 4,* 699.

Haldane, Rt. Hon. R. B.—*Secretary of State for War* [Haddington]
- Africa, South—Garrison, Reduction Proposals, *Feb. 27,* 36.
- Armaments, Reduction of Expenditure on, proposed, *Mar. 2,* 461–468.
- Arms and Ammunition Supply of, *Mar. 12,* 1859.
- Artillery, Objections to Reduction of, *Mar. 12,* 1857, 1858.
- Barrack Policy, *Mar. 12,* 1860.
- Bayonet, New Pattern, Order for, *Mar. 12,* 1717.
- Cadet Corps, Proposals as to, *Mar. 1,* 1602.
- Cardwell System, Adherence to, *Mar. 2,* 463, 464; *Mar. 4,* 706–708, 741.
- Cavalry
  - Depots, Establishment of, *Mar. 4,* 728.
  - Distribution System, *Mar. 5,* 869.
  - Divisional Cavalry Recruited from Yeomanry, Abandonment of Scheme, *Mar. 12,* 1852, 1855.
  - Reorganisation Scheme, *Mar. 4,* 728.
  - Statistics (1908), *Mar. 2,* 330.
  - Training in Cork District, *Mar. 11,* 1496.
- Civil Service—Naval and Military Service—Counting towards Pension, proposed, *Mar. 2,* 317.
- Cloch Point, Land Purchased and Re-sold by War Office, *Mar. 12,* 1731.
- Colonial Garrisons, Decision as to, *Mar. 4,* 734.

Haldane, Rt. Hon. R. B.—*cont.*
- Cordite
  - Amount destroyed and Measures taken to Replace, *Mar. 2,* 1857.
  - Defective Stores, Alleged Use of, *Mar. 11,* 1615.
  - Inquiry as to Use of Mercury, etc., *Mar. 5,* 870.
  - Report of Committee of Inquiry, *Mar. 11,* 1614.
- Crimean War
  - Case of A. McCormick, *Mar. 5,* 862.
  - Veterans in United Kingdom — Number receiving Pensions, etc., *Mar. 3,* 515.
- Danish System of Training, Introduction of, *Mar. 4,* 726.
- Drunkenness Statistics, (1897–1907), *Mar. 5,* 863.
- Duke of York's School
  - Reduction of Number of Boys on Removal, etc., *Feb. 27,* 34; *Mar. 2,* 327.
  - Site, Disposal of, *Mar. 9,* 1088, 1089, *Mar. 11,* 1497.
- Edinburgh—Queen Victoria School, Accommodation at, *Mar. 5,* 870.
- Egypt, British Army of Occupation, Cost of, *Mar. 11,* 1498.
- Engineers
  - Reorganisation of, *Mar. 4,* 733, 734.
  - Scheme for Improvement of Service of Surveyors, *Feb. 28,* 212; *Mar. 12,* 1719.
- Estimates
  - Statement, *Mar. 4,* 706–737.
  - Vote I., Opportunity for General Discussion on, *Mar. 11,* 1614.
  - Works Loans, Annuity chargeable for, *Feb. 28,* 212.
- Expeditionary Force of 160,000 Men, Organisation of, *Mar. 4,* 709–712, 737.
  - Artillery Training Brigades, *Mar. 4,* 713.
  - Reserve Officers, *Mar. 4,* 712.
  - Special Reserve
    - Cost of, *Mar. 4,* 715.
    - Organisation of, *Mar. 4,* 711, 712, 715.
- Furlough — Special Facilities for Men Abroad, proposed, *Mar. 10,* 1295.
- General Staff, Establishment of, *Mar. 12,* 1858, 1859.
- Guns, Converted—Exhibition of Specimen to Members, *Mar. 12,* 1734.
- Horses
  - Breeding, Subsidies Paid for, *Mar. 11,* 1496.
  - Riding Horses available, *Feb. 27,* 35.

[*cont.*

Haldane, Rt. Hon. R. B.—*cont.*
- Indian Frontier, Troops required for Defence of, *Mar. 2*, 462, 463.
- Indian Mutiny
  - Pensions, Conditions of Granting, *Mar. 12*, 1716.
  - Veterans in United Kingdom—Number receiving Pensions, etc., *Mar. 3*, 515.
- Inniskilling Fusiliers, 2nd Battalion—Procedure in Conveyance to Dublin, *Mar. 2*, 316.
- Irish Dragoon Guards, 4th, Selection of Station for, *Mar. 2*, 331.
- Letchworth Social Democrat Meeting, Conduct of Volunteers at, *Mar. 10*, 1297.
- Malta Fever Cases, (1905–7), *Mar. 4*, 668; *Mar. 4*, 726.
- Manœuvres, Results of and Proposals for, *Mar. 4*, 732, 733.
- Medical College in London, Opening of, *Mar. 4*, 727.
- Militia
  - Essex Regiment, 4th Battalion—Disposal of Officers, *Mar. 2*, 329.
  - Officers—Uniform Grant on Transfer, *Mar. 11*, 1515.
- Officers
  - Cadet Battalion Officers, Position of, under New Scheme, *Mar. 12*, 1731.
  - Colonial Staff Officers, Exchange System, *Mar. 4*, 734.
  - Eyesight, Regulations as to, *Mar. 12*, 1716.
  - Foreign and Oriental Languages, Facilities for Requiring, *Mar. 4*, 723, 724.
  - Promotion from the Ranks, *Mar. 12*, 1814.
  - Shortage in Supply of, *Mar. 4*, 716.
  - Training — Alterations in Present System, *Mar. 4*, 719–724.
  - Universities and Public Schools, Recruiting from, *Mar. 4*, 716–719; *Mar. 12*, 1849, 1861.
- Pay, Increase in, *Mar. 4*, 724.
- Pensions—Cases of D. Harvey, P. Brady, and T. McAuley, *Mar. 5*, 863, 864.
- Pimlico Clothing Factory Assistant Inspector, Delay in Appointing, *Mar. 5*, 871.
- Plain-clothes Regulations—Extension to Colour-Sergeants, *Mar. 4*, 727.
- Punishments, Alterations in Regulations as to, *Mar. 4*, 727.
- Recruiting Statistics, *Mar. 4*, 725.
- Reductions Effected, *Mar. 2*, 385; *Mar. 4*, 735, 752.
- Reserve, Strength of, *Mar. 4*, 728.

Haldane, Rt. Hon. R. B.—*cont.*
- Rifle Clubs, War Office Grant of Ammunition to, *Mar. 4*, 661.
- Rifles
  - Lee-Enfield
    - Converted—Position of Swivel-lug, *Mar. 4*, 662.
    - Slings for, *Feb. 27*, 31.
  - Muzzle Velocity, *Mar. 11*, 1498.
- St. Patrick's Day—Conditions of Observance as Holiday in Government Departments, *Mar. 12*, 1719.
- Shannon Bridge Barracks, Present Use of, *Feb. 27*, 35.
- Soldiers, Tuberculous
  - Sanatoria, Grant for Provision of, *Mar. 2*, 329.
  - Treatment—Date of Tabling Report, *Mar. 2*, 329.
- South African War—Royal Artillery Batteries sent, *Mar. 9*, 1098.
- Staff College—Proposals for Increase of Students, *Mar. 12*, 1718.
- Submarine Mining Work, Decision as to, *Mar. 2*, 313.
- Temperance, Steps taken to Promote, *Mar. 4*, 727.
- Territorial Force
  - Advisory Council, Scope of, etc., *Mar. 2*, 330, 331.
  - Artillery, Field
    - Guns for, *Mar. 4*, 663.
    - Organisation as a Fighting Force, *Mar. 11*, 1575–1580.
  - Areas where Regiments Overlap, *Mar. 12*, 1834, 1856.
  - Attestation Form
    - Amendment Proposals, *Mar. 4*, 662, 664.
    - Cost of Printing, etc., *Mar. 2*, 328.
    - Date of Publishing New Version, *Mar. 12*, 1717.
    - New Forms Issued, *Mar. 11*, 1582.
  - Brigadier-Colonels, Duties and Pay of, *Mar. 11*, 1582, 1583.
  - City of London Corps, Organisation of, *Mar. 12*, 1856.
  - Colour-Sergeants, Decision as to, *Mar. 5*, 870.
  - Cost of, *Mar. 4*, 730–732.
  - County Associations
    - Recruiting Methods Permissible to, *Mar. 3*, 518, 519.
    - Secretaries—Number Appointed, *Mar. 2*, 328.
  - Cyclists, Proposals for, *Feb. 27*, 36; *Mar. 11*, 1498.
  - Government Employees, Eligibility of, *Mar. 12*, 1718.

Haldane, Rt. Hon. R. B.—*cont.*
  Territorial Force—*cont.*
    Guns—Type to be Supplied, *Mar. 11*, 1576–1578; *Mar. 12*, 1819.
    Home Defence, Arrangements for, *Mar. 11*, 1499.
    Horses—Source of Supply, *Mar. 12*, 1861.
    Lords-Lieutenants, Political Position of, *Mar. 12*, 1862, 1863, 1872.
    Mobilisation Scheme, *Mar. 11*, 1499.
    Officers
      Messing Allowance during Training, *Mar. 11*, 1516.
      Special Reserve
        Conditions of Enrolment, *Mar. 4*, 724.
        Line Commissions for, *Feb. 27*, 34.
      Unattached, Training Facilities for, *Mar. 10*, 1294.
    Progress made with, *Mar. 4*, 729.
    Quartermasters, Pay of, *Mar. 4*, 663.
    Re-engagement, Terms of, *Mar. 2*, 330.
    Regimental Sergeant-Majors and Bandmasters, Rank of, *Mar. 10*, 1295.
    Special Reserve
      Constitution of, *Mar. 9*, 1099.
      Training Period for, *Mar. 12*, 1862.
      Transfer to Regular Army, Conditions of, *Mar. 11*, 1498.
    Training Regulations, etc.
      Circulation of Copies of, *Mar. 12*, 1718.
      Leave of Absence from Training—Applications for, *Mar. 5*, 871.
    Walking-out Uniform, Pattern of, *Mar. 11*, 1516.
    Welsh Counties, Schemes for—Creation of Administrative District, proposed, *Mar. 12*, 1793–1798.
  Trade Disputes, Power of Chief Magistrates to call out Troops during, *Mar. 5*, 924–930, 938.
    Committee to Consider—Terms of Reference, *Mar. 5*, 938.
  Venereal Diseases, Decrease in, *Mar. 4*, 727.
  Volunteers
    Disbandment Proposals, *Mar. 12*, 1717.
      Officers, Disposal of, *Mar. 3*, 516.
    Medical Officers, Application of New Scheme to, *Mar. 5*, 869.
    Medical Inspection under New Scheme, *Mar. 2*, 316.
    Officers
      Outfit Grant on Transfer, *Mar. 11*, 1517.
      Rank on Transfer *Mar. 12*, 1731.

Haldane, Rt. Hon. R. B.—*cont.*
  Waltham Abbey
    Discharges from, *Mar. 11*, 1515.
    Wage Reductions since 1906, *Mar. 12*, 1732.
  War Office
    Clothing Contracts—Wages paid by Contractors, *Mar. 10*, 1296.
    Writers' Pensions and Duties, *Mar. 11*, 1496.
  Wastage, Decrease in, *Mar. 4*, 725.
  Woolwich Arsenal
    Employment Statistics and Reduction Proposals, *Mar. 11*, 1516.
    Machinery lying Idle, *Mar. 11*, 1515.
    Reduction Policy, Dangers of, *Mar. 11*, 1861.
  Works—Abolition of Loan System, *Mar. 12*, 1859, 1860.
  Yeomanry
    Netheravon School, Abolition of, *Mar. 12*, 1717, 1856.
    Pay under New Scheme, *Mar. 12*, 1800, 1810, 1812.
    Training for, under New Scheme, *Mar. 12*, 1783.

Halpin, Mr. J. [Clare, W.]
  Milk—Import Statistics, *Mar. 5*, 896.

Hampstead
  Borough Council Officials—Vaccination Regulations.
    Qs. Mr. Bowerman, Mr. Lupton; *As.* Mr. Burns, *Mar. 9*, 1115.

Hamstead Colliery
  Disaster, Information as to.
    Q. Mr. Albert Stanley; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 9*, 1113.
    Qs. Dr. Hazel, Mr. Byles, Mr. W. E. Harvey; *As.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 10*, 1308.
    Q. Mr. Albert Stanley; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 12*, 1755.

Handloom Weaving (Ireland) Bill
  c. 1R.* *Mar. 4*, 705.

Harbours
  [*See* Piers and Harbours, *and also Names of Places*.]

Harcourt, Rt. Hon. L.—*First Commissioner of Works* [Lancs., N.E. Rossendale]
  Duke of York's School Site, Value of, and Proposals as to, *Mar. 2*, 344.
  House of Commons
    Indicator in Lobby to show Speaker and Subject in House of Lords, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1315.
    Ventilation, Improvement of, proposed, *Mar. 9*, 1122, 1123.
  Marble Arch—Re-erection of Clock at Lodge, *Mar. 12*, 1766.

Hardinge, Viscount
- Army
  - Reductions effected, *Mar. 12,* 1699.
  - Strength of, *Mar. 12,* 1699–1701.
- Militia, Abolition of, *Mar. 12,* 1700.

Hardy, Mr. G. A. [Suffolk, Stowmarket]
- Railway Relations with the State—Nature of Inquiry, *Mar. 4,* 676.

Hardy, Mr. L. [Kent, Ashford]
- Dungeness Bay—Lug Worms removed by French Fishermen, *Feb. 27,* 22.

Harmood Banner, Mr. J. S. [Liverpool, Everton]
- Liverpool Corporation Bill, 2R., *Mar. 12,* 1841.
- London County Council General Powers Bill, 2R., *Mar. 5,* 985.
- Milk Supply—Legislative Proposals, *Mar. 5,* 985.

Harmsworth, Mr. C. B. [Worcester, Droitwich]
- Inniskilling Fusiliers, [2nd Battalion—Procedure in Conveyance to Dublin, *Mar. 2,* 316.
- Salt—Export and Import Statistics, *Mar. 2,* 319.

Harpenden
- Sewerage Scheme, Inquiry as to.
  - *Q.* Colonel Long; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Mar. 6,* 992.

Harrington, Mr. T. [Dublin Harbour]
- Dublin Metropolitan Police,—Cost of Upkeep, Objections to levying on the Rates, etc., *Mar. 11,* 1633.
- St. Patrick's Day—Conditions] of Observance as Holiday in Government Departments, *Mar. 12,* 1719.

Hart-Davies, Mr. T. [Hackney, N.]
- Duke of York's School—Reduction of Number of Boys on Removal, etc., *Feb. 27,* 34.
- India—Reorganisation of Karachi Police, *Mar. 10,* 1288.
- Tobacco Dealers' Licences, Graduation of, proposed, *Mar. 2,* 315.

Harvey, Mr. A. G. C. [Rochdale]
- Education (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 6,* 1013–1017.

Harvey, Mr. W. E. [Derbyshire, N.E.]
- Asiatics on British Ships—Cause of Death of certain Men, *Mar. 3,* 502.
- Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, Postponement of, proposed, *Mar. 10,* 1310.
- Colliery Accidents in 1907—Regulation of Winding-speeds, etc., *Mar. 2,* 337.
- Hamstead Colliery Disaster, Information as to, *Mar. 10,* 1309.

Harwich Docks Bill
- c. *Rep.* Mar. 4,* 657.

Harwood, Mr. G. [Bolton]
- Man, Isle of—Decision as to Reform in Constitution, *Mar. 9,* 1093.

Hastings
- Parliamentary Election—New Member Sworn, *Mar. 5,* 902.

Haversham, Lord
- Army
  - Mediterranean Garrisons, Reduction of, *Mar. 12,* 1702.
  - Reductions effected, *Mar. 12,* 1702, 1703.
  - Reserve, Strength of, *Mar. 12,* 1703.

Haworth, Mr. A. A. [Manchester, S.]
- Crimean and Indian Mutiny Veterans in United Kingdom—Number receiving Pensions, etc., *Mar. 3,* 515.

Hay, Mr. C. G. D. [Shoreditch, Hoxton]
- Billingsgate Post Office—Provision of Additional Accommodation for Staff, *Feb. 28,* 209.
- Madagascar Native Labour Recruitment for Transvaal Mines, Negotiations for, *Mar. 12,* 1743, 1744.
- Post Office
  - Political Organisations in, *Mar. 12,* 1759.
  - Sub-engineers—Promotion System, *Mar. 5,* 851.
- Transvaal Native Labour in Mines—Retirement of Medical Inspector, *Mar. 12,* 1746, 1747.

Hayden, Mr. J. P. [Roscommon, S.]
- Ardglas—Sale of Estate of Mrs. McEndoo and Mrs. Reid, *Mar. 3,* 550.
- Ballintubber Intimidation Case—Remarks of Mr. Rice, *Mar. 10,* 1320.
- Congested Districts Board—Funds available, *Mar. 5,* 894.
- Fodder Imported, Precautions against Danger of Infection from, *Mar. 2,* 351.
- Goodall Estate Sale Proposals, *Mar. 10,* 1325.
- Land Purchase Stock—Cause of Fall in Price, *Feb. 27,* 67.
- Mullingar Rural Council—Notices served on Labourers, *Feb. 27,* 62.
- Pakenham Estate, Sale Proposals, *Mar. 3,* 550.
- Shannon Bridge Barracks, Present Use of, *Feb. 27,* 34.

Hazel, Dr. A. E. W. [West Bromwich]
- Coal Mine Accidents,—Proposals as to Rescue Apparatus, *Mar. 10,* 1308.
- Hamstead Colliery Disaster, Information as to, *Mar. 10,* 1308.
- Income-Tax,—Payment Half-Yearly, proposed, *Mar. 3,* 528.

Hazleton, Mr. R. [Galway, N.]
Civil Service Estimates— Irish proportion of certain Votes, *Mar. 12*, 1723, 1724, 1725.
Emigrants' Information Office, Grant for, *Mar. 12*, 1721.
Headford Police Force, Cause for Increase in, *Mar. 6*, 993.

Headford
Police Force, Cause for Increase in.
Q. Mr. Hazelton; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 6*, 993.

Healy, Mr. T. M. [Louth, N.]
Contempt of Court—Limitation of Jurisdiction of Judges, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1411-1415.
Dublin Metropolitan Police—Cost of upkeep, Objection to levying on the Rates, etc., *Mar. 11*, 1646-1648.
Land Commission—Duties and Qualifications of Mr. Mullaly, *Mar. 11*, 1534.

Hedges, Mr. A. P. [Kent, Tonbridge]
Factory Inspectors' Returns, Procedure in Making, *Mar. 2*, 530.

Helmsley, Viscount [Yorks, N.R., Thirsk]
Army Territorial Force
  Areas where Regiments overlap, *Mar. 12*, 1834.
  Training Manuals, *Mar. 12*, 1835.
Cordite—Inquiry as to use of Mercury, etc., *Mar. 5*, 870.
Yeomanry—Netheravon School, Abolition of, *Mar. 12*, 1717, 1835.

Hely Estate
Case of J. Brennan.
Q. Mr. Delany; *A.* Mr. Cherry, *Feb. 28*, 210.

Henderson, Mr. A. [Durham, Barnard Castle]
Factories and Workshops Accidents, Non-fatal—Special Inquiries in 1907, *Mar. 5*, 852.
Licensing Bill, Intro., *Feb. 27*, 117–123.
Local Authorities (Admission of the Press) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 10*, 1433-1436.

Henderson, Mr. J. M. [Aberdeenshire, W.]
Rosyth—Use of British Granite, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1393.

Henry, Mr. C. S. [Shropshire, Wellington]
Education—Voluntary Schools built since 1890, *Mar. 4*, 679.
Magistrates, County—Appointments in 1907, *Feb. 27*, 58, 59.

Herbert, Colonel Sir I. [Monmouthshire]
Army Territorial Force,—Schemes for Welsh Counties, *Mar. 12*, 1786-1793, 1797.

Herbert, Mr. T. A. [Bucks, Wycombe]
Natal—Dinizulu, Trial of, Charge and Procedure, *Mar. 10*, 1303.

Herne Bay Pier Bill
l. *Rep.**, *Mar. 5*, 817.
3R.*, *Mar. 10*, 1237.
c. 1R.*, *Mar. 11*, 1487.

Herschell, Lord
Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 11*, 1438–1442.

Hill, Sir C. L. [Shrewsbury]
Uganda, Game Preservation in, *Mar. 4*, 671.

Hobart, Sir R. [Hants, New Forest]
Milton Sewage Rate, Representations against, *Mar. 2*, 338.

Hogan, Mr. M. [Tipperary, N.]
Asiatics on British Ships—Cause of Death of Certain Men, *Mar. 3*, 497.
Cloughjordon Cattle-driving Prosecution, Procedure in, *Mar. 11*, 1532.

Holt, Mr. R. D. [Northumberland, Hexham]
Asiatics on British Ships, Increase in Number Employed — Inquiry into Working of Act of 1906, proposed, *Mar. 3*, 652–654.
Army Estimates—Chargeable for Works Loans, Annuity, *Feb. 28*, 211.
Cunard Subsidies, Information as to, *Feb. 27*, 58.
Juries—Liability of Scottish Justices of the Peace, *Mar. 4*, 681.
Liverpool Corporation Bill, 2R., *Mar. 12*, 1841.
Navy
  Estimates—Annuity Chargeable for Works Loans, *Feb. 28*, 209.
  Rosyth, Policy as to, *Mar. 10*, 1386–1388.
Postal Rates to Shanghai, *Feb. 27*, 54.

Home Office
Secretary of State—Rt. Hon. H. Gladstone
Under-Secretary—Mr. H. Samuel.

Horniman, Mr. E. J. [Chelsea]
Ancient Monuments, Inventory of, proposed, *Mar. 11*, 1552.
Duke of York's School Site, Disposal of, *Mar. 11*, 1497.
Motors
  Cars taken Abroad Temporarily—Inclusion in Returns, *Feb. 27*, 51.
  Import Regulations, *Mar. 5*, 878.
War Office Writers' Pensions and Duties, *Mar. 11*, 1496.

Horses
Army, *see that title.*

Hours of Labour (Bakehouses) Bill
c. 1R.*, *Mar. 4*, 705.

Housing of the Working Classes
Irish Legislative Proposals.
Q. Mr. Sheehan; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Mar. 11*, 1493.
Legislative Proposals.
Q. Mr. Mackarness; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Mar. 9*, 1117.

Housing and Town Planning Bill
Extension to Ireland, proposed.
Q. Mr. Sheehan; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 9*, 1086.

Houston, Mr. R. P. [Liverpool, W., Toxteth]
Asiatics on British Ships, Increase in Number employed — Inquiry into Working of Act of 1906, proposed, *Mar. 3*, 635-638.

"Huddersfield"
Cause of Loss of
Q. Mr. J. H. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 11*, 1492.

Huddersfield Water Bill
l. Rep*, *Mar. 5*, 817.
3R*, *Mar. 12*, 1657.

Hudson, Mr. W. [Newcastle-on-Tyne]
Armstrong, Whitworth & Company—Wages Paid to Electrical Wire Workers, *Mar. 5*, 868.
Newcastle Post Office—Case of Mr. W. E. Patrick, *Mar. 12*, 1758.
Railway Goods Yards, Regulation of, *Mar. 5*, 878.

Hull
Post Office—Pay of Webster.
Q. Mr. W. Rutherford; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 5*, 881.

Humber Commercial Railway and Dock Bill
c. 2R*, *Mar. 11*, 1487.

Hunt, Mr. R. [Shropshire, Ludlow]
Army
Reduction effected, *Mar. 12*, 1631.
Territorial Force—Value as a Fighting Force, *Mar. 12*, 1832.
Navy
Rosyth—Use of British Granite, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1394.
Seamen—Rate of Pay, *Mar. 10*, 1357, 1358.
Two-Power Standard, Maintenance of, *Mar. 9*, 1218; *Mar. 10*, 1356.

Hutton, Mr. A. E. [Yorkshire, W.R., Morley]
Council Schools—Power of Local Authorities to Re-Impose Fees, *Mar. 11*, 1506.

Hypothec Abolition (Scotland) Bill
c. 1R*, *Feb. 27*, 72.

Imports
See Exports and Imports.

Incest Bill
c. 1R*, *Feb. 27*, 72.
2R*, *Mar. 10*, 1436.

Income Tax
Abatement on Income of £690.
Q. Sir F. Cawley; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 10*, 1299.
Glebe Buildings, Provision as to.
Q. Lord J. Joicey-Cecil; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 2*, 321.
Liquor Traffic, *see that title.*
Payment Half-Yearly, proposed.
Q. Dr. Hazel; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 3*, 528.

India
Afridis, *see subheading* Zakka Khel.
Army
Drafts, Provision of.
Os. Earl of Portsmouth, *Mar. 12*, 1678, 1679; Viscount Midleton, 1679.
Strength, Necessity for Maintaining.
Os. Sir F. Banbury, *Mar. 12*, 1849; Mr. Lupton, 1869.
Troops Required for.
Os. Mr. Rees, *Mar. 4*, 771.
Assam and Eastern Bengal
Mahomedan Attitude towards Hindus, Danger from.
Q. Mr. O'Grady; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 3*, 521.
Police Appointments.
Q. Sir H. Cotton; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Feb. 27*, 38.
Bengali Barrister Imprisoned for Assaulting Railway Officials.
Q. Mr. O'Grady; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 12*, 1736.
Bombay Riots on 13th February.
Q. Mr. O'Grady; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Feb. 27*, 40.
Budget, Date of taking.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 12*, 1707.
Calcutta
High Court, Proposals for Partitioning.
Q. Sir H. Cotton; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 2*, 331.
Yugantar Newspaper, Seditious Matter in—Amendment of Existing Law proposed.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 3*, 509.
Ecclesiastical Charges—Return Presented, *Mar. 3*, 490.

[cont.

India—*cont.*
Emigration Statistics.
Q. Sir G. S. Robertson; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Feb. 27*, 37.
Famine Relief
Chiefs of States, Responsibility of.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 12*, 1709.
Statistics.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 12*, 1709.
Qs. Mr. O'Grady; *As.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 12*, 1735.
Frontier, Troops required for Defence of.
Os. Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 2*, 380; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 452, 453; Mr. Haldane, 462, 463.
Handcuffing of Political Prisoners.
Q. Sir H. Cotton; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Feb. 27*, 38.
Imperial Cadet Corps, Proposals as to.
Q. Sir B. Sheffield; *A.* M. Morley, *Mar. 12*, 1710.
Imperial Legislative Council, Constitution of.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A,* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 12*, 1708.
Indian Officials, Allegations as to Incivility of.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 3*, 522.
Jullundur—Facilities for Presbyterian Services.
Qs. Sir J. Jardine; *As.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 10*, 1288.
Justice, Administration of.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 3*, 521.
Karachi—Reorganisation of Police.
Q. Mr. Hart-Davies; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 10*, 1288.
Kashmir, Restrictions on Englishmen settling in.
Q. Mr. Fell; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 2*, 332.
Newspapers Prosecuted in 1907.
Q. Mr. J. M. Robertson; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 12*, 1708.
Opium, *see that title.*
Police Amalgamation Proposals—Memorial from Berar Officers.
Q. Sir S. King; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 2*, 321.
Punjab Irrigation Colonies, Area of.
Q. Sir G. S. Robertson; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Feb. 27*, 36.
Railways
Assam-Bengal Line, Connection of Sylhet with.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 12*, 1719.
Bombay-Sind Line, Route for.
Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 12*, 1720.

India—*cont.*
Railways—*cont.*
Bridges across Ganges and Hooghly, Proposals for.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 12*, 1720.
Chaman, Russian Proposals for Railway to.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 3*, 521.
Expenditure Contemplated (1908-9).
Q. Sir E. Sassoon; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 2*, 332.
Sedition, Definition of.
Q. Mr. O'Grady; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 10*, 1299.
Seditions Publications, Power to deal with under existing Acts.
Qs. Mr. O'Grady, Mr. Rees; *As.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 3*, 520.
Swadeshi Movement—Circular issued in Dacca and Mymensingh.
Q. Mr. O'Grady; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 3*, 522.
Taxes, Collection of.
Q. Mr. Lupton; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 12*, 1736.
Tea Garden Labour Commission—Placing Resolution in Library, proposed.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 12*, 1707.
Trade—Tables (1902-1907) Presented, *Mar. 5*, 846; *Mar. 9*, 1070.
Viceroy's Executive Council, Vacancy on.
Q. Sir H. Cotton; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 12*, 1720.
Whipping Act—Amendment Proposals.
Qs. Sir H. Cotton; *As.* Mr. Morley, *Feb. 27*, 38; *Mar. 11*, 1512.
Whipping as Legal Punishment.
Q. Mr. O'Grady; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 10*, 1301.
Zakka Khel Expedition.
Os. Marquess of Londonderry, Earl of Crewe, *Mar. 2*, 291.
Agreement with Afridi Tribes, Tabling of.
Q. Mr. Gretton; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 12*, 1737.
Application of Clause 55 of Act of 1858.
Q. Sir H. Cotton; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 2*, 332.
Conditions of Cessation of Operations.
Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 2*, 333.
Zakka Khel Tribe
Subsidy paid to, in 1898.
Qs. Mr. O'Grady; *As.* Mr. Morley. *Feb. 27*, 39.
Territory, Location of.
Q. Sir H. Cotton; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 4*, 661.

Indian Mutiny
Pensions, Conditions of Granting.
Q. Mr. Watt; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1716.
Veterans in United Kingdom—Number receiving Pensions, etc.
Q. Mr. Haworth; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 3*, 515.

India Office
Secretary of State—Rt. Hon. J. Morley.
Under-Secretary—Mr. C. E. H. Hobhouse.

"Indrasamha"
Lascars, Madness and Suicide of.
Q. Mr. J. H. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 9*, 1115.

Infant Life Protection Act
Special Inspectors appointed under.
Q. Mr. Gulland; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Feb. 27*, 21.

Inland Revenue
Excise Secretary, Duties of.
Q. Mr. P. O'Brien; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 12*, 1722.
Stamps, Revenue derived from.
Qs. Mr. Courthope; *As.* Mr. Buxton, Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 11*, 1524, 1525.

Inny Valley
Grating in Mill-race, Floods likely to be caused by.
Q. Mr. V. Kennedy; *A.* Mr. Cherry, *Mar. 12*, 1770.

Insurance
Gambling in Lives—Remarks of Judge Hans Hamilton.
Q. Mr. J. Rutherford; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Feb. 27*, 47.

Inter-Oceanic Railway of Mexico Bill
l. 2R **, *Mar. 3*, 473.

Inverliever Estate
Afforestation, Control of.
Q. Lord Balcarres; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 11*, 1526.

Ireland
Chief Secretary—Right Hon. A. Birrell.
Lord-Lieutenant—Earl of Aberdeen.
Attorney-General — Right Hon. R. R. Cherry.
Solicitor-General—Mr. R. Barry.
[*For* Particular Places, Estates, etc., *see their names.*]
Agriculture and Technical Instruction Department, *see that title.*
Arterial drainage, Proposals for.
Q. Mr. W. Redmond; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 10*, 1320.

Ireland—*cont.*
Boycotting on certain days (1902–1908)—Return ordered, *Mar. 3*, 490, presented, *Mar. 11*, 1489.
Q. Mr. Lonsdale; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 3*, 515.
Condition of—Application of English Pistols Act, etc.
Q. Captain Craig; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 4*, 685.
Constabulary, *see that title.*
Contempt of Court—Limitation of Jurisdiction of Judges proposed.
Os. Mr. N. J. Murphy, *Mar. 10*, 1394; Mr. P. A. McHugh, 1394–1406; Mr. Cherry, 1406–1411, 1416; Mr. S. MacNeill, 1408, 1415; Mr. T. M. Healy, 1411–1415; Mr. J. Campbell, 1415–1418, 1422; Mr. Birrell, 1419–1423; Mr. J. Redmond, 1423–1425; Mr. Gordon, 1425; Mr. C. Craig, 1426; Mr. W. Long, 1429–1432.
Cottage industries, protection of.
Qs. Mr. Moore, Mr. Flynn; *As.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 9*, 1131.
Crown Jewels, Loss of—Public Inquiry proposed.
Qs. Mr. W. Redmond, Mr. Moore, Captain Craig; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1533..
Deputy-Lieutenants' Qualifications—Returns (1907) presented, *Mar. 5*, 821, 846.
Education, *see that title.*
Evictions
Cases pending—Government attitude and assistance.
Q. Mr. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5*, 890.
Return, Date of Tabling.
Q. Mr. V. Kennedy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 10*, 1321.
Land Acts, Land Commission, Land Judges Court and Land Purchase, *see those titles.*
Maynooth College, grants to.
Qs. Captain Craig, Mr. MacNeill; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1527.
Police, *see* Constabulary and Dublin—Metropolitan Police.
Queens Colleges, *see names of Cities.*
Roman Catholic University Proposals
Provost's Speech at Manchester, tenour of.
Qs. Mr. Moore, Sir W. Anson; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 4* 691.
Royal University—Students entering for Examination in 1907.
Q. Captain Craig; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 12*, 1713.
Trade Statistics available.
Q. Mr. Kettle; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell, *Mar. 2*, 315.

[*cont.*

Ireland—*cont.*
Valuation system, revision of proposed.
Q. Mr. Field; *A.* Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman, *Mar. 6*, 990.

Works Board

Cabinet-making contract—Boy Labour Employed.
Q. Mr. O'Grady; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 5*, 853.

Irish Materials, use of, in Building.
Q. Mr. Field; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 10*, 1289.

Japan
Anglo-Japanese Treaty, Maintenance of.
Os. Mr. Smeaton, *Mar. 9*, 1195–1198; Sir. F. Banbury, 1201.

Jardine, Sir J. [Roxburghshire]
India—Facilities for Presbyterian Services at Jullundar, *Mar. 10*, 1288.

Jenkins, Mr. J. [Chatham]
Navy

Personnel, reduction in, proposed, *Mar. 9*, 1224.

Rosyth, Policy as to, *Mar. 9*, 1225–1228.

Jones, Mr. L. [Westmoreland, Appleby]
Spirit Ration—Discontinuance in Favour of Money Allowance, proposed, *Mar. 3*, 613.

West Indies Intercolonial Mail Service, Payment for, *Mar. 10*, 1299.

Joicey-Cecil, Lord J. [Lincs., Stamford]
Income-Tax on Glebe Buildings, Provision as to, *Mar. 2*, 321.

Jowett, Mr. F. W. [Bradford, W.]
Asiatics on British Ships—Cause of Death of certain Men, *Mar. 3*, 500, 501.

Factories and Workshops Inspectors

Examination Subjects, *Mar. 3*, 529.

Qualifications required of, *Mar. 10*, 1306.

Joyce, Mr. M. [Limerick]
Asiatics on British Ships—Cause of Death of certain Men, *Mar. 3*, 508.

Juries
Scottish Justices of the Peace, Liability of.
Qs. Mr. Gulland, Mr. Younger, Mr. Holt; *As.* Mr. T. Shaw, *Mar. 4*, 680.

Juvenile Offenders
Age for sending to Reformatories.
Q. Mr. Wedgwood; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 9*, 1110.

Kearley, Mr. H. E.—*Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade* [Devonport]
Beri-Beri, Proposals for Scientific Inquiry into, *Mar. 5*, 855, 856.

"Bramley" Crew, Complaints by, *Mar. 11*, 1490.

Civil Service Estimates—Irish Proportion of certain Votes, *Mar. 12*, 1726.

"Craigisla" Crew, Complaints by, *Mar. 11*, 1491.

Donegal Whaling Station, Protests against Establishment of, *Mar. 11*, 1494.

"Frankby" Chinese Crew, Incendiarism by, *Mar. 11*, 1490.

"Huddersfield," Cause of Loss of, *Mar. 11*, 1492.

Limited Partnerships Act, 1907—Date of Issuing, Rules under Section 6 (4), *Mar. 5*, 855.

Merchant Shipping

Asiatics on British Ships, *Mar. 3*, 638–648.

First-aid Certificates of Masters and Mates, *Feb. 27*, 24; *Mar. 5*, 879.

Life-saving Apparatus, Ship's Drill with, *Feb. 27*, 50.

Motors

Cars taken Abroad temporarily—Inclusion in Returns, *Feb. 27*, 51.

Import Regulations, *Mar. 5*, 878.

"Mount Temple," Cause of Stranding of, *Mar. 11*, 1492.

Opium, Indian, Duty on, at certain Ports, *Feb. 27*, 52.

"Pernambuco," Cause of Loss of, *Mar. 12*, 1707.

Railways

Communication Cords, Occasions for Using, *Mar. 5*, 880.

London and North Western Goods Yard at Soho—Cause of Death of G. Taylor, *Mar. 5*, 877, 878.

Shunting Accidents, Prevention of, *Mar. 12*, 1756.

South Eastern—Speed of 5 p.m. Train from Hastings, *Mar. 5*, 880.

Rocket Apparatus, Board of Trade Regulations as to, *Mar. 5*, 879.

St. Andrew's Ambulance Association—Recognised Lecturers in Scotland, *Feb. 27*, 24.

Switzerland—Tariff and Employment Statistics, *Mar. 5*, 881.

"Tolesby"—Cause of Stranding and Loss, *Mar. 11*, 1493.

Trade-marks, British—Protection in the East, *Mar. 5*, 879.

Kearley, Mr. H. E.—*cont.*

- Weights and Measures—Local Authorities availing themselves of Regulation 9, *Feb. 27*, 24.
- Wheat, Price in 1907, Charges Included in, *Feb. 27*, 23.
- Yachts, Pleasure, Dues and Fees Payable by, *Feb. 27*, 51.

Kearney Estate

- Case of Luke Caffrey.
  Q. Mr. P. White; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5*, 847.

Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H. [Devon, Honiton]

- Coastguard, Policy as to, *Mar. 9*, 1363.

Kennedy, Mr. V. P. [Cavan, W.]

- Ballinamore and Ballyconnell Canal—Rate Payable, *Mar. 5*, 891.
- Cavan
  - County Lieutenant and Magistrates, Date of Appointing, *Mar. 10*, 1324.
  - Evicted Tenants
    - Instructions to Inspectors, *Mar. 12*, 1712.
    - Reinstatements Effected, *Mar. 5*, 891.
- Crookenden and Casey Estate, Sale Negotiations, *Mar. 5*, 891.
- Enniskillen Labourers' Cottages Scheme, Delay in, *Mar. 12*, 1713.
- Evictions Return, Date of Tabling, *Mar. 10*, 1321.
- Inny Valley—Grating in Mill-Race, Floods likely to be Caused by, *Mar. 12*, 1770.
- Kilnalick—Case of Mary Coyle, *Mar. 9*, 1087.

Kenyon-Slaney, Rt. Hon. Colonel W. [Shropshire, Newport]

- Army
  - Officers, Training of—Alterations in Present System, *Mar. 4*, 759, 760.
  - Pensions—System of Reckoning on Transfer of Service, *Mar. 11*, 1611, 1612.
  - Reductions effected, *Mar. 4*, 759.
  - Territorial Force
    - Organisation of, *Mar. 11*, 1609, 1610.
    - Training of, *Mar. 4*, 761.
    - Value as a Fighting Force, *Mar. 11*, 1608, 1609.

Kettle, Mr. T. [Tyrone, E.]

- Dublin Metropolitan Police—Cost of Upkeep, Objections to Levying on the Rates, etc., *Mar. 11*, 1635–1637.
- Egypt
  - British Army of Occupation—Reduction Proposals, *Mar. 12*, 1749.
  - Moustafa Kamal Pasha's Funeral, Attendance of Students at, *Mar. 12*, 1751.
  - School Sports, Date of Holding, *Mar. 12*, 1750.
- Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill—Equivalent Grant for Scotland and Ireland, proposed, *Feb. 27*, 68.
- Irish Trade Statistics Available, *Mar. 2*, 315.
- Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28*, 259–261.

Kew Gardens

- Gardeners, Conditions of Employing.
  Qs. Mr. Summerbell; *As.* Mr. J. A. Pease, *Mar. 5*, 884; *Mar. 10*, 1316.
- Lectures, Student admitted Free to.
  Q. Mr. Summerbell; *A.* Mr. J. A. Pease, *Mar. 10*, 1316.

Kilbradern

- Case of Scanlon Family.
  Q. Mr. O'Shaughnessy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1501.

Kilbride

- Case of Alice O'Connor.
  Q. Mr. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5*, 889.

Kilbride, Mr. D. [Kildare, S.]

- Cullenagh—Cattle Drive on 3rd Inst., *Mar. 1*, 1543.

Kilnalick

- Case of Mary Coyle.
  Q. Mr. V. Kennedy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 9*, 1087.

Kilnsea and Easington

- Coast Erosion, Measures for Checking.
  Qs. Mr. A. S. Wilson; *As.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 10*, 1311.

Kimber, Sir H. [Wandsworth]

- Civil Service—Counting of Naval and Military Service, *Mar. 2*, 316; *Mar. 3*, 512.
- Death Duties on Licensed Property, *Mar. 2*, 354; *Mar. 4*, 660.
- Non-provided Schools—Number in Single School Areas, *Mar. 2*, 340.

King Edward
Foreign Tour—Attendance of Minister of the Crown.
Q. Mr. Lea; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 9,* 1133.

King, Sir H. S. [Hull, Central]
Indian Police Amalgamation Proposals—Memorial from Berar officers, *Mar. 2,* 321.

King's College, London (Transfer) Bill
l. 2R.*, *Mar. 3,* 473.

Kingston Estate
Sale Proposals.
Q. Mr. W. Abraham; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 12,* 1715.

Kingwilliamstown
Case of E. O'Riordan.
Q. Mr. Flynn; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 4,* 664.

Knott End Railway Bill
c. 2R.*, *Mar. 9,* 1077.

Lamb, Mr. E. H. [Rochester]
Chatham Dockyard, Allocation of Work to, *Mar. 10,* 1352.

Lambert, Mr. G.—*Lord of the Admiralty* [Devon, S. Molton]
Admiralty Decision in Beresford-Scott Case, *Mar. 9,* 1098.
Attachés at Foreign Courts, Qualifications Required of, *Mar. 3,* 517.
Battleships
Comparative Strength of Great Britain and Germany, *Mar. 3,* 596.
"Dreadnought" Type — Relative Strength of Great Britain and Germany in 1911-1912, *Mar. 9,* 1183.
"Cæsar" Firing Practice, Girl Injured by—Compensation Offered, etc., *Mar. 9,* 1097, 1098.
Coastguard Service
Duties in Saving Life, Proposals for Carrying out, *Mar. 3,* 516, 594.
Policy as to, *Mar. 9,* 1187.
Reduction Proposals, *Mar. 2,* 327.
Cunard Company, Subsidy to—Speed of "Mauretania" and "Lusitania," *Mar. 9,* 1187.
Dockyards Establishment, Proposals as to, *Mar. 9,* 1097.
Estimates
Date of Printing, *Mar. 2,* 326, 327.
Material, Sum proposed for, *Mar. 2,* 326.
Gibraltar Docks, Capacity of, *Mar. 9,* 1096.

Lambert, Mr. G.—*cont.*
Greenwich Hospital Age Pensions, Number of Men Available for, *Mar. 3,* 518.
Haulbowline Dock, Extension of, *Mar. 10,* 1378.
Home Fleet
Constitution of and readiness for War *Mar. 3,* 597, 600.
Nore Division, Constitution of, *Mar. 9,* 1151.
Refit, Vessels Undergoing and Manned with Nucleus Crews, *Mar. 9,* 1184, 1185.
Loch Long Torpedo Range, *Mar. 10,* 1378, 1392.
Medical Service, Position of, *Mar. 9,* 1187.
Oil Fuel, Supply of, *Mar. 9,* 1187.
Persian Gulf Slave-Traffic, Vessels Engaged in Suppressing, *Mar. 3,* 517.
Portsmouth Dockyard Lock, Expenditure on, *Mar. 3,* 598; *Mar. 10,* 1376.
Repairs, Provision for, *Mar. 9,* 1186.
Rosyth Works
Date of Readiness for use, *Mar. 3,* 599.
Policy as to, *Mar. 3,* 598; *Mar. 10.* 1376, 1377, 1392.
Sheerness Bar, Dredging of, *Mar. 10,* 1375.
Shipbuilding
Armoured Cruiser, Type decided on, *Mar. 9,* 1185, 1186.
Designs, Preparation of, *Mar. 9,* 1096.
Expenditure on, *Mar. 9,* 1183, 1184.
Information for 1904, *Mar. 3,* 516.
Programme 1908–9, *Mar. 3,* 595–597; *Mar. 9,* 1182.
Stores, Surplus of and Reduced Expenditure on, *Mar. 3,* 598; *Mar. 9,* 1187.
Strength — Comparison with Germany, *Mar. 9,* 1182, 1183.
Torpedo Boat Destroyers
Comparative Strength of Great Britain and Germany, *Mar. 9,* 1183.
Number under Repair in December, 1906, etc., *Mar. 9,* 1097.
Works, Expenditure on, *Mar. 10,* 1375.

Lambert Minors Estate
Sale Proposals.
Q. Mr. Duffy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 2,* 323.

Lambton, Mr. F. W. [Durham, S.E.]
Army Officers
Shortage in, Causes of, *Mar. 5,* 907–914.
Training—Alterations in Present System, *Mar. 4,* 774.

Land Commission (Ireland)
[*For* Particular Estates, etc., *see their Names.*]
Mullaly, Mr., Duties and Qualifications of.
Qs. Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. Healy; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11,* 1534.

Land Purchase (Ireland)
[*For* Particular Estates, etc., *see their Names.*]
Stock—Cause of Fall in Price.
Qs. Mr. Hayden, Mr. T. L. Corbett; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Feb. 27,* 67.

Land Values (Scotland) Bill
l. 1R.* *Feb. 27,* 17.
Date of Proceeding with.
Os. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, Earl of Crewe, *Feb. 27,* 17.

Lane-Fox, Mr. G. [Yorks, W.R., Barkston Ash]
Army Horses, Supply of, *Mar. 5,* 956–958.
Officers
Promotion from the Ranks, *Mar. 5,* 956.
Shortage in, Causes of, *Mar. 5,* 956.
Cavan County Lieutenant and Magistrates, Date of Appointing, *Mar. 10,* 1325.
Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill
Control of Contracted-out Schools, *Mar. 10,* 1314.
Fodder, Dangers from Import of and Proposals for Prohibiting, *Mar. 5,* 886.
Royston School—Case of Mr. O. B. Milnes, *Mar. 10,* 1314, 1315.
West Riding Appeal Case, Decision in, *Mar. 10,* 1313.

Lansdowne, Marquess of
Admiralty Policy—German Emperor's Letter to Lord Tweedmouth, *Mar. 9,* 1072–1075.
Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, 2A., 1469–1481.

Law, Mr. H. A. [Donegal, W.]
Donegal Whaling Stations, Proposals for Establishing, *Mar. 4,* 678.
Milk Supply—Evil arising from Use of Skim Milk, *Mar. 4,* 701.
Poor Law Relief Expenditure (1905–6), *Feb. 27,* 30,

Law of Distress Amendment Bill
c. 2R.*, *Feb. 27,* 200.

Layland-Barrett, Mr. F. [Devon, Torquay]
Army Territorial Force—Grant for Cyclists, *Mar. 11,* 1498.

Leader Estate
Case of C. Rahilly.
Q. Mr. Sheehan; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11,* 1550.

Lea, Mr. H. C. [St. Pancras, E.]
Admiralty
Beresford-Scott Case, Decision in, *Mar. 9,* 1098.
Policy—German Emperor's Letter to Lord Tweedmouth, *Mar. 9,* 1135.
Army Expenditure, Necessity for reduction of, *Mar. 12,* 1853–1855.
Dangerous Performances Act—Extension to Women proposed, *Mar. 9,* 1112.
King Edward's Foreign Tour—Attendance of Minister of the Crown, *Mar. 9,* 1133.
Parliamentary Debates, Responsibility for Compilation of, and Vote on which Contract is taken, *Mar. 11,* 1495.
Question omitted from *Hansard* of 2nd May, 1907, *Mar. 9,* 1136.
Privilege, Time for raising Question of, *Mar. 9,* 1133.

Lee, Mr. A. H. [Hants, Fareham]
Armaments, Reduction of Expenditure on, proposed, *Mar. 2,* 415–421.
Army
Engineers, Reorganisation of, *Mar. 4,* 733.
Officers, Shortage in supply of, *Mar. 11,* 1565.
Reductions effected, *Mar. 11,* 1556, 1557, 1566.
Reserve—Strength under New Scheme, *Mar. 11,* 1555, 1556.
Stores—Maintenance of Efficient Reserve, *Mar. 11,* 1557.
Territorial Force
Artillery, Field—Organisation as a Fighting Force, *Mar. 11,* 1558–1561.
Attestation Form—New Forms issued, *Mar. 11,* 1564, 1565.
County Associations, Financial position of, *Mar. 11.* 1564.
Guns—Type to be Supplied, *Mar. 11,* 1561–1564, 1578.
Special Reserve, Conditions of Transfer to Regular Army, *Mar. 11,* 1498.
Value as a Fighting Force, *Mar. 11,* 1558.
Works—Abolition of Loan System, *Mar. 12,* 1860.
Army Estimates—Opportunity for General Discussion on Vote I. *Mar. 11,* 1615.

[*cont.*

Lee, Mr. A. H.—*cont.*
- Cunard Company, Subsidy to—Speed of "Mauretania" and "Lusitania," *Mar. 9*, 1154.
- Forth and Clyde Canal, Widening of, *Mar. 10*, 1384.
- Loch Long Torpedo Range, Establishment of, *Mar. 2*, 403.
- Navy
  - Ammunition, Provision of, *Mar. 9*, 1151.
  - Battleships—Comparative Strength of Great Britain and Germany, *Mar. 3*, 561. 596.
  - Chatham Dockyard, Extension of, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1385, 1386.
  - Dockyard Accommodation for Ships of "Dreadnought" type, *Mar. 3*, 564.
  - German Shipbuilding Programme, *Mar. 2*, 419.
  - Home Fleet
    - Constitution of and Readiness for War, *Mar. 3*, 566.
    - Nore Division, Condition of, etc., *Mar. 3*, 567; *Mar. 9*, 1151.
    - Refit, Vessels under-going, and Manned with Nucleus Crews, *Mar. 9*, 1149, 1150, 1184, 1185.
  - Fuel, Supply of, *Mar. 9*, 1154.
  - Portsmouth Dockyard Lock, Expenditure on and Progress made, *Mar. 10*, 1383.
  - Repairs, Provision for, *Mar. 9*, 1154.
  - Rosyth, Policy as to, *Mar. 10*, 1382–1385.
  - Shipbuilding
    - Comparative speed of building in Great Britain and Foreign Countries, *Mar. 9*, 1155.
    - Expenditure under new Programme, *Mar. 9*, 1152.
    - Programme 1908–9, *Mar. 3*, 558–564; *Mar. 5*, 398.
  - Stores, Surplus of, and reduced expenditure on, *Mar. 3*, 565.
  - Torpedo-Boat Destroyers
    - British and Foreign, *Mar. 9*, 1080.
    - Comparative strength of Great Britain and Germany, *Mar. 3*, 563.
    - Construction Policy, *Mar. 3*, 559, 562–564.
  - Torpedoes, Reduction in Estimate for, *Mar. 3*, 565.
  - Two-power Standard, Maintenance of, *Mar. 3*, 560, 567, 568.
  - Works
    - Expenditure on, *Mar. 10*, 1381, 1382.
- Navy Estimates, Criticisms on, *Mar. 3*, 557, 558, 568.

Leese, Sir J. F. [Lancashire, N.E., Accrington]
- Bread—Causes of Increase in Price, *Mar. 4*, 774–783.
- Food Taxation, Policy as to, *Mar. 4*, 775.
- Wheat Crop, Shortage in, *Mar. 4*, 779–781.

Leeward Islands
- Employment of Female Prisoners—Rule Presented, *Mar. 9*, 1071, 1078.

Lehmann, Mr. R. C. [Leicester, Market Harborough]
- Natal
  - Dinizulu, Trial of, *Mar. 4*, 674.
  - Financial position, *Mar. 9*, 1106.
  - Public Debt, Amount of, *Mar. 9*, 1106

Leitrim
- (North) Parliamentary Election—New Member Sworn, *Mar. 9*, 1137.

Letchworth
- Social Democrat Meeting, Conduct of Volunteers at.
  - *Qs.* Mr. G. Roberts, Mr. J. Ward; *As.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 10*, 1297.

Lever, Mr. A. L. [Essex, Harwich]
- Gibraltar Docks, Capacity of, *Mar. 9*, 1096

Levy, Sir M. [Leicestershire, Loughborough]
- Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28*, 252–255, 266, 267.

Lewis, Island of
- Emigration to Mainland, Scheme for.
  - *Q.* Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 11*, 1526.
- Land available for Small Holdings.
  - *Q.* Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 9*, 1128.
- Sanitary Condition, Proposals for improving.
  - *Q.* Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 11*, 1526.

Liberia
- Deaths of J. Blenkinsop and E. A. Ditchfield, Circumstances of.
  - *Q.* Mr. Forster; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 5*, 873.

Licensing Act Amendment Bill
- *c.* 1R*, *Feb. 27*, 73.
  - Order for Second Reading and Bill withdrawn, *Mar. 4*, 815.

Licensing Bill
- *c.* Intro., *Feb. 27*, 73, 200.
  - 1R*, *Feb. 27*, 200.
- Central Licensing Commission—Tenure of Office by Members.
  - *Q.* Mr. S. Wortley; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 9*, 1134.

Licensing Bill—*cont.*
- Debate on Introduction (Commons), *Feb. 27*, 73.
  - Appeal Authority, Powers and Duties of, 91.
  - *Bona fide* Traveller, Alteration in Definition of, 96.
  - Brewery Shareholders, Position of, 101, 113, 128, 141, 142, 175, 186.
  - Children, Exclusion of from Public-houses, 97, 123.
  - Clubs
    - Hours of Opening and Closing, Necessity for dealing with, 121.
    - Increase in as a Result of the Bill, 101, 106, 137.
    - Police Inspection, Provision for, 95, 106, 130, 189, 198.
    - Registration, Annual Renewal of, 94, 95, 138, 139, 173, 189.
  - Compensation for Licences Suppressed.
    - Annual Value of Licences, Method of Arriving at, 85–87, 102, 103, 116.
    - Funds for, Method of raising, 83, 185, 186.
    - Scale of, 83, 84, 185.
    - Tenant, Safeguarding Interests of, 84.
    - Time Limit, 84.
  - Drunkenness, Statistics as to, 126.
  - Licences.
    - Ante-1869 Beer Licences, Position of, 177, 182, 194, 197.
    - Assumption of Right of Renewal, 75, 76, 112, 115, 120, 127, 181.
    - Compensation for Licences Suppressed, *see that Subheading.*
    - Conditions to be Attached to, 97.
    - Enhanced Value Owing to Reduction in Number, 114.
    - Local Option as to Future Licences, 90, 174, 194.
    - New Licences.
      - Monopoly Value, disposal of, 92.
      - Prohibition of — Powers Granted to Parochial Electors, 93, 118, 174, 194.
    - On-Licences, *see that Subheading.*
    - Off-Licences
      - Justices Licence to be Required for, 93.
      - New Licences to be Subject to Parochial Prohibition, 94.
      - Statutory Reduction not Applicable to, 93.
    - Time Limit, *see that Subheading.*

Licensing Bill—*cont.*
- Debate on Introduction (Commons)—*cont.*
  - Licensing Commission, Establishment of, 90.
  - Licensing Justices in Boroughs, Provisions as to, 91.
    - Appeals against Decisions of—Indemnification of Costs, 92.
  - Monopoly Value, 75.
  - On-Licences
    - Existing Number of, 77.
    - Statutory Reduction of, Provision for, 79, 125, 136, 145, 192.
      - Optional Reduction, Powers of Licensing Authorities, 81, 109.
      - Scheme for carrying out Duties of Licensing Authorities, 81.
      - Wales and Monmouthshire, Local Option for Licences beyond Statutory amount, 82, 179.
  - State Control, Resumption of, 74 100, 111, 112, 125, 192, 195, 196.
  - Sunday Opening—Curtailment of Hours Outside Metropolitan district, 96, 110, 122, 129, 130, 179.
  - Temperance, Effect of the Bill on, 100, 132, 143, 144, 176.
  - Time Limit of Fourteen years, proposed, 87–90, 104–106, 109, 119, 120, 140–142, 146, 173, 175, 184–188, 192, 195, 200.
- Districts, Alterations proposed in.
  - *Q.* Mr. Barnard; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 6*, 991.
- Proposals as to.
  - *Q.* Mr. Lyell; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 2*, 353.
  - *Q.* Mr. Ellis; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 2*, 354.
- Second Reading Date of taking.
  - *Q.* Mr. Ellis; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 12*, 1752.

Lights and Lighthouses
- Local Inspections—Reports Presented, *Mar. 10*, 1238, 1282.

Limavady
- Urban District Council Contracts, alleged Irregularities in.
  - *Q.* Mr. J. MacVeagh; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 3*, 512.

Limited Partnerships Act, 1907
- Rules under Section 6 (4), Date of Issuing.
  - *Q.* Mr. Micklem; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 5*, 855.

Linen Industry
Irish hand-woven Damask, Protection of.
Qs. Mr. J. MacVeagh, Mr. T. L. Corbett, Capt., Craig, Mr. Sloan ; *As.* Mr. T. W. Russell, *Mar. 4*, 702.

Liquor Traffic
Compensation money paid in 1906.
Q. Mr. Mackarness ; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 9*, 1112.
Employment Statistics.
Q. Mr. W. Rutherford ; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 5*, 901 .
Grocers' Licences in 1905.
Q. Mr. Barnard ; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 6*, 992.
Income-tax, Assessment for.
Qs. Mr. Gibbs, Mr. George Faber ; *As.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 12*, 1752.
Irish Licensing Statistics.
Q. Mr. Barrie ; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 11*, 1551.
Licensing Statistics for County Boroughs—Return proposed.
Q. Mr. Crossley ; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 10*, 1290.
Population and On-licences in Rural and Urban Districts—Return proposed.
Q. Mr. Younger ; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 9*, 1080.
Scotland
Licensing Statistics.
Q. Mr. Barrie ; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 11*, 1525.
Statistics as to Sale of Spirits.
Q. Mr. Wilkie ; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 6*, 993.
Statistics (1907) Presented, *Feb. 28*, 202 ; *Mar. 2*, 290.

Lisburn
Registrar, Appointment of.
Q. Mr. J. MacVeagh ; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 10*, 1322.

Liverpool Corporation Bill
2R., *Mar. 12*, 1841.

Liverpool Corporation (Streets and Buildings) Bill
Referring to Police and Sanitary Committee.
Os. Mr. C. Grant, *Mar. 5*, 844, 845 ; Mr. W. Rutherford, 845.

Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. D.—*President of the Board of Trade* [Carnarvon, etc.]
Ballinamore Railway Level Crossing, Supervision of, *Mar. 4*, 704.
Belfast Harbour Commissioners Contracts, Allocation of, *Mar. 10*, 1284, 1285.
Bread—Causes of Increase in Price, *Mar. 4*, 807–812.
Colwick—Erection of footbridge at Savilles Crossing, *Mar. 9*, 1114.

Lloyd-George, Rt. Hon. D.—*cont.*
Donegal Whaling Stations, proposals for establishing, *Mar. 4*, 678.
Exports and Imports—Statistics (1902–1907), *Mar. 5*, 850.
France—Parisian Octroi duty on Bread Stuff, *Mar. 9*, 1115.
Gambling in Futures—Foreign Anti-Gambling Legislative proposals, *Mar. 9*, 1089.
"Indrasamha" Lascars, Madness and Suicide of, *Mar. 9*, 1115.
Irish Cottage Industries, Protectionof, *Mar. 9*, 1131, 1132.
Kilnsea and Easington Coast Erosion, Measures for checking, *Mar. 10*, 1311, 1312
Merchant Shipping
Asiatics on British Ships—Cause of Death of certain men, *Mar. 5*, 494 8, 531.
First-aid Certificates of Master and Mate, Facilities for Obtaining in Scotland, *Mar. 3*, 532.
Rates, Fixing of Maximum, proposed, *Mar. 4*, 660.
Seamen—Figures given in Return, *Mar. 9*, 1114.
North Devon or Cornwall Coast, Harbour on—Tabling of Report, *Mar. 9*, 1090.
"Queen Eleanor"—Mutiny of Chinese Crew, *Mar. 3*, 511.
Railways
Conference—Representation of Fruit Trade, etc., *Mar. 5*, 847, 848.
Disputes — Number of Arbitrators Appointed, *Mar. 9*, 1090.
Free Passes for Legislators, proposed *Mar. 5*, 848.
Relations with the State,—Nature of Inquiry, *Mar. 4*, 676, 677, *Mar. 9*, 1091.
Workmen's Trains—Demand for and Inquiries held during last Ten Years, *Mar. 2*, 318, 319.
Salt—Export and Import Statistics, *Mar. 2*, 319.
Swansea—King's Dock Accident on 3rd March, Inquiry into, *Mar. 10*, 1312, 1313.
Trade Marks Act, Rules under, *Mar. 9*, 1113.
United States—New York Unemployed, Practice as to, Out-of-Work Benefit for, *Mar. 3*, 531.
Wheat Cultivation within the Empire, Encouragement of, proposed, *Mar. 4*, 809, 810.

Loan Societies Act
Amendment of, proposed.
Q. Mr. Seaverns; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 2,* 320.

Local Authorities
Accounts—Action to be taken on Report of Committee.
Q. Sir G. Fardell; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Mar. 5,* 856.
Ireland—Audit of Accounts, Charges for.
Qs. Mr. J. MacVeagh; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 3,* 545.

Local Authorities (Admission of the Press) Bill
c. 2R., *Mar. 10,* 1433.

Local Authorities (Taxation and Purchase of Land) Bill
c. 1R*, *Mar. 5,* 904.

Local Government Act, 1898
Disqualification for Election on Irish Public Bodies, Provisions as to.
Q. Mr. W. Redmond; *A.* Mr. Cherry, *Mar. 9,* 1130.

Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1902
Bye-laws under Section 15.
Q. Mr. Mooney; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5,* 861.

Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889
Amendment Proposals.
Q. Mr. Younger; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 4,* 682.
Qs. Mr. Smeaton, Mr. Younger; *As.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 9,* 1127.

Loch Long
Torpedo Range, Establishment of.
Os. Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 2,* 403; Mr. A. Lee, 403; Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 10,* 1378, 1392; Mr. Carlile, 1392.

Lockwood, Rt. Hon. Lieut.-Col. A. [Essex, Epping]
Admiralty Policy — German Emperor's Letter to Lord Tweedmouth, *Mar. 9,* 1135, 1136.
Army
Enfield Lock—Case of West, *Mar. 10,* 1293.
Trade Disputes, Power of Chief Magistrates to Call out Troops during, *Mar. 5,* 933.
London County Council General Powers Bill, 2R., *Mar. 5,* 983, 984.
Militia—Disposal of Officers of Essex Regiment, 4th Battalion, *Mar. 2,* 329.
Milk Supply—Legislative Proposals, *Mar. 5,* 984.
Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28,* 255–259.

London County Council General Powers Bill
c. 2R., *Mar. 5,* 966.
Milk Clauses—Instruction to Committee *Mar. 5,* 966.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill
l. 2R*., *Feb. 27,* 3.

London Electric Supply Bills
Referring to Joint Committee
Message to the Commons, *Mar. 5,* 844.
Os. Earl of Onslow, *Mar. 5,* 818 820.

London Paving Expenses Bill
c. 1R*., *Mar. 9,* 1137.

London and Windsor Motor Roads, Tramroads and Tramways Bill
l. 1R*., *Mar. 9,* 1069.

London (Westminster and Kensington) Electric Supply Companies Bill
l. 2R*., *Mar. 3,* 473.

Londonderry, Marquess of
India—Zakka Khel Expedition, *Mar. 2,* 291.

Long, Colonel C. W. [Worcestershire Evesham]
Harpenden Sewerage Scheme, Inquiry as to, *Mar. 6,* 992.

Long, Rt. Hon. W. H. [Dublin, S.]
Contempt of Court—Limitation of Jurisdiction of Judges, proposed, *Mar. 10,* 1429–1432.
Dublin Metropolitan Police—Cost of Upkeep, etc., *Mar. 11,* 1644–1646.
Glenahiery Outrage—Public Inquiry proposed, *Mar. 11,* 1540.
Northamptonshire Rabies Outbreak, *Mar. 5,* 884.

Longan Estate
Evicted Tenants, Reinstatement of.
Q. Mr. O'Shee; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11,* 1499.

Longford
Condition of—Cause for Employment of extra Police.
Qs. Mr. Farrell; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11,* 1531.
Land Commission Sitting, Date of.
Q. Mr. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5,* 889.
United Irish League Threats against Graziers.
Qs. Captain Craig, Mr. Moore, Mr C. Craig; *As.* Mr. Birrell, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 3,* 548.

Lonsdale, Mr. J. B. [Armagh, Mid.]
  Army
    Cavalry Training in Cork District, *Mar. 11,* 1495.
    Horses
      Irish Breeding Scheme, *Mar. 11,* 1551.
      Riding Horses available, *Feb. 27,* 35.
      Subsidies paid for Breeding, *Mar. 11,* 1495.
  Boycotting Statistics, *Mar. 3,* 515.
  Glenaheiry Outrage—Public Inquiry proposed, *Mar. 11,* 1535, 1539.
  Land Commission—Duties and Qualifications of Mr. Mullaly, *Mar. 11,* 1534.
  Penny Postage with France proposed, *Mar. 11,* 1523.
  Siam, New Treaty with, *Mar. 12,* 1748.
  Trade Marks, British—Protection of, in the Far East, *Mar. 12,* 1747.

Lord Chamberlain
  Viscount Althorp.

Lord Chancellor
  Lord Loreburn.

Lord Chief Justice
  Lord Alverstone.

Lord Great Chamberlain
  Marquess of Cholmondeley.

Lord Lieutenant of Ireland
  Earl of Aberdeen.

Lord President of the Council
  Earl Crewe.

Lord Privy Seal
  Marquess of Ripon.

Loreburn, Lord.—*Lord Chancellor.*
  Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 10,* 1238–1251; *Mar. 11,* 1449, 1481–1484

Lough, Mr. T.—*Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education* [Islington, W.]
  Education (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 6,* 1052–1059.

Lough, George
  Assault on Mrs. Greated's Servant.
    Q. Captain Craig; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 4,* 693.

Lovat, Lord
  Crofters Holdings (Scotland) Acts Amendment Bill, 2R. *Feb. 27* 3–12.

Lowther Rt. Hon. J. W. [Cumberland, Penrith]
  [*For* Rulings as Speaker *see titles* Speaker *and* Questions.]

Lundon, Mr. W. [Limerick, E.]
  Ardpatrick—Case of Mrs. B. Murphy, *Mar. 12* 1711.
  Bevan Estate, Sale of, *Mar. 12,* 1771.
  Cooper Estate Sale Proposals—Cases of J. McGrath and T. Barry, *Mar. 4,* 664.

Lupton, Mr. A. [Lincs., Sleaford]
  Army
    Officers
      Pay of, *Mar. 5,* 964.
      Pensions, Reduction of, proposed, *Mar. 5,* 964, 965.
      Promotion from the ranks, *Mar. 5,* 964.
    Personnel, Reduction of, proposed, *Mar. 12,* 1868–1872.
    Strength of, *Mar. 5,* 966.
    Works—Abolition of Loan system, *Mar. 12,* 1868.
  Education—Restrictions on Corporal Punishment, *Mar. 2,* 343.
  Education (Local Authorities) Bill, 1R., *Mar. 6,* 1062–1064.
  Hampstead Borough Council Officials—Vaccination Regulations, *Mar. 9,* 1116.
  India
    Army, Strength, necessity for maintaining, *Mar. 12,* 1869.
    Taxes, Collection of, *Mar. 12,* 1736.
  Navy
    Officers' Pay, Reduction of, proposed, *Mar. 9,* 1232.
    Personnel, Reduction in, proposed, *Mar. 9,* 1230.
    Precautions against Night Attack, absence of, *Mar. 9,* 1232, 1233.
    Spirit Ration—Discontinuance in favour of Money Allowance, proposed, *Mar. 3,* 616.
  Vaccination, Expenditure from Rates since 1895, *Mar. 5,* 877.
  Vaccination Acts
    Breaches of—improvements since 1873, *Mar. 5,* 852, 876.
    Prosecutions under (1906 and 1907), *Mar. 3.* 511.

Luttrell, Mr. H. F. [Devon, Tavistock]
  Army
    Cardwell System *Mar. 11,* 1617, 1618.
    Personnel, Reduction of, proposed, *Mar. 11,* 1616–1621.
  Navy Spirit Ration—Discontinuance in favour of Money Allowance, proposed, *Mar. 3,* 614.

Lyell, Mr. C. H. [Dorset, E.]
- Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill, Allocation of Time for, *Mar. 2,* 353.
- Licensing Bill, Proposals as to, *Mar. 2,* 353.

Lyttelton, Rt. Hon. A. [St. George's, Hanover Square]
- Africa, Central—Native Labour Recruitment Proposals, *Mar. 11,* 1518.
- Africa, East—Portuguese Native Labour Recruitment for Transvaal Mines, *Mar. 11,* 1521.
- Transvaal
  - Mines—Mortality among Labourers, *Mar. 12,* 1742.
  - Native Labour in Mines—Retirement of Medical Inspector, *Mar. 12,* 1746.

McArthur, Mr. C. [Liverpool, Kirkdale]
- Sugar Refining in bond, Regulations as to, *Mar. 5,* 857.

McCalmont, Col. J. [Antrim, E.]
- Carrickfergus Harbour Loan—Remission of Balance, *Mar. 10,* 1319.
- National School Teachers—Claims of Transition Teachers, *Mar. 10,* 1293.

McCrae, Mr. G. [Edinburgh, E.]
- Army Territorial Force
  - Attestation Form, Terms of, *Mar. 4,* 756, 757.
  - Cost of, *Mar. 4,* 755, 756.
  - Representation on Army Council, proposed, *Mar. 4,* 758.

Macdonald, Mr. J. A. M. [Falkirk Burghs]
- Armaments
  - Estimates for—Growth since 1893, *Mar. 2,* 355, 356.
  - Reduction of Expenditure on, Proposals as to, *Mar. 2,* 355–365.
- Navy
  - *Personnel,* Reduction in, proposed, *Mar. 9,* 1191–1194, 1198, 1199, 1200.
  - Shipbuilding, Expenditure on, *Mar. 9,* 1191.
  - Short-Service System, Introduction of, proposed, *Mar. 9,* 1193.

Macdonald, Mr. J. R. [Leicester]
- Factories and Workshops
  - Inspectors—Proposals for Increase, *Mar. 2,* 337.
  - Parliamentary Discussion of Subject, proposed, *Mar. 2,* 352.
- Imperial School of Science and Technology, Governing Body, Constitution of, *Mar. 2,* 341, 342.
- Railway Relations with the State—Nature of Inquiry, *Mar. 4,* 677.
- War Office Clothing Contracts—Wages paid by Contractors, *Mar. 10,* 1295.

McHugh, Mr. P. A. [Sligo, N.]
- Contempt of Court—Limitation of Jurisdiction of Judges, proposed, *Mar. 10,* 1394–1406.

Mackarness, Mr. F. C. [Berks, Newbury]
- Army Territorial Force—Political Position of Lords-Lieutenants, *Mar. 12,* 1829.
- Army Estimates—Increase since 1895, *Mar. 12,* 1830.
- Housing of the Working Classes—Legislative Proposals, *Mar. 9,* 1117.
- Liquor Traffic—Compensation Money Paid in 1906, *Mar. 9,* 1112.
- Natal
  - Dinizulu, Trial of, *Mar. 4,* 673, 674; *Mar. 9,* 1107.
  - Financial Position, *Mar. 9,* 1107.

McKenna, Rt. Hon. R.—*President of the Board of Education* [Monmouth, N.]
- Accommodation in Schools, *Mar. 5,* 884.
- Attendance Officers, Powers and Duties of, *Mar. 3,* 535.
- Corporal Punishment, Restrictions on, *Mar. 2,* 343, 344.
- Cost per Head, *Mar. 2,* 321; *Mar. 11,* 1495.
- Council Schools
  - Number of, etc., *Mar. 5,* 883.
  - Power of Local Authorities to Reimpose Fees, *Mar. 11,* 1506.
- Dewsbury—Application of Hinchcliffe Bequest, *Mar. 12,* 1763.
- Education (Provision of Meals) Act
  - Amendment, proposed, *Mar. 3,* 534.
  - Local Authorities Adopting, *Feb. 27,* 26.
- Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill.
  - Clause 1, Sub-sections (1) and (2), Effect of, *Mar. 10,* 1292.
  - Contracted-out Schools
    - Control of, *Mar. 10,* 1314.
    - Furniture, Ownership of, *Mar. 12,* 1760, 1761.
    - Scholarship Schemes, *Mar. 9,* 1120.
    - Teachers' Service, Counting of, *Mar. 11,* 1495.
  - Enactments Affected by—Circulation of Print, proposed, *Mar. 2,* 342.
  - Grant
    - Amount and Allocation of, *Mar. 9,* 1121, 1122; *Mar. 12,* 1764, 1765.
    - System of Calculating, *Mar. 4,* 680.
  - Religious instruction
    - Definition of, *Mar. 3,* 535, 536.
    - Provisions as to, *Mar. 5,* 883.

[*cont.*

McKenna, Rt. Hon. R.—*cont.*
  Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill—*cont.*
    Section 3, Sub-section 3, Interpretation of, *Mar. 2*, 343.
    Teachers, Effect on Demand for, *Mar. 12*, 1765.
    Voluntary Transferred Schools, Provisions as to, *Mar. 9*, 1120.
  London County Council Schools—Syllabus of Religious Instruction, *Mar. 3*, 534; *Mar. 5*, 882.
  Medical Inspection, Payment for, *Mar. 5*, 883.
  Merionethshire School Teachers' Salaries, *Mar. 5*, 883.
  Non-Provided Schools
    Exchequer Grants during 1907, *Mar. 4*, 679.
    Expenditure by Local Authorities in 1907, *Mar. 2*, 342.
    London Expenditure on Structural Alterations, *Mar. 11*, 1503.
    Number in Single-School Areas, *Feb. 27*, 56; *Mar. 2*, 340.
    Voluntary Schools Built since 1890, *Mar. 4*, 679.
  Religious Instruction—Number of Children Withdrawn since 1902, *Mar. 3*, 533. 535.
  Royston School—Case of Mr. O. B. Milnes, *Mar. 10*, 1314, 1315.
  Rural Evening and Secondary Schools, Curriculum of, *Mar. 11*, 1503, 1505.
  Schools—Fire Safeguards, *Mar. 9*, 1120.
  Science and Technology, Imperial School of—Constitution of Governing Body, *Mar. 2*, 341, 342.
  Secondary Schools—Conditions of Obtaining Grants under New System, *Mar. 12*, 1762.
  Single-School Parishes, Information as to, *Mar. 12*, 1766.
  Swansea Dispute—Present Position, *Mar. 9*, 1117, 1118; *Mar. 12*, 1766.
  Teachers
    Parchment Certificates, Cause for Delay in Issuing, *Mar. 12*, 1761, 1762.
    Salaries—Conditions in Code, *Feb. 27*, 55.
  Training Colleges—Provision for Instruction in Rural School Work, *Mar. 12*, 1727.
  Union Jacks Presented and Speech made by Lord Rosebery—Printing of Speech proposed, *Feb. 27*, 55.
  Yorkshire
    North Riding—SingleSchool Areas, *Mar. 4*, 666.
    West Riding Schools, Accommodation in, *Mar. 12*, 1732, 1763, 1764.

Maclean, Mr. D. [Bath]
  Army
    Canteen System, *Mar. 11*, 1613.
    Civil Employment for Ex-Soldiers, *Mar. 5*, 946.
    Line Commissions for Officers of Special Reserve and Territorial Force, *Feb. 27*, 34.
    Pensions—System of Reckoning on Transfer of Service, *Mar. 11*, 1612.
    Soldiers
      Barrack Accommodation, *Mar. 5*, 945.
      Civil Rights and Social Condition of, *Mar. 5*, 944.
      Detention in lieu of Imprisonment, *Mar. 5*, 944.
  Debt, Imprisonment for—Proposals for Amendment of Law, *Feb. 27*, 49.

MacNeill, Mr. J. G. S. [Donegal, S.]
  Admiralty Policy—German Emperor's Letter to Lord Tweedmouth, *Mar. 12*, 1768, 1769.
  Ancient Monuments, Inventory of, proposed, *Mar. 11*, 1552.
  Contempt of Court—Limitation of Jurisdiction of Judges, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1408, 1415.
  House of Lords, Abolition of, proposed, *Mar. 12*, 1773.
  Maynooth College, Grants to, *Mar. 11*, 1528.

Macpherson, Mr. J. T. [Preston]
  Asiatics on British Ships—Cause of Death of certain Men, *Mar. 3*, 500.

MacVeagh, Mr. J. [Down, S.]
  Agriculture Department—Duties, etc., of Mr. Filgate, *Mar. 5*, 899.
  Carrickfergus Harbour Loan—Remission of Balance, *Mar. 9*, 1130, 1131; *Mar. 10*, 1319.
  Congested Districts Board—Funds Available, *Mar. 5*, 892, 893.
  Limavady Urban District Council Contracts, Alleged Irregularities in, *Mar. 3*, 512.
  Linen, Irish Hand-woven, Protection of, *Mar. 4*, 702.
  Lisburn Registrar, Appointment of, *Mar. 10*, 1322.
  Local Authorities—Charges for Audit of Accounts, *Mar. 3*, 545.
  Magistrates, Resident, Qualifications of, *Mar. 3*, 551, 552.
  Natal—Trial of Dinizulu, *Mar. 9*, 1108.
  National School Teachers—Students of 1898 and 1899, Salaries of, *Mar. 3*, 546.

[*cont.*

MacVeagh, Mr. J.—*cont.*
Postal Orders Paid through Bank—Loss sustained by Mr. P. White, etc., *Mar. 12,* 1705.
Taxation—Decision as to *status* of Surveyor's Clerks, *Mar. 5,* 851.

McVeigh, Mr. C. [Donegal, E.]
Ballinamore Railway Level Crossing, Supervision of, *Mar. 4,* 704.
Conyngham Estate—Case of Mrs. M. Bell, *Mar. 2,* 348.
Donegal Whaling Stations, Proposals for Establishing, *Mar. 4,* 699 ; *Mar. 11,* 1494.
Gledstane Estate—Case of J. Gorman, *Mar. 5,* 894.
Strabane Labourers' Cottages, Proposals for Erecting, *Mar. 12,* 1714.

Macedonia
Turkish Governor — Austro-Hungarian Attitude.
Q. Mr. Alden ; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 2,* 1747.

Madagascar
Native Labour Recruitment Negotiations.
Q. Sir G. Parker ; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 2,* 335.
Qs. Earl Winterton, Mr. Mitchell-Thomson, Sir G. Parker ; *As.* Mr. Churchill, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 4,* 669.
Qs. Mr. Mitchell-Thomson, Mr. Watt, Earl Winterton ; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9,* 1101.
Q. Mr. E Cecil ; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9,* 1105.
Q. Sir G. Parker ; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9,* 1109.
Qs. Mr. Hay, Sir G. Parker ; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 12,* 1743.

Maddison, Mr. F. [Burnley]
Railway Shunting Accidents, Prevention of, *Mar. 2,* 1755.

Madras Railway Company (Annuities) Bill
*c. Rep.**. *Feb. 27,* 18.
*Con.**. *Mar. 3,* 488.
3R* *Mar. 6,* 989.
l. 1R* *Mar. 6,* 1069.

Magistrates
County—Appointments in 1907.
Qs. Mr. Henry ; *As.* Sir W. Robson, *Feb. 27,* 58.
Ireland
Appointments (1906–1908)—Return Ordered, *Mar. 2,* 312.
Resident, Qualifications of.
Q. Mr. Muldoon ; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 3,* 546,
Qs. Mr. J. MacVeagh; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 3,* 551,

Magnus, Sir P. [London University]
Education (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 6,* 1036–1041.
Education—Secondary School Grants under New System, *Mar. 12,* 1762.
House of Commons Ventilation, Improvement of, proposed, *Mar. 9,* 1122, 1123.
Imperial School of Science and Technology Governing Body, Constitution of, *Mar. 2,* 341.

Mallett, Mr. C. E. [Plymouth]
Dockyards Establishment, Proposals as to, *Mar. 9,* 1097.
Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28,* 232–241, 246.

Malta Fever
Cases (1905–7).
Q. Sir W. J. Collins ; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4,* 668.
Decrease in Cases.
Os. Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4,* 726.

Man, Isle of
Reform in Constitution, Decision as to.
Q. Mr. Harwood ; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 9,* 1093.

Mansfield, Mr. H. R. [Lincoln, Spalding]
Feeble-minded Children—Inclusion in Scope of Royal Commission proposed, *Mar. 3,* 511.

Marble Arch
Clock at Lodge, Re-erection of.
Q. Mr. Bryce ; *A.* Mr. Harcourt, *Mar. 12,* 1766.

Marines, Royal
Reduction in Strength of.
Os. Mr. Bellairs, *Mar. 9,* 1204 ; Captain Craig, 1220–1222.

Marriages
General Abstract Presented, *Mar. 9,* 1071, 1078.

Married Women's Property Bill
c. 1R.* *Mar. 5,* 904.

Matches
Phosphorus
Deaths from Consuming in 1907.
Qs. Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. Byles ; *As.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 9,* 1111.
White or Yellow, Restrictions on Use of.
Qs. Mr. T. P. O'Connor, Mr. A. S. Wilson, Mr. Byles ; *As.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 9,* 1112.

Mauritius
Cyclone on 3rd inst., Particulars of.
Q. Major Anstruther-Gray; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 12,* 1738.

Meagher, Mr. M. [Kilkenny, N.]
Dublin Metropolitan Police—Cost of Upkeep, Objections to levying on the Rates, etc., *Mar. 11,* 1625-1630, 1639.

Meat
Foreign Beef Trusts, Operations of—Inquiry proposed.
Q. Mr. Chaplin; *A.* Sir E. Strachey, *Mar. 3,* 510.

Scottish Inspection System, Appointment of Veterinary Surgeons, etc.
Qs. Mr. Morton, Mr. Watt; *As.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 10,* 1317.

Menzies, Mr. W. [Lanark, S.]
Burglary Cases in Metropolitan Police Area, *Mar. 2,* 337.

Food Imports in 1906, *Mar. 9,* 1091.

Merchandise Marks (No. 2) Bill
c. 1R.* *Feb. 27,* 72.

Merchant Shipping
Asiatics on British Ships
Cause of Death of certain Men.
Qs. Mr. Summerbell, Mr. Brace, Mr. J. Williams, Mr. Reddy, Mr. C. Duncan, Mr. Hogan, Mr. N. Murphy, Mr. O'Grady, Mr. Macpherson, Mr. Jowett, Mr. Albert Stanley, Mr. Devlin, Mr. W. E. Harvey, Mr. E. Edwards, Mr. Barnes, Mr. Seddon, Mr. T. F. Richards, Mr. Walsh, Mr. T. Richards, Mr. Cooper, Mr. Joyce; *As.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 3,* 493, 531.

Increase in Number Employed—Inquiry into Working of Act of 1906, etc., proposed.
Qs. Mr. Fenwick, *Mar. 2,* 618-625, 654; Mr. J. H. Wilson, 625-633, 644; Mr. A. Taylor, 631-635; Mr. Houston, 635-638; Mr. Kearley, 638-648; Mr. J. Ward, 648-651; Mr. W. Rutherford, 651; Mr. Holt, 652-654.

Mortality, Causes of.
Qs. Mr. J. H. Wilson, *Mar. 3,* 629, 630.

Cunard Company, Subsidy to—Speed of "Mauretania" and "Lusitania."
Qs. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 9,* 1154; Mr. Lambert, 1187.
Qs. Mr. Watt, Mr. W. Redmond, Mr. Summerbell, Mr. Holt; *As.* Mr. Runciman, *Feb. 27,* 57.

Merchant Shipping—*cont.*
First-Aid Certificates of Masters and Mates.
Qs. Major Anstruther-Gray; *As.* Mr. Kearley, *Feb. 27,* 24; *Mar. 5,* 879.
Qs. Major Anstruther-Gray; *As.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 3,* 532.

Life-saving Apparatus, Ships Drill with.
Q. Mr. J. C. Wason; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Feb. 27,* 50.

Protection in Time of War.
Qs. Mr. J. M. Robertson, *Mar. 2,* 428.

Rates, fixing of Maximum, proposed.
Q. Mr. Curran; *A.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 4,* 660.

Seamen—Figures given in Return.
Q. Mr. J. H. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 9,* 1114.

Merionethshire
School Teachers' Salaries.
Qs. Mr. Bridgeman, Lord Balcarres; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 5,* 883.

Metropolitan Electric Tramways Bill
l. 2R.* *Mar. 3,* 473.

Metropolitan Sewers and Drains Bill
c. 1R.* *Mar. 5,* 903.

Micklem, Mr. N. [Herts, Watford]
Limited Partnerships Act, 1907—Rules under Section 6 (4), Date of Issuing, *Mar. 5,* 855.

Midleton, Viscount
Army
Artillery
Reductions in, *Mar. 12,* 1665 1668.

Minute of Army Council Approving—Tabling, proposed, *Mar. 12,* 1658, 1670, 1671.

Reserve, Present Strength of, *Mar. 12,* 1703.

Infantry, Condition of, *Mar. 12,* 1668.

Mediterranean Garrisons, Reduction of, *Mar. 12,* 1662.

Officers—Public Schools and Universities as a Source of Supply, *Mar. 12,* 1665.

Reductions effected, *Mar. 12,* 1661, 1662, 1664.

Report of Inspector-General as to Training and Efficiency—Tabling, *Mar. 12,* 1659, 1668, 1670.

Strength of, *Mar. 12,* 1658-1670.

Territorial Force Return, Date of Tabling, *Mar. 2,* 310.

Indian Army, Provision of Drafts for, *Mar. 12,* 1679.

Militia
- Abolition of.
  - *Os.* Viscount Hardinge, *Mar. 12,* 1700; Colonel Sandys, 1806.
- Bands, Upkeep of.
  - *Os.* Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5,* 828, 829; Earl of Portsmouth, 835.
- Engineers
  - Bridging Battalion, Reason for Abolition of.
    - *Os.* Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5,* 832; Earl of Portsmouth, 839.
  - Officers
    - Recruit Officers, Training for.
      - *Os.* Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5,* 827; Earl of Portsmouth, 834.
    - Special Reserve, Source of Supply for.
      - *Os.* Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5,* 826; Earl of Portsmouth, 834.
    - Travelling Expenses and Allowances.
      - *Os.* Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5,* 828; Earl of Portsmouth, 835.
  - Training in Musketry, etc.
    - *Os.* Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5,* 831; Earl of Portsmouth, 838.
- Essex Regiment, 4th Battalion—Disposal of Officers.
  - *Q.* Col. Lockwood; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 2,* 329.
- Non-Commissioned Special Reserve Officers—Number to be Called Up for Recruit Drill.
  - *Os.* Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5,* 829; Earl of Portsmouth, 836.
- Officers
  - Messing Arrangements.
    - *Os.* Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5,* 829; Earl of Portsmouth, 835.
  - Regular Officers, Proportion of under New Scheme.
    - *Os.* Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5,* 828; Earl of Portsmouth, 835.
  - Uniform Grant on Transfer.
    - *Q.* Mr. H. Beach; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11,* 1515.
- Quartermasters of Special Service Section—Granting Honorary Rank of Captain, proposed.
  - *Os.* Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5,* 828; Earl of Portsmouth, 835.
- Recruiting Statistics for last Ten Years.
  - *Os.* Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5,* 831; Earl of Portsmouth, 837, 838.
- Separation Allowances for Non-Commissioned Officers.
  - *Os.* Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5,* 830; Earl of Portsmouth, 836.
- Submarine Mining Section, Abolition of.
  - *Os.* Lord Raglan, *Mar. 5,* 832; Earl of Portsmouth, 840.

Milk Supply
- Importation Statistics for 1907 and 1908.
  - *Q.* Mr. Halpin; *A.* Mr. T. W. Russell, *Mar. 5,* 896.
- Legislative Proposals.
  - *Os.* Mr. Rees, *Mar. 5,* 966–970; Mr. H. Beach, 970; Mr. Guinness, 972–978; Mr. Burns, 978–982; Mr. V. Cavendish, 982; Dr. Cooper, 983; Col. Lockwood, 984; Mr. Seddon, 985; Mr. Harmood-Banner, 985; Mr. E. Gardner, 986; Mr. C. Warner, 987.
  - *Q.* Mr. Watt; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Mar. 9.* 1117.
- Scottish Inspection System, Improvement of.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Watt, Mr. Gulland; *As.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 9,* 1126.
- Skim Milk, Evils arising from Use of.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Gwynn, Mr. H. Law; *As.* Mr. T. W. Russell, *Mar. 4,* 700.
- Warranty with Consignments from Farmers, Hardship inflicted by Demanding.
  - *Q.* Mr. Gibbs; *A.* Sir E. Strachey, *Mar. 11,* 1508.

Millstreet
- Labourers Acts Inquiry, Cause for Delay in.
  - *Q.* Mr. Sheehan; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 4,* 697.

Milton
- Sewage Rate, Representations Against.
  - *Q.* Sir R. Hobart; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Mar. 2,* 338.

Mines and Quarries
- Coal Mines, *see that title.*
- Inspectors in Wales, Language Qualifications of.
  - *Q.* Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 4,* 676.
- Scottish—Fatal Accidents (1907–8).
  - *Q.* Major Anstruther-Gray; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Feb. 27,* 21.

Mitchell-Thomson, Mr. W. [Lanark, N.W.]
- China—Che-Kiang Railway Loan Agreement, *Mar. 10,* 1304.
- Coastguard, Policy as to, *Mar. 9,* 1164.
- Congo Free State—Case of James Koffie, *Mar. 5,* 872.
- Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill—Equivalent Grant for Scotland and Ireland, proposed, *Feb,* 27, 68.
- Madagascar Native Labour Recruitment, *Mar. 4,* 670; *Mar. 9,* 1101, 1102.

[*cont.*

Mitchell-Thomson, Mr. W.—*cont.*
- Navy
  - Home Fleet—Vessels Undergoing Refit, and Manned with Nucleus Crews, *Mar. 9,* 1165.
  - Medical Service, Position of, *Mar. 9,* 1164.
  - Patrol Boats for Police Duties, *Mar. 9,* 1165, 1166.
  - Rosyth, Policy as to, *Mar. 9,* 1167.
- Nigeria—Game Preservation, *Mar. 10,* 1302, 1303.
- Russia—Import Duties on Indian Tea, *Mar. 3,* 528.
- Siam, Government Negotiations with, *Mar. 5,* 873.
- Switzerland—Tariff and Employment Statistics, *Mar. 5,* 880.
- Trade Marks, British—Protection in the East, *Mar. 5,* 878.
- Transvaal Mine Labour—Negotiations for Import of Labourers, *Mar. 9,* 1105.
- Vatersay and Barra—Date of Publishing Papers, *Mar. 9,* 1127.

Monaghan
- Post Office—Cause for Delay in Erection. *Q.* Mr. Sloan; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 5,* 851.

Moneytigue
- Sale Proposals. *Q.* Mr. Duffy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 2,* 323.

Montrose, Duke of
- Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 10,* 1251-1257.

Mooney, Mr. J. J. [Newry]
- Agriculture Department—Duties, etc., of Mr. Filgate, *Mar. 5,* 899.
- Belfast Corporation Bill, 2R., *Feb. 27,* 161-164.
- Cordite
  - Defective Stores, Alleged Use of, *Mar. 11,* 1615.
  - Report of Committee of Inquiry, *Mar. 11,* 1614.
- Criminal Procedure—Persons Summoned under 34 Edward 3, Examination of Witnesses by, *Mar. 5,* 856.
- Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1902—By-laws under Section 15, *Mar. 5,* 861.
- Post Office—Irish Mail Service Subsidy, *Mar. 2,* 349, 350, 351.

Moore, Mr. W. [Armagh, N.]
- Armagh Asylum—Cost of Maintenance of Insane Prisoners, *Mar. 9,* 1087.
- Army
  - Irish Dragoon Guards, 4th, Selection of Station for, *Mar. 2,* 331.
  - Trade Disputes, Power of Chief Magistrates to call out Troops during, etc., *Mar. 5,* 943.
- Cavan County Lieutenant and Magistrates, Date of Appointing, *Mar. 10,* 1325.
- Congested Districts Board, Funds available for Work of, *Mar. 4,* 691.
- Crown Jewels, Loss of—Public Inquiry, proposed, *Mar. 11,* 1533.
- Dublin Metropolitan Police—Cost of Upkeep, etc., *Mar. 11,* 1648-1652.
- Education.
  - Bi-lingual Programme, Adoption of, *Mar. 11,* 1530.
  - Cookery Instruction, Provision for, *Mar. 4,* 696.
- Glenaheiry Outrage—Public Inquiry, proposed, *Mar. 11,* 1535, 1541.
- Irish Cottage Industries, Protection of, *Mar. 9,* 1131.
- Longford United Irish League Threats against Graziers, *Mar. 3,* 549.
- Mullingar Rural Council—Notices Served on Labourers, *Feb. 27,* 62.
- Post Office—Irish Mail Service Subsidy, *Mar. 2,* 351.
- Rathowen—Disturbance at Mr. Bond's House, *Mar. 9,* 1086.
- Roman Catholic University Proposals—Provost's Speech at Manchester, *Mar. 4,* 691, 692, 693.
- Trinidad Indentured Labour, Condition of Employing, *Mar. 10,* 1302.
- Waterford
  - Evicted Tenants—Progress made with Reinstatements, *Mar. 2,* 347.
  - Land, Proposals for Compulsory Acquisition of, *Mar. 2,* 347.
  - Untenanted Land offered for Purchase, *Mar. 2,* 346.

Moray Firth
- "Benaigen" and "Bangkok" Case, Procedure in.
  - *Q.* Sir A. Bignold; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 12,* 1721.
- Fishery Protection, Measures taken for. *Q.* Captain Waring; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 10,* 1318.
- Illegal Trawling Cases.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Weir, Mr. A. S. Wilson; *As.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 11,* 1527.
  - Prosecutions in 1907-8.
    - *Q.* Mr. Sutherland; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Feb. 27,* 61.
- "Paramount" Case—Result of Inquiry. *Q.* Captain Waring; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 9,* 1127.

Morgan, Mr. G. H. [Cornwall, Truro]
- Coastguard Service—Reduction Proposals, *Mar. 2*, 327.

Morley, Rt. Hon. J.—*Secretary of State for India* [Montrose Burghs.]
- Assam and Eastern Bengal.
  - Mahomedan Attitude towards Hindus, Danger from, *Mar. 3*, 521.
  - Police Appointments, *Feb. 27*, 38.
- Bengali Barrister imprisoned for assaulting Railway Officials, *Mar. 12*, 1737.
- Bombay, Riots on 13th February, *Feb. 27*, 40.
- Budget, Date of taking, *Mar. 12*, 1708.
- Calcutta
  - High Court, Proposals for partitioning, *Mar. 2*, 331.
  - Yugantar Newspaper, Seditious Matter in—Amendment of Existing Law, proposed, *Mar. 3*, 510.
- Emigration Statistics, *Feb. 27*, 37.
- Famine Relief
  - Chief of States, Responsibility of, *Mar. 12*, 1709.
  - Statistics, *Mar. 12*, 1709, 1736.
- Handcuffing of Political Prisoners, *Feb. 27*, 39.
- Imperial Cadet Corps, Proposals as to, *Mar. 12*, 1710.
- Imperial Legislative Council, Constitution of, *Mar. 12*, 1708.
- Indian Officials, Allegations as to Incivility of, *Mar. 3*, 522.
- Jullundar—Facilities for Presbyterian Services, *Mar. 10*, 1288, 1289.
- Justice, administration of, *Mar. 3*, 521.
- Karachi, Reorganisation of Police, *Mar. 10*, 1288.
- Kashmir, Restrictions on Englishmen Settling in, *Mar. 2*, 332.
- Newspapers prosecuted in 1907, *Mar. 12*, 1709.
- Opium
  - Bengal Exports and Area of Poppy Cultivation, *Mar. 10*, 1301.
  - Revenue Derived from Consumption (1895–6 and 1905–6), *Mar. 3*, 519.
- Police Amalgamation Proposals—Memorial from Berar Officers, *Mar. 2*, 322.
- Punjab Irrigation Colonies, Area of, *Feb. 27*, 37.
- Railways
  - Assam-Bengal Line, Connection of Sylhet with, *Mar. 12*, 1719.
  - Bombay-Sind Line, Route for, *Mar. 12*, 1720.
  - Bridges across Ganges and Hooghley, Proposals for, *Mar. 12*, 1720.
  - Chaman, Russian Proposals for Railway to, *Mar. 3*, 521.
  - Expenditure Contemplated (1908–9), *Mar. 2*, 332.

Morley, Rt. Hon. J.—*cont.*
- Sedition, Definition of, *Mar. 10*, 1300.
- Seditious Publications, Power to deal with under existing Acts, *Mar. 3*, 520.
- Swadeshi Movement—Circular issued in Dacca and Mymensingh, *Mar. 3*, 522.
- Taxes, Collection of, *Mar. 12*, 1736.
- Tea Garden Labour Commission—Placing Resolution in Library, proposed, *Mar. 12*, 1707.
- Thibet
  - Anglo-Thibetan Trade Agreement, Tabling of, *Mar. 12*, 1735.
  - Gyantse and Gantok, British Trade Agents at, *Mar. 10*, 1299.
- Viceroy's Executive Council, Vacancy on, *Mar. 12*, 1720.
- Whipping Act—Amendment Proposals, *Feb. 27*, 38; *Mar. 11*, 1512.
- Whipping as Legal Punishment, *Mar. 10*, 1301.
- Zakka Khel Expedition
  - Agreement with Afridi Tribes, Tabling of, *Mar. 12*, 1737.
  - Application of Clause 55 of Act of 1858, *Mar. 2*, 333.
  - Condition of Cessation of Operations, *Mar. 2*, 333.
- Zakka Khel Tribe
  - Subsidy paid to, in 1898, *Feb. 27*, 39.
  - Territory, Location of, *Mar. 4*, 661.

Morocco
- Kaid Sir H. Maclean, British Government Responsibility for Safety of.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Fell; *As.* Sir E. Grey, *Feb. 27*, 42; *Mar. 12*, 1751.

Morpeth, Viscount [Birmingham, S.]
- Education (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 6*, 998–1007, 1055.

Morton, Mr. A. C. [Sutherland]
- Beef Trust, Correspondence with, in 1903—Tabling proposed, *Mar. 12*, 1768.
- Donegal Whaling Stations, Proposals for Establishing, *Mar. 4*, 677.
- Durness Crofters, Grazing Land Available for, *Mar. 2*, 346.
- Meat—Scottish Inspection system, Appointment of Veterinary Surgeons, etc., *Mar. 10*, 1317.
- Navy Spirit Ration—Discontinuance in Favour of Money Allowances, proposed, *Mar. 3*, 615.
- Parliamentary Procedure
  - Adjournment, Motion for, *Mar. 3*, 655.
  - Private Members' Rights, Infringement of, *Mar. 3*, 655.

Motherwell Burgh Extension, etc., Bill
- c. 2R.* *Mar. 2*, 311.

Motors
Cars taken Abroad Temporarily—Inclusion in Return.
Q. Mr. Horniman ; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Feb. 27*, 51.
Import Regulations.
Q. Mr. Horniman ; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 5*, 878.
Speed Limit—Applications from Local Authorities.
Q. Mr. J. C. Wason ; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Feb. 27*, 60.
Q. Mr. J. C. Wason ; *A.* Mr. Cherry, *Feb. 27*, 65.

Mount Bellew
Labourers' Cottages Applications, Decision as to.
Qs. Mr. J. Roche ; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 2*, 349 ; *Mar. 4*, 695.
Land Commission Cases, Hearing of.
Q. Mr. J. Roche ; *A.* Mr. Cherry, *Feb. 27*, 65.

"Mount Temple"
Cause of Stranding.
Q. Mr. J. H. Wilson ; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 11*, 1491.

Muldoon, Mr. J. [Wicklow, E.]
Belfast Corporation Bill, 2R., *Feb. 27*, 155–158.
Magistrates, Resident, Qualifications of, *Mar. 3*, 546.
Rathdrum—Land not registered, Loss to Ratepayers by, *Feb. 27*, 26.
Tyrone Lieutenancy, Holder of, *Mar. 3*, 549.

Mullingar
Rural Council — Notices served on Labourers.
Qs. Mr. Moore, Mr. Hayden, Captain Craig ; *As.* Mr. Cherry, *Feb. 27*, 62.

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill
c. Bill withdrawn, *Mar. 10*, 1281.

Municipal Representation Bill.
l. 2R., *Mar. 3*, 474.

Murphy, Mr. N. J. [Kilkenny, S.]
Asiatics on British Ships—Cause of Death of certain Men, *Mar. 3*, 498.
Contempt of Court—Limitation of Jurisdiction of Judges, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1394.
Education
Necessitous Districts, School Building Grants in, *Feb. 27*, 66.
Primary Education Grant, Proposals for, *Feb. 27*, 66.
Teachers' Pension Fund, Proposals as to, *Feb. 27*, 67.

Myer, Mr. H. [Lambeth, N.]
Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill, Section 3, Subsection 3, Interpretation of, *Mar. 2*, 342.

Nannetti, Mr. J. P. [Dublin, College Green]
Dublin Metropolitan Police, Cost of Upkeep, Objections to levying on the Rates, etc., *Mar. 11*, 1630–1633.
Friendly Societies, Transfer, Regulations as to, *Mar. 12*, 1767.
Postmen, Vacancies available *Mar. 4*, 667.
Rathgar Post Office—Case of M. Kelly, *Mar. 3*, 493.
Telegraph Messengers, Over Age, Appointments Available for, *Mar. 4*, 659.

Natal
Dinizulu, Trial of.
Q. Mr. Ellis ; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Feb. 27*, 42.
Charges of Procedure.
Q. Mr. Ellis ; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 3*, 524.
Qs. Mr. W. Redmond ; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 4*, 672.
Qs. Mr. Mackarness, Mr. J. Ward, Mr. W. Redmond, Mr. Lehmann ; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 4*. 673.
Qs. Mr. Mackarness, Mr. J. MacVeagh ; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9*, 1107.
Q. Mr. Herbert ; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 10*, 1303.
Q. Mr. Flynn ; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 11*, 1519.
Telegram from Colonial Office, Circumstances of rending.
Q. Mr. A. S. Wilson, Mr. W. Redmond ; *As.* Mr. Churchill, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 12*, 1744.
Financial Position.
Q. Mr. Lehmann, Mr. Mackarness ; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9*, 1106.
Martial Law, Proposals for Continuing.
Qs. Mr. G. Greenwood ; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 2*, 336.
Q. Mr. G. Greenwood ; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 4*, 672.
Public Debt, Amount of.
Qs. Mr. Lehmann, Mr. Belloc, Mr. Wedgwood, Mr. Cox ; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9*, 1106.

National Gallery
Report (1907)—Return Ordered, *Feb. 27*, 20 ; Presented, *Feb. 28*, 202.

National Military Training Bill
c. 1R*, *Mar. 11*, 1553.

Navan
Postal Facilities.
Qs. Mr. P. White ; *As.* Mr. Buxton *Mar. 5*, 896.

Navy
First Lord.—Right Hon. Lord Tweedmouth.
Financial Secretary.—Right Hon. E. Robertson.
Ammunition, Provision of.
Os. Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 9,* 1141; Mr. A. Lee, 1151.
Armoured Ships, 1909, Publication of Designs, proposed.
Q. Mr. Bellairs; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 3,* 605.
Attachés at Foreign Courts, Qualifications Required of.
Q. Mr. Bellairs; *A.* Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 3,* 517.
Badges—Conditions of Supply.
Os. Mr. Bramsdon, *Mar. 10,* 1341.
Battleships
Classification of.
Os. Mr. Bellairs, *Mar. 9,* 1161.
Comparative Strength of Great Britain and Germany.
Os. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 3,* 561, 596; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 576; Mr. Lambert, 596.
"Dreadnought" Type — Relative Strength of Great Britain and Germany, in 1911–1912.
Os. Mr. Bellairs, *Mar. 9,* 1159; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1179–1182; Mr. Lambert, 1183; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 1187–1189; Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Mar. 10,* 1335; Mr. Asquith, 1337, 1338.
Strength in.
Os. Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 9,* 1146; Mr. Bellairs, 1159; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1178, 1179.
Unarmoured Ends, Policy as to.
Os. Mr. Bellairs, *Mar. 9,* 1166.
"Cæsar" Firing Practice, Girl injured by—Compensation offered, etc.
Qs. Mr. Weir; *As.* Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 9,* 1097.
Chatham Dockyard
Allocation of Work to.
Os. Mr. E. H. Lamb, *Mar. 10,* 1352.
Eligibility of Employees to join Territorial Force.
Q. Mr. Courthope; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 12,* 1733.
Q. Mr. Courthope; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 12,* 1752.
Extension of, proposed.
Os. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 10,* 1385, 1386.
Coal—Quantities and Prices in 1906 and 1907.
Q. Mr. Alden; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Feb. 27,* 33.
Coastguards, *see that title.*

Navy—*cont.*
Cordite
Condition of Stores.
Os. Mr. Wyndham, *Mar. 2,* 388.
Provision for Storage of and Loss incurred by Destruction of Unfit Stores.
Os. Lord Balcarres, *Mar. 10,* 1361, 1362; Mr. E. Robertson, 1368.
Q. Lord Balcarres; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 12,* 1732.
Cruisers
Programme 1908–1909.
Os. Mr. A. Chamberlain, *Mar. 3,* 574; Mr. Wyndham, 583; Mr. C. Craig, 591.
Strength of Great Britain and Germany.
Os. Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 9,* 1140; Mr. Bellairs, 1163.
Devonport Engineering College—Food supplied to Cadets.
Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 12,* 1733.
Dis-Rating—Powers of Commanders.
Os. Mr. Bramsdon, *Mar. 10,* 1340.
Dockyards (*see also Subheading* Names of Dockyards.)
Accommodation for Ships of "Dreadnought" Type.
Os. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 3,* 564; Mr. C. Craig, 592; Mr. J. Ward, 603.
Annual Accounts Presented, *Mar. 12,* 1705.
Establishment, Proposals as to.
Qs. Mr. Mallet, Mr. Bramsdon; *A.* Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 9,* 1097.
"Dreadnought," Test of.
Q. Mr. Gretton; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 12,* 1729.
Engineer Officers
Emolument Grievances.
Os. Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 3,* 555.
Regulations as to.
Q. Mr. Wedgwood; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 5,* 867.
Status of.
Os. Mr. Bramsdon, *Mar. 10,* 1341–1347; Mr. Wedgwood, 1363–1368, 1369; Mr. E. Robertson, 1369, 1370.
Expenditure 1904–1905–1907–1908.
Os. Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 2,* 372–374; Mr. Wyndham, 384; Mr. E. Robertson, 396.
Q. Mr. Toulmin; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Feb. 28,* 204.
German Shipbuilding Programme.
Os. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 2,* 419.

[*cont.*

Navy—*cont.*

Guns

Reserve.
Q. Mr. Bellairs; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 10*, 1294.

Small Guns, Advantages of.
Os. Mr. Bellairs, *Mar. 9*, 1162, 1163.

Haulbowline Dock, Extension of.
Os. Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 10*, 1378.

Home Fleet

Constitution of and Readiness for War.
Os. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 3*, 566; Mr. C. Craig, 590, 591; Mr. Lambert, 597, 600; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 599, 600.
Qs. Mr. Gretton; *As.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 11*, 1510, 1511.

Nore Division, Condition of.
Os. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 3*, 567; Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 9*, 1139, 1140; Mr. A. Lee, 1151; Mr. Lambert, 1151.

Refit, Vessels undergoing and manned with Nucleus Crews.
Os Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 9*, 1138; Mr. A. Lee, 1149, 1150, 1184, 1185; Mr. Mitchell-Thomson, 1165; Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Mar. 9*, 1174; Mr. Lambert, 1184, 1185.

Strength of.
Os. Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 9*, 1138, 1173; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1172–1174; Mr. C. Craig, *Mar. 10*, 1349, 1350.

Marines, Royal, *see that title.*

Mechanicians and Boy Artificers—Abolition of Training Establishments, proposed.
Qs. Mr. C. Duncan, Mr. Bellairs; *As.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Feb. 27*, 32.

Medical Service, Position of.
Os. Mr. Mitchell-Thomson, *Mar. 9*, 1164; Mr. Lambert, 1187.

Officers

Pay, Reduction of, proposed.
Os. Mr. Lupton, *Mar. 9*, 1232.

Reserve Lieutenants—Terms of Order of 11th July, 1905.
Q. Sir G. S. Robertson; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 5*, 867.

Oil Fuel, Supply of.
Os. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 9*, 1154; Mr. Lambert, 1187.

Patrol Boats for Police Duties.
Os. Mr. Mitchell-Thomson, *Mar. 9*, 1165, 1166.

Navy—*cont.*

Personnel, Reduction in, proposed.
Os. Mr. J. M. Macdonald, *Mar. 9*, 1191–1194, 1198, 1199, 1200; Mr. Smeaton, 1194; Mr. E. Robertson, 1198, 1199; Sir F. Banbury, 1201–1204; Mr. Bellairs, 1204; Mr. C. Craig, 1205; Mr. J. Ward, 1207; Mr. Rees, 1209–1213; Mr. Barnes, 1213–1219; Mr. T. L. Corbett, 1217; Sir G. Parker, 1222–1224; Mr. Jenkins, 1224; Mr. Lupton, 1230.

Portsmouth Dockyard New Lock, Expenditure on.
Os. Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 2*, 402. Mr. A. Chamberlain, *Mar. 3*, 579; Mr. Lambert, 598; Mr. J. Ward, 603; Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 10*, 1376; Mr. A. Lee, 1383.

Precautions against Night Attack, Absence of.
Os. Mr. Lupton, *Mar. 9*, 1232, 1233.

Range Finders, Estimate for.
Os. Lord Balcarres, *Mar. 10*, 1362.
Q. Lord Balcarres; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 12*, 1732.

Reforms effected.
Os. Mr. Bramsdon, *Mar. 10*, 1338, 1339.

Refrigerating Machinery for Magazines.
Os. Mr. Bellairs, *Mar. 9*, 1155; Lord Balcarres, *Mar. 10*, 1361.

Repairs, Policy as to and Expenditure on.
Os. Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 2*, 400–402; Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 9*, 1154; Mr. Bellairs, 1158; Mr. Lambert, 1186.

Reserve

Engine-room Artificers

Certificates held by.
Q. Mr. C. Duncan; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Feb. 27*, 32.

Promotion of.
Q. Mr. Alden; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 4*, 659.

Re-enrolment, Regulations as to.
Q. Mr. Weir; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 12*, 1733.

Rosyth Works

Date of Readiness for Use.
Os. Mr. A. Chamberlain, *Mar. 3*, 579, 599; Mr. Lambert, 599.

Granite, British, Use of, proposed.
Os. Mr. Pirie, *Mar. 10*, 1388, 1393; Mr. J. M. Henderson, 1393; Mr. E. Robertson, 1393; Sir J. Benn, 1393; Mr. Hunt, 1394; Captain Donelan, 1394.

[*cont.*

Navy—*cont.*
Rosyth Works—*cont.*
Policy as to.
Os. Mr. Wyndham, *Mar. 2,* 387, 402; Mr. E. Robertson, 402; Sir C. Dilke, *Mar. 3,* 571–574. 578; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 577–579; Mr. Lambert, 598; Mr. J. Ward, 603, 605; Mr. Mitchell-Thomson, *Mar. 9,* 1167; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1175–1176; Mr. Jenkins, 1225–1228; Mr. Lambert *Mar. 10,* 1376, 1377. 1392; Mr. J. Ward, 1377; Sir. C. Dilke, 1378–1381; Mr. A. Lee, 1382–1385; Mr. Holt, 1386–1388; Sir G. Parker, 1389–1391; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 1392.

Seamen—Rate of Pay.
Os. Mr. Hunt, *Mar. 10,* 1357, 1358; Mr. E. Robertson, 1369.

Shipbuilding
Annual Communication to Foreign Powers, Offer as to.
Qs. Sir R. Cremer, Mr. Bowles; *As.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 9,* 1132.

Annual Accounts Presented, *Mar. 12,* 1705.

Armoured Cruiser—Type decided on.
Os. Mr. Bellairs, *Mar. 9,* 1158, 1186; Mr. Lambert, 1185, 1186.

Comparative speed of building in Great Britain and Foreign Countries.
Os. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 9,* 1155; Mr. Bellairs, 1159, 1160; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1180; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 1189, 1190.

Designs, Preparation of.
Q. Mr. Bellairs; *A.* Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 9,* 1096.

Expenditure on.
Os. Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 3,* 556; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 579; Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 9,* 1142–1144; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1143, 1144; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 1144; Mr. A. Lee, 1152; Mr. Nuttall, 1170, 1171; Mr. Lambert, 1183, 1184; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 1184; Mr. J. M. Macdonald, 1191.

Information for 1904.
Q. Sir B. Sheffield; *A.* Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 3,* 516.

Programme 1908–9.
Os. Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 2,* 397–399; Mr. A. Lee, 398; Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 3,* 555; Mr. A. Lee, 558–564; Mr. C. Craig, 588; Mr. Lambert, 595–597; Mr. A. J. Balfour, *Mar. 9,* 1179–1182; Mr. Lambert, 1182.

Short Service System, introduction of, proposed.
Os. Mr. J. M. Macdonald, *Mar. 9,* 1193; Mr. J. Ward, 1207–1209.

Navy—*cont.*
Social Institutes in Scottish Ports, establishment of, proposed.
Os. Mr. Gulland, *Mar. 3,* 606.

"Speedwell" Steamboat, loss of.
Qs. Mr. Bellairs; *As.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 5,* 865.

Spirit Ration—Discontinuance in favour of Money Allowance, proposed.
Os. Mr. Gulland, *Mar. 3,* 606–609; Mr. Ferens, 609–611; Mr. E. Robertson, 612, 616; Mr. L. Jones, 613; Mr. Luttrell, 614; Mr. Morton, 615; Mr. Lupton, 616; Mr. Carlile, 616, 617.

Stores

Reserve at certain Ports.
Q. Viscount Castlereagh; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 11,* 1510.

Surplus of and reduced expenditure on.
Os. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 3,* 565; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 580, 581, 598; Mr. Lambert, 598; Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 9,* 1147, 1148; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1147; Mr. Lambert, 1187.

Strength

Comparison with Germany.
Os. Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 9,* 1146; Mr. Nuttall, 1168–1171; Mr. Lambert, 1182, 1183; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 1187–1191.

Policy as to, Criticisms on.
Os. Sir C. Dilke, *Mar. 3,* 369, 370; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 574.

Two-Power Standard, *see that sub-heading.*

Submarine Mines, Decision as to.
Os. Sir C. Dilke, *Mar. 3,* 571, 572.

Torpedo Boat Destroyers

Comparative strength of Great Britain and Germany.
Os. Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 3,* 556, 557; Mr. A. Lee, 563; Mr. Wyndham, 584, 586, 587; Mr. Bellairs, 586.
Os. Mr. Bellairs, *Mar. 9,* 1156, 1157; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 1177, 1178; Mr. Lambert, 1183.
Q. Mr. A. Lee; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 9,* 1080.

Construction policy.
Os. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 3,* 559, 562–564; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 575; Mr. Wyndham, 581, 582, 585; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 600.

Number under repair in December, 1906, etc.
Q. Mr. Bellairs; *A.* Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 9,* 1096.

Provision of.
Os. Mr. Wyndham, *Mar. 2,* 388.

[*cont.*

Navy—*cont.*

Torpedo Boats—Strength of Great Britain and Germany.
Os. Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 9,* 1140.

Torpedoes, Reduction in Estimate for.
Os. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 3,* 565; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 601.

Two-Power Standard, Maintenance of.
Os. Sir J. Brunner, *Mar. 2,* 365–367; Mr. E. Robertson, 398, 399; Mr. Bellairs, 435; Sir G. Parker, 444; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 452, 453, 454; Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 3,* 560, 567, 568; Mr. C. Craig, 589; Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 9,* 1145; Mr. Barnes, 1218; Mr. Hunt, 1218; Sir G. Parker, 1222. Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 10,* 1336; Mr. C. Craig, 1347–1349; Mr. Hunt, 1356; Mr. Wedgwood, 1363.

Victualling Committee, Recommendations of.
Os. Mr. Gulland, *Mar. 3,* 606.

Warrant Rank, Decision as to Extension of.
Q. Mr. C. Duncan; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Feb. 27,* 31.

Works

Expenditure on.
Os. Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 10,* 1375; Sir C. Dilke, 1379; Mr. A. Lee, 1381, 1382.

Memorandum showing Progress Presented, *Mar. 9,* 1070, 1078.

Navy Estimates

Appendix No. 8. and Tables showing Nucleus Crews, Omission of.
Qs. Mr. Bellairs; *As.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 11,* 1517.

Automatic Increases
Os. Mr. E. Robertson, *Mar. 9,* 1141 Mr. A. Chamberlain, 1190.

Criticisms on.
Os. Mr. A. Lee, *Mar. 3,* 557, 558, 568; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 580; Mr. A. J. Balfour, 601, 602.

Date of Printing.
Qs. Mr. Bellairs; *As.* Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 2,* 326.

Sea and Coastguard Services (128,000), *Com., Mar. 9,* 1138; *Mar. 10,* 1335.

Shipbuilding Material, Sum proposed for.
Q. Mr. Bellairs; *A.* Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 2,* 326.

Statements (Mr. E. Robertson), *Mar. 2,* 391–397; *Mar. 3,* 554–557.

Vote A., Opportunity for Discussion.
Os. Mr. A. Chamberlain, *Mar. 9,* 1228, 1229; Mr. Bramsdon, 1229, 1234; Mr. Asquith, 1230.

Works, Buildings and Repairs—£2,306, 700, *Com., Mar. 10,* 1375.

Works Loans, Annuity Chargeable for.
Q. Mr. Holt; *A.* Mr. E. Robertson, *Feb. 28,* 209.

New Hebrides

Native Labour

Report of High Commissioner and Regulations, Tabling of.
Qs. Mr. Staveley-Hill; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 11,* 1520.

Statistics (1907-8).
Q. Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9,* 1099.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Foreign Animals Wharf—Order revoking Order No. 5179, Presented, *Mar. 9.* 1079; *Mar. 10,* 1238.

Post Office—Case of Mr. W. E. Patrick.
Q. Mr. Hudson; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 12,* 1758.

Newton, Lord

Territorial Force—Church Parade on April 5th, Proposals as to, *Mar. 2,* 305–308.

Neyland

Telephone Extension to proposed.
Q. Mr. O Philipps; *A.* Mr. Buxton *Mar. 12,* 1757.

Nield, Mr. H. [Middlesex, Ealing]

Army—Engineer Surveyors, Scheme as to *Mar. 12,* 1719.
Children Bill, Provision of, *Mar. 12,* 1754.

Nigeria

Game Preservation.
Qs. Mr. Mitchell-Thomson; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 10,* 1302.

Land Tenure Systems

Assimilation of.
Q. Mr. Wedgwood; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 2,* 335.

Presentation of Sir P. Girouard's Memoranda.
Q. Mr. Wedgwood; *A.* Mr Churchill, *Mar. 9,* 1101.

Nith River

Fishery Season, Extension of,
Qs. Mr. Gulland; *As.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 12,* 1769.

North British and Mercantile Insurance Company Bill

l. 2R.* *Mar. 5,* 817.

North-East London Railway Bill

c. 2R.* *Mar. 3,* 488.

Northamptonshire

Muzzling Order, Scope of.
Q. Mr. C. Edwards; *A.* Sir E. Strachey, *Mar. 11,* 1508.

Rabies Outbreak, Information as to.
Q. Mr. W. Long; *A.* Mr. J. A. Pease, *Mar. 5,* 884.
Q. Mr. C. Edwards; *A.* Sir E. Strachey, *Mar. 11,* 1508.

Norton, Catain C. W. [Newington, N.]
- Belfast Sub Post Office, Notice Plates supplied to, *Feb 27*, 68.
- Post Office
  - Consumptive Employees—Scheme for providing Sanatoria, *Feb. 27*, 54.
  - Postal Rates to Shanghai, *Feb. 27*, 54.

Notification of Births Act
- Local Authorities adopting.
  - *Q.* Sir W. J. Collins; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Feb. 27*, 26.

Nugent, Sir W. R. [Westmeath, S.]
- Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28*, 249.

Nuttall, Mr. H. [Lancashire, S.E., Stretford]
- China—Tientsin British Post Office, Decision as to, *Mar. 12*, 1737.
- Navy
  - Shipbuilding, Expenditure on, *Mar. 9*, 1170, 1171.
  - Strength—Comparison with Germany, *Mar. 9*, 1168–1171.
- Post Office—China Mails, Route for, *Mar. 12*, 1757.

Nyassaland
- British Indians in.
  - *Q.* Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 4*, 668.
- Resources, Proposals for Advertising.
  - *Q.* Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9*, 1100.

O'Brien, Mr. P. [Kilkenny]
- Education
  - Inspectors
    - Grading of, *Feb. 27*, 27.
    - Horses and Cars, Provision of, *Feb. 27*, 26.
  - National Board, Meetings of (1906–7) *Mar. 2*, 313.
- Inland Revenue Excise Secretary, Duties of, *Mar. 12*, 1722.
- Irish Mail Service Subsidy, *Mar. 2*, 351.

O'Brien, Mr. W. [Cork]
- Congested Districts Board, Funds available for Work of, *Mar. 4*, 691.
- Irish Mail Service Subsidy, *Mar. 2*, 351.

O'Connor, Mr. James [Wicklow, W.]
- Agriculture Department—Duties, etc., of, Mr. Filgate, *Mar. 5*, 897–899.

O'Connor, Mr. John [Kildare, N.]
- Education—School Building Grants and Plans, *Feb. 27*, 64.

O'Connor, Mr. T. P. [Liverpool, Scotland]
- Matches, Phosphorus.
  - Deaths from consuming in 1907, *Mar. 9*, 1111.
  - White or Yellow, Restrictions on use of, *Mar. 9*, 1112.

O'Donnell, Mr. T. [Kerry, W.]
- Ballyseedy Estate—Cases of T. O'Connor and W. O'Neill, *Mar. 9*, 1095.
- Cloncurra School House, Delay in erecting, *Mar. 10*, 1323.
- Education
  - Bi-lingual Programme, Adoption of, *Mar. 11*, 1529, 1530.
  - National School Teachers—Transition Teachers, Claims of, *Mar. 9*, 1095.
- Ventry Estate, Sale of, *Mar. 10*, 1323.

O'Grady, Mr. J. [Leeds, E.]
- Asiatics on British Ships—Cause of Death of certain Men, *Mar. 3*, 499, 500.
- Education (Provisions of Meals) Act Amendment, proposed, *Mar. 3*, 534.
- India
  - Assam and Eastern Bengal—Mahomedan Attitude towards Hindus, Danger from, *Mar. 3*, 521.
  - Bengali Barrister imprisoned for assaulting Railway Officials, *Mar. 12*, 1736.
  - Bombay, Riots on 13th February, *Feb. 27*, 40.
  - Famine Relief Statistics, *Mar. 12*, 1735.
  - Sedition, Definition of, *Mar. 10*, 1299.
  - Seditious Publications, Power to deal with under Existing Acts, *Mar. 3*, 520.
  - Swadeshi Movement — Circular issued, in Dacca and Mymensingh, *Mar. 3*, 522.
  - Whipping as Legal Punishment, *Mar. 10*, 1301.
  - Zakka Khel Tribe, Subsidy paid to, in 1898, *Feb 27*, 39.
- Opium—Bengal Exports and Area of Poppy Cultivation, *Mar. 10*, 1300.
- Post Office—Political Organisations, Regulations as to, *Mar. 3*, 539.
- Thibet—Anglo-Thibetan Trade Agreement, Tabling of, *Mar. 12*, 1735.
- Unemployed Workmen Bill, Facilities for, *Feb. 27*, 52.
- Works Board Cabinet-making Contract—Boy Labour employed, *Mar. 5*, 853.

O'Malley Estate
- Sale Proposals
  - *Q.* Mr. Duffy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 2*, 324.

O'Shaughnessy, Mr. P. J. [Limerick, W.]
- Butter, Milk-blended, Regulations as to Sale of, *Mar. 9*, 1124, 1125.
- Croagh—Case of J. Hurley, *Mar. 5*, 862.

[*cont.*

O'Shaughnessy, Mr. P. J.—*cont.*
Education
Inspector Employed at Central Office, *Mar. 11,* 1547.
National Board
Meetings of Commissioners, *Mar. 11,* 1546.
Senior Secretary, Duties, etc., of, *Mar. 11,* 1547.
Fodder, Dangers from Import of and Proposals for prohibiting, *Mar. 3,* 542, 543, 544 ; *Mar. 5,* 886, 887.
Kilbradern—Case of Scanlon Family, *Mar. 11,* 1501.
Sands Estate Untenanted Lands, Sale of, *Mar. 5,* 862.
Shelton Estate, Sale of, *Mar. 11,* 1502.
Vereker Estate—Claim of M. Hartnett and J. Collins, *Mar. 11,* 1502.

O'Shee, Mr. J. J. [Waterford, W.]
Longan Estate Evicted Tenants, Reinstatement of, *Mar. 11,* 1499.

Onslow, Earl of—*Chairman of Committees.*
London Electric Supply Bills—Referring to Joint Committee, *Mar. 5,* 818–820.
Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 10,* 1257–1262.

Opium
Indian.
Bengal Exports and Area of Poppy Cultivation.
Q. Mr. O'Grady; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 10,* 1300.
Duty on, at certain Ports.
Q. Sir H. Cotton; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Feb 27,* 51.
Revenue derived from Consumption (1896–5 and 1905–6).
Q. Mr. H. Roberts; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 3,* 519.

Ordnance Survey
Royal Engineers, Charge on Vote for Pay of,
Q. Captain Donelan; *A.* Sir E. Strachey, *Feb. 27,* 22.

Pakenham Estate
Sale Poposals.
Q. Mrs. Hayden; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 3,* 550.

Parker, Mr. J. [Halifax]
Belfast Corporation Bill, 2R., *Feb. 27,* 169.

Parker, Sir G. [Gravesend]
Africa, Central—Native Labour Recruitment Proposals, *Mar. 11,* 1519.
Africa, East—Portuguese Native Labour Recruitment Negotiations, *Mar. 9,* 1109; *Mar. 11,* 1521, 1522; *Mar. 12,* 1740.

Parker, Sir G.—*cont.*
Armaments, Reduction of Expenditure on, proposed, *Mar. 2,* 443–448.
Canada—Preservation of Quebec Battlefields, *Mar. 11,* 1522.
China Railway Extension West of Liao River—Japanese Attitude, *Mar. 3,* 527.
Congo Free State—Additional Act to Treaty of Cession, Effect of, *Mar. 12,* 1748.
Madagascar Native Labour Recruitment Negotiations, *Mar. 2,* 335; *Mar. 4,* 670; *Mar. 9,* 1109; *Mar. 12,* 1743.
Navy
Personnel, Reduction in, proposed, *Mar. 9.* 1222–1224.
Rosyth, Policy as to, *Mar. 10,* 1389–1391.
Two-Power Standard, Maintenance of, *Mar. 2,* 444; *Mar. 9,* 1222.
Transvaal
Chinese Labour
Conditions of Employment on Expiry of Ordinance, *Mar. 11,* 1520.
Statistics (1906–1908), *Mar. 4,* 669.
Mine Labour
Compounds, use of, *Mar. 9,* 1103.
Mortality among Labourers, *Mar. 12,* 1742.

Parliament
House of Commons
Indicator in Lobby to show Speaker and Subject in House of Lords, proposed.
Qs. Mr. Gulland, Mr. A. S. Wilson; *As.* Mr. Harcourt; *Mar. 10,* 1315.
Ventilation, Improvement of, proposed.
Qs. Sir P. Magnus; *As.* Mr. Harcourt, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 9,* 1122.
House of Lords
Abolition of—Motion (Mr. MacNeill).
Os. Mr. MacNeill, Lord R. Cecil, Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 12,* 1773.
Sat first—Earl of Suffolk and Berkshire, after the Death of his Father, *Mar. 9,* 1069.
Relations between Lords and Commons, Proposals for dealing with, during present Session.
Qs. Earl Winterton, Mr. A. S. Wilson; *As.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 4,* 704.

Parliamentary Debates
Compilation, Responsibility for, and Vote on which Contract is taken.
Q. Mr. Lea; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 11,* 1495.

- **Parliamentary Elections**
  - New Members sworn
    - Baldwin, Mr. S. (Bewdley), *Mar. 3*, 553.
    - Du Cros, A. P. (Hastings), *Mar. 5*, 902
    - Meehan, F. E. (Leitrim, N.), *Mar. 9*, 1137.
    - Morgan, J. H. (Carmarthen, W.), *Feb. 27*, 69.
  - New Writs issued
    - Down (West), *Mar. 2*, 310.
- **Parliamentary Procedure**
  - Adjournment, Motion for.
    - *Os.* Mr. Morton, *Mar. 3*, 655; Mr. T. L. Corbett, Captain Craig, 656.
  - Private Members' Rights, Infringement of.
    - *Os.* Mr. Morton, *Mar. 3*, 655.
  - Privilege, time for raising Question of.
    - *Os.* Mr. Lea, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 9*, 1133, 1136.
- **Parochial Medical Officers' (Scotland) Bill**
  - c. 1R.* *Mar. 12*, 1775.
- **Partington, Mr. O.** [Derbyshire, High Peak]
  - Army Territorial Force—Proposals for Cyclists, *Feb. 27*, 35.
  - Education
    - London County Council Schools—Syllabus of Religious Instruction, *Mar. 3*, 533.
    - Religious Instruction—Number of Children withdrawn since 1902, *Mar. 3*, 533.
- **Passengers to and from Places out of Europe**
  - Return Presented, *Mar. 6*, 990; *Mar. 9*, 1070.
- **Patriotic Fund, Royal**
  - Case of Mrs. Evans.
    - *Qs.* Mr. Byles; *As.* Mr. Asquith, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 5*, 900.
- **Peace Preservation (Ireland) Act, 1881**
  - Constabulary Authorities consulted before Withdrawal of.
    - *Q.* Captain Craig; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 4*, 684.
- **Pearce, Mr. W.** [Tower Hamlets, Limehouse]
  - Education—Cost per Child, *Mar. 11*, 1495.
- **Peard Estate**
  - Case of Mrs. M. Rice.
    - *Q.* Mr. W. Abraham; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5*, 858.
- **Pease, Mr. H. P.** [Darlington]
  - Army—Territorial Force, Attestation Form new Version, *Mar. 12*, 1717.
  - Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill Grant, Amount and Allocation of, *Mar. 9*, 1121.
  - Volunteers—Disbandment Proposals, *Mar. 12*, 1717.
  - Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28*, 245-249.
- **Pease, Mr. J. A.**—*Lord of the Treasury* [Essex, Saffron Walden]
  - Beef Trust, Correspondence with in 1903—Tabling proposed, *Mar. 12*, 1768.
  - Butter, Milk-Blended, Regulations as to Sale of, *Mar. 9*, 1125.
  - Fodder Import Restrictions, Scope of, *Mar. 3*, 542, 543, 544, 545; *Mar. 5*, 885, 886, 887.
  - Foot-and-Mouth Disease
    - Cattle Steamers from Infected Ports, Disinfection of, *Mar. 9*, 1124.
    - Origin of Outbreak in 1885, *Mar. 3*, 542.
    - Raw Hides, Offal, etc., Danger from Importing, *Mar. 9*, 1123.
  - Glanders—Use of Mallein Test, *Mar. 3*, 541, 542.
  - Kew Gardens
    - Gardeners—Conditions of Employing, *Mar. 5*, 884; *Mar. 10*, 1316.
    - Lectures, Student admitted Free to, *Mar. 10*, 1316.
  - Northamptonshire Rabies Outbreak, *Mar. 5*, 885.
  - Russian Import Duties on Indian Tea, *Mar. 3*, 527, 528.
- **Pedlars' Acts Amendment Bill**
  - c. 1R*, *Mar. 4*, 706.
- **"Pernambuco"**
  - Cause of Loss of.
    - *Q.* Mr. J. H. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 12*, 1706.
- **Persia**
  - Railway Concessions in — Autograph Letter of Shah of March, 1899.
    - *Os.* Lord Curzon, Lord Fitzmaurice, *Mar. 2*, 292.
  - Suj Bulak—Fighting between Kurds and Persians.
    - *Qs.* Mr. Rees; *As.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 4*, 675.
- **Persian Gulf**
  - Slave-Traffic, Vessels engaged in Suppressing.
    - *Q.* Sir B. Sheffield; *A.* Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 3*, 517.
- **Peterborough**
  - Boon, Prosecution of, for Cruelty to Horse.
    - *Q.* Sir F. Banbury; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 12*, 1757.
- **Philipps, Lt.-Col. J.** [Southampton]
  - Army Plain Clothes Regulations, Extension of, *Mar. 5*, 955.
- **Philipps, Mr. O. C.** [Pembroke and Haverfordwest]
  - Neyland, Telephone Extension to, proposed, *Mar. 12*, 1757.

Pickersgill, Mr. E. H. [Bethnal Green, S.W.]
  Debt, Imprisonment for
    Amendment of Law, Proposals for, *Feb. 27*, 49.
    Statistics for 1907, *Mar. 2,* 1754.

Piers and Harbours
  North Devon and Cornwall Coast, Harbour on—Tabling of Report.
    Q. Mr. Soares; *A.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 9,* 1090.

Pirie, Mr. D. V. [Aberdeen, N.]
  Forth and Clyde Canal, Widening of, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1388.
  Rosyth Works—Use of British Granite, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1388, 1393.

Plural Voting Bill
  Proposals as to.
    Q. Mr. Watt, Mr. A. S. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 5*, 902.

Poisons and Pharmacy Bill
  l. 2R, *Mar. 5*, 821.
  Referred to Joint Committee, *Mar. 5*, 826, 844; *Mar. 11*, 1656; *Mar. 12*, 1658.

Police (Superannuation) Bill
  *c. Rep.** *Mar. 11*, 1553.

Police (Weekly Holiday) Bill
  c. Intro. and 1R*, *Mar. 10*, 1328, 1331.

Polling Arrangements (Parliamentary Boroughs) Bill
  *c. Rep.** *Mar. 11*, 1552.

Polling Districts (County Councils) Bill
  c. Order for Second Reading, and Bill Withdrawn, *Mar. 4*, 815.

Polling Districts and Registration of Voters (Ireland) Bill
  c. 2R*, *Mar. 2*, 472.

Poor Law
  Ireland—Relief Expenditure (1905-1906.)
    Q. Mr. H. Law; *A.* Mr. Cherry, *Feb. 27*, 30.
  Paupers—number relieved on certain Days—Copy of Statement ordered, *Mar. 11*, 1489.
  Scotland—Organs for Poorhouses, Provision of.
    Qs. Mr. Gulland; *As.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 4*, 683.

Portugal
  Assassination of King Carlos and Duke of Braganza—Letter from Portuguese Minister, *Feb. 27*, 1, 17.

Portsmouth, Earl of—*Under-Secretary for War*
  Artillery
    Reduction of, *Mar. 12*, 1673.
      Minute of Army Council approving—Tabling, proposed, *Mar. 12*, 1671-1673, 1681.
      Reorganisation of, *Mar. 12*, 1673-1675.
    Reserve, Strength of, *Mar. 12*, 1703.
  Defence of the Empire—Decision as to Mine-Fields, *Mar. 5*, 833.
  Indian Army, Provision of Drafts for, *Mar. 12*, 1678, 1679.
  Infantry, condition of, *Mar. 12*, 1675.
  Militia
    Bands, Upkeep of, *Mar. 5*, 835.
    Engineers
      Bridging Battalion, Reason for Abolition of, *Mar. 5*, 839.
      Officers
        Special Reserve, source of supply for, *Mar. 5*, 834.
        Training for, *Mar. 5*, 834.
        Travelling Expenses and Allowances, *Mar. 5*, 835.
      Training in Musketry, etc., *Mar. 5*, 838.
    Non-Commissioned Special Reserve Officers, Number to be called up for Recruit Drill, *Mar. 5*, 836.
    Officers
      Messing Arrangements, *Mar. 5*, 835.
      Regular Officers, Proportion of under New Scheme, *Mar. 5*, 835.
    Quartermasters of Special Service Section, granting Honorary Rank of Captain to, proposed, *Mar. 5*, 835.
    Recruiting Statistics for last Ten Years, *Mar. 5*, 837, 838.
    Separation Allowances for non-Commissioned Officers, *Mar. 5*, 836.
    Submarine Mining Section, Abolition of, *Mar. 5*, 840.
  Period of Service—Disadvantages of Short Service System, *Mar. 12*, 1675-1680.
  Report of Inspector-General as to Training and Efficiency—Tabling, *Mar. 12*, 1681.
  Territorial Force
    Church Parade on 5th April, Proposal as to, *Mar. 2*, 308.
    County Associations
      Military Representatives, Power to co-opt Members as, *Mar. 2*, 301.
      Relations with the War Office, *Mar. 2*, 303.
      Secretaries, Remuneration of, *Mar. 2*, 302.

[*cont.*

Portsmouth, Earl of—*cont.*
- Territorial Force—*cont.*
  - Guns, Provision of, *Mar. 2*, 303, 304.
  - Officers of disbanded Units, Position of, *Mar. 2*, 300.
  - Promotion to non-Commissioned Rank System of, *Mar. 5*, 837, 838.
  - Return, Date of Tabling, *Mar. 2*, 310.
  - Special Reserve
    - Old Soldiers, eligibility of, *Mar. 5* 830.
    - Retired Regular non-Commissioned Officers, enlisting bounties for, *Mar. 5*, 836, 837.
- Volunteers—Long Service Cases, *Mar. 2*, 309, 310.
- Wastage, Decrease in, *Mar. 12*, 1680.

Post Office
- *Postmaster General*—Rt. Hon. S. Buxton.
- [*See also Names of Places.*]
- Consumptive Employees—Scheme for providing Sanatoria.
  - *Q.* Mr. Alden; *A.* Captain Norton, *Feb. 27*, 54.
- Irish Mail Service Subsidy.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Mooney, Mr. W. O'Brien, Mr. Moore, Mr. P. O'Brien; *As.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 2*, 349.
- Lottery Literature, Transmission of.
  - *Q.* Mr. Bottomley; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 12*, 1706.
- Mail Service
  - China Mails, Route for.
    - *Q.* Mr. Nuttall; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 12*, 1757.
  - Hong Kong
    - Contract, Terms of renewal of.
      - *Q.* Mr. Cox; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 12*, 1753.
    - Revenue from trans-Canadian route.
      - *Q.* Mr. Cox; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 11*, 1523.
  - Postal Rates to Shanghai.
    - *Q.* Mr. Holt; *A.* Captain Norton, *Feb, 27*, 54.
  - Registered Letters sent by "Celtic," cause for non-delivery of.
    - *Q.* Mr. C. Roberts; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 9*, 1092.
- Minor Offences, Punishment for.
  - *Q.* Mr. Seddon; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 10*, 1287.
- Money Orders—Amendment (No. 2) Regulations, Presented, *Mar. 5*, 847; *Mar. 9*, 1071.
  - (*For* Agreements with Foreign Countries, *see their Names*).
- Parcel Post—Foreign and Colonial Amendment Warrant (No. 14) Presented, *Mar. 9*, 1071, 1078.
- Penny Postage with France proposed.
  - *Q.* Mr. Lonsdale; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 11*, 1523.

Post Office—*cont.*
- Political Organisations, Regulations as to.
  - *Q.* Mr. A. Allen; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 3*, 508; *Qs.* Mr. S. Roberts, Earl Winterton, Mr. A. Chamberlain, Mr. O'Grady, Sir F. Banbury, Mr. Curran, Mr. R. Duncan, Mr. Courthope, Mr. A. S. Wilson; *As.* Mr. Buxton, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 3*, 537.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Hay, Mr. Albert Stanley, Mr. A. S. Wilson Earl Winterton; *As.* Mr. Buxton, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 12* 1759.
- Postal Orders paid through Bank—Loss sustained by Mr. P. White, etc.
  - *Q.* Mr. J. MacVeagh; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 12*, 1705.
- Postmen
  - New Scale of Pay for.
    - *Q.* Dr. Rutherford; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 2*, 339.
  - Rural, Duties of.
    - *Q.* Mr. Courthope; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 11*, 1524.
  - Vacancies available.
    - *Q.* Mr. Nannetti; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 4*, 667.
- Sub-Engineers—Promotion system.
  - *Q.* Mr. Hay; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 5*, 851.
- Vaccination of Officials, Regulations as to.
  - *Q.* Mr. T. F. Richards; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 12*, 1711.

Post Office Savings Bank
- Circular, Display of.
  - *Q.* Mr. W. T. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 11*, 1510.

Potatoes
- Spraying, Value of, etc.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Gwynn; *As.* Mr. T. W. Russell, *Mar. 4*, 699.

Powell, Sir F. S. [Wigan]
- Education (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 6*, 995–998.
- Education
  - Medical inspection, Payment for, *Mar. 5*, 883.
  - Syllabus in Return 115–1 Printing of, *Mar. 5*, 882.
- Volunteer Medical Officers, application of new scheme to, *Mar, 5*, 868.

President of the Board of Agriculture
- *Right Hon. Earl Carrington.*

President of the Board of Education
- *Right Hon. R. McKenna.*

President of the Board of Trade
- *Right Hon. D. Lloyd-George.*

President of the Local Government Board
- *Right Hon. J. Burns.*

Price, Mr. C. E. [Edinburgh, Central]
- Army Officers—Promotions from the ranks, *Mar. 5,* 958.

Probation of Offenders Act, 1907.
- Administration—Memorandum Presented, *Mar. 12,* 1658, 1705.
- Rules, Tabling of.
  - *Q.* Sir H. Vincent; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 9,* 1110.

Public Health Officers Bill
- *c.* 1R*., *Feb. 27,* 72.

Public Records
- Disposal of Documents—Addition to Rules Presented, *Mar. 2,* 312; *Mar. 3,* 474.

Public Trustee
- Vote, charges included in.
  - *Q.* Mr. J. D. White; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 12,* 1730.

Purcell Estate
- Case of M. Lyons.
  - *Q.* Mr. W. Abraham; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 9,* 1079.

Queen Anne's Bounty
- Report and Accounts (1907) Presented, *Feb. 28,* 202; *Mar. 2,* 290.

"Queen Eleanor."
- Mutiny of Chinese Crew.
  - *Q.* Mr. J. H. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 3,* 510.

Questions
- Form of—Power of Clerks at the Table as to Alterations.
  - *Os.* Mr. L. Williams, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 2,* 353.
- Irrelevant, *Mar. 3,* 549; *Mar. 4,* 669, 671; *Mar. 12,* 1745.
- Notice to be given of, *Mar. 3,* 536; *Mar. 5,* 901; *Mar. 9,* 1124; *Mar. 11,* 1542, 1544; *Mar.* 12, 1746.
- Omission from *Hansard* of 2nd May, 1907.
  - *Os.* Mr. Lea, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 9,* 1136.
- Out of Order, *Mar. 3,* 538; *Mar. 11,* 1540, 1541; *Mar. 12,* 1739, 1751, 1759.
- Raising on Estimates, *Mar. 9,* 1123.
- Speech may not be made during Time for, *Mar. 3,* 539.
- Supplementary, Fresh Matter introduced in, *Mar. 12,* 1745.

Rabbits on Commons Bill
- c. 1R.* *Mar. 5,* 903.

Raglan, Lord
- Militia
  - Bands, Upkeep of, *Mar. 5,* 828, 829.
  - Engineers
    - Bridging Battalion, Reason for abolition of, *Mar. 5,* 832.
    - Officers
      - Recruit Officers, Training for, *Mar. 5,* 827.
      - Special Reserve, Source of Supply for, *Mar. 5,* 826.
      - Travelling Expenses and Allowances, *Mar. 5,* 828.
    - Training in Musketry, etc., *Mar. 5,* 831.
  - Non-Commissioned Special Reserve Officers, Number to be called up for Recruit Drill, *Mar. 5,* 829.
  - Officers
    - Messing Arrangements, *Mar. 5,* 829.
    - Regular Officers, Proportion of under New Scheme, *Mar. 5,* 828.
  - Quarter-Masters of Special Service Section—Granting Honorary Rank of Captain, proposed, *Mar. 5,* 828.
  - Recruiting Statistics for Last Ten Years, *Mar. 5,* 831.
  - Submarine Mining Section, abolition of, *Mar. 5,* 832.
  - Separation Allowances for Non-Commissioned Officers, *Mar. 5,* 830.
- Mine-Fields, decision as to, *Mar. 5,* 833.
- Territorial Force
  - Promotion to Non-Commissioned Rank, System of, *Mar. 5,* 831.
  - Special Reserve
    - Old Soldiers, eligibility of, *Mar. 5,* 830, 837.
    - Retired Regular Non-Commissioned Officers enlisting, Bounties for, *Mar. 5,* 830.

Railways
- Accidents, etc.—Returns Presented, *Mar. 6,* 989; *Mar. 9,* 1071.
- Communication Cord on Trains, Occasions for using.
  - *Qs.* Mr. C. Craig, Earl Winterton; *As.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 5,* 880.
- Conference — Representation of Fruit Trade, etc.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Sloan, Mr. W. F. D. Smith; *As.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 5,* 847.
- Disputes—Number of Arbitrators appointed.
  - *Q.* Mr. Whitehead; *A.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 9,* 1089.

[*cont.*

Railways—*cont.*

Free Passes for Legislators, proposed.
Q. Mr. P. White; *A.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 5,* 848.

Great Western Company—Passenger Duty Returns.
Qs. Mr. Thorne; *As.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 5,* 854.

Ireland—Delays on certain Lines, Correspondence with Vice-regal Commission as to.
Qs. Capt. Craig; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11,* 1542.

London and North-Western Goods Yard at Soho—Cause of Death of G. Taylor.
Qs. Mr. Wardle, Mr. Hudson; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 5,* 877.

Passenger Duty, Method of claiming.
Q. Mr. Thorne; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 5,* 854.

Relations with the State—Nature of Inquiry.
Qs. Mr. G. A. Hardy, Mr. Wardle, Mr. Curran, Mr. J. H. Ward, Mr. J. R. Macdonald, Sir F. Channing; *As.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 4,* 676.
Q. Mr. Field; *A.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 9,* 1090.

Scotland—Highland Extension proposals.
Q. Mr. Younger; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 4,* 683.

South-Eastern—Excessive Speed of 5 p.m. Train from Hastings.
Q. Mr. C. Edwards; *A.* Mr. T. Kearley, *Mar. 5,* 880.

Shunting Accidents, Prevention of.
Qs. Mr. Maddison, Mr. Guest; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 12,* 1755.

Workmen's Trains, Demand for and Inquiries held during last Ten Years.
Qs. Mr. Whitehead; *As.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 2,* 318.

Randles, Sir J. S. [Cumberland, Cockermouth]

Transvaal Mine Labour, Compounds, use of, *Mar. 9,* 1104.

Raphael, Mr. H. H. [Derbyshire, S.]

Army Officers' Eyesight, Regulations as to, *Mar. 12,* 1716.

Rathdrum

Land not Registered, Loss to Ratepayers by.
Q. Mr. Muldoon; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Feb. 27,* 26.

Rathgar

Post Office—Case of M. Kelly.
Q. Mr. Nannetti; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 3,* 493.

Rathowen

Disturbance at Mr. Bond's House.
Q. Mr. Moore; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 9,* 1086.

Rawlinson, Mr. J. F. P. [Cambridge University]

Royston School—Case of Mr. O. B. Milnes, *Mar. 10,* 1315.

Redmond, Mr. J. E. [Waterford]

Business of the House, Course of, *Mar. 4,* 705.

Canadian Education Rates, System of applying, *Mar. 9,* 1118, 1119.

Congested Districts Board, Funds Available for Work of, *Mar. 4,* 686, 687, 688, 689, 690.

Contempt of Court—Limitation of Jurisdiction of Judges, proposed, *Mar. 10,* 1423–1425.

Dublin Metropolitan Police

Cost of Upkeep, Objections to levying on the Rates, etc., *Mar. 11,* 1642–1644.

Inquiry into, proposed, *Mar. 11,* 1642.

Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill—Contracting-out Schools, Furniture, Ownership of, *Mar. 12,* 1761.

Glenaheiry Outrage—Public Inquiry proposed, *Mar. 10,* 1326, 1327; *Mar. 11,* 1539, 1540, 1541.

National School Teachers' Salaries, Provision for Increase in, *Mar. 12,* 1772, 1773.

Redmond, Mr. W. H. K. [Clare, E.]

Arterial Drainage, proposals for, *Mar. 10,* 1320.

Australian Naval Contribution, etc., Arrangement as to, *Mar. 5,* 866, 867.

Butler Minor's Estate, Sale of, *Mar. 10,* 1321.

Canadian Education Rates, System of applying, *Mar. 9,* 1118, 1119.

Crown Jewels, Loss of—Public Inquiry proposed, *Mar. 11,* 1533.

Cunard Subsidies, Information as to, *Feb. 27,* 58.

Local Government Act, 1898—Disqualification for Election on Irish Public Bodies, Provisions as to, *Mar. 9,* 1130.

Natal—Dinizulu, Trial of

Charges and Procedure, *Mar. 4,* 672, 673, 674.

Telegram from Colonial Office, Circumstances of sending, *Mar. 12,* 1745.

Trade Disputes, Power of Chief Magistrates to call out Troops during, *Mar. 5* 934–936.

Reddy, Mr. M. [King's County, Birr]

Asiatics on British Ships—Cause of Death of certain Men, *Mar. 3,* 495.

Rees, Mr. J. D. [Montgomery Boroughs]
- Africa, East
  - Game Preserves, Opposition to, *Mar. 9,* 1109.
  - Steamship Communication with, *Mar. 9,* 1100, 1101.
- Africa, South, Customs Unification—proposals for Conference, *Mar. 9* 1101.
- Agriculture Inspectors—Regulations as to Welsh Language, *Feb. 27,* 56.
- Army
  - Cardwell System, Adherence to, *Mar. 4,* 769; *Mar. 11,* 1601.
  - Officers
    - Foreign and Oriental Languages, Facilities for Acquiring, *Mar. 4,* 772.
    - Shortage in, Supply of, *Mar. 11,* 1602.
  - Territorial Force
    - County Associations Secretaries, Salaries of, *Mar. 11,* 1601.
    - Quartermasters, Pay of, *Mar. 4,* 663; *Mar. 11,* 1600.
    - Regimental Sergeant-Major and Bandmasters, Rank of, *Mar. 10,* 1295.
    - Separation Allowances — Extension to Privates, proposed, *Mar. 4,* 773; *Mar. 11,* 1601.
    - Sergeant-Majors, Granting Rank of Warrant Officers to, proposed, *Mar. 11,* 1600.
    - Welsh Counties, Schemes for—Creation of Administrative Districts, proposed, *Mar. 11,* 1599, 1600.
- Black Scab, Measures taken to Check, *Mar. 2,* 344, 345.
- Cadet Corps, Proposals as to, *Mar. 11,* 1601, 1602.
- India
  - Army, Troops required for, *Mar. 4,* 771.
  - Budget, Date of taking, *Mar. 12,* 1707.
  - Calcutta—Yugantar Newspaper, Seditious Matter in—Amendment of Existing Law, proposed, *Mar. 3,* 509.
  - Famine Relief
    - Chiefs of States, Responsibility of, *Mar. 12,* 1709.
    - Statistics, *Mar. 12,* 1709.
  - Imperial Legislative Council, Constitution of, *Mar. 12,* 1708.
  - Indian Officials, Allegations as to Incivility of, *Mar. 3,* 522.
  - Justice, Administration of, *Mar. 3,* 521.

Rees, Mr. J. D.—*cont.*
- India—*cont.*
  - Railways
    - Assam—Bengal Line, Connection of Sylhet with, *Mar. 12,* 1719.
    - Bridge across Ganges and Hooghley, Proposals for, *Mar. 12,* 1720.
    - Chamen, Russian Proposals for Railway to, *Mar. 3,* 512.
  - Seditious Publications, Power to deal with under Existing Acts, *Mar. 3,* 520.
  - Tea Garden Labour Commission—Placing Resolutions in Library, proposed, *Mar. 12,* 1707.
- Milk Supply, Legislative Proposals, *Mar. 5,* 966–970.
- Mine Inspectors in Wales—Language Qualifications, *Mar. 4,* 676.
- Navy *Personnel,* Reduction in, proposed, *Mar. 9,* 1209–1213.
- Nyassaland
  - British Indians in, *Mar. 4,* 668.
  - Resources, Proposals for Advertising, *Mar. 9,* 1100.
- Persia — fighting between Kurds and Persians at Suj Bulak, *Mar. 4,* 675.
- Russian Import Duties on Indian Tea, *Mar. 3,* 527, 528.
- Thibet—Gyantse and Gantok, British Trade Agents at, *Mar. 10,* 1299.
- Volunteers—Medical Inspection under New Scheme, *Mar. 2,* 315.
- Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28,* 281–282.
- Workmen's Compensation — Bankruptcy of Employer, Remedy against, *Mar. 4,* 675.

Refreshment Houses Act
- Section 6, Operation of.
  - *Q.* Mr. Alden; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 3,* 491.

Remnant, Mr. J. F. [Finsbury, Holborn]
- Police (Weekly Holiday) Bill, *Intro., Mar. 10,* 1328.
- Registration of Births Act—Approval of Borough Council Resolutions, *Feb. 27,* 25.

Revenue and Expenditure
- Collection of Taxes (1906–8)—Return Ordered, *Mar. 4,* 658.

Ribblesdale, Lord
- Army — Report of Inspector-General as to Training and Efficiency, *Mar. 12,* 1694.

Richards, Mr. T. [Monmouthshire, W.]
  Asiatics on British Ships—Cause of Death of certain Men, *Mar. 3*, 506.

Richards, Mr. T. F. [Wolverhampton, W.]
  Asiatics on British Ships—Cause of Death of certain Men, *Mar. 3*, 504.
  Birmingham County Court, Perjury Committed in — Remarks of Judge Bray, *Feb. 27*, 60.
  Post Office Officials, Regulations as to Vaccination of, *Mar. 12*, 1711.
  Unemployed Operative Stone-Masons' Society, Unemployment among, *Feb. 27*, 52.
  Unemployed Workmen Bill, Facilities for, *Feb. 27*, 52.
  Wolverhampton Postal Telegraph Office, Pay in, *Mar. 12*. 1710.

Richmond and Gordon, Duke of
  Territorial Force — Provision of Guns, *Mar. 2*, 304.

Ridsdale, Mr. E. A. [Brighton]
  Admiralty Policy — German Emperor's Letter to Lord Tweedmouth, *Mar. 9*, 1135.
  Greenwich Hospital — Case of S. H. Andrews, *Feb. 27*, 33.

Rifle Clubs
  War Office Grant of Ammunition to.
    Q. Mr. Courthope; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 4*, 661.

Registration of Births Act
  Borough Council Resolutions, Approval of.
    Q. Mr. Remnant; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Feb. 27*, 25.

Roads
  Main Roads, Incidence of Charge for Maintaining.
    Q. Mr. Bennett; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Mar. 9*, 1116.

Roberts, Earl
  Army
    Artillery, Reduction of, *Mar. 12*, 1682.
    Territorial Artillery, Organisation and Training of, *Mar. 12*, 1683–1687.

Roberts, Mr. C. [Lincoln]
  Licensing Bill, *Intro.*, *Feb. 27*, 143–146, 173.
  Post Office — Registered Letters sent by "Celtic," Cause for Non-Delivery of, *Mar. 9*, 1092.

Roberts, Mr. G. H. [Norwich]
  Army
    Territorial Force — County Associations, Recruiting Methods, Permissible to, *Mar. 3*, 518, 519.
    Trade Disputes, Power of Chief Magistrates to Call out Troops during, *Mar. 5*, 920–924.
  Education — Attendance Officers, Powers and Duties of, *Mar. 3*, 534.
  Letchworth Social Democrat Meeting, Conduct of Volunteers at, *Mar. 10*, 1297.

Roberts, Mr. J. H. [Denbighshire, W.]
  Licensing Bill, *Intro.*, *Feb. 27*, 179.
  Opium, Indian—Revenue derived from Consumption (1895–6 and 1905–6, *Mar. 3*, 519.

Roberts, Mr. S. [Sheffield, Ecclesall]
  Post Office Political Organisations, Regulations as to, *Mar. 3*, 537.

Robertson, Lord
  Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 10*, 1268–1274.

Robertson, Right Hon. E.—*Secretary to the Admiralty* [Dundee]
  Ammunition, Provision of, *Mar. 9*, 1141.
  Armaments, Reduction of Expenditure on, proposed, *Mar. 2*, 391–404.
  Armoured Ships 1909—Publication of Designs, proposed, *Mar. 3*, 605.
  Armstrong, Whitworth & Co.—Wages paid to Electrical Wire Workers, *Mar 5*, 868.
  Australia—Naval Contribution, etc., Arrangement as to, *Mar. 5*, 866, 867.
  Battleships, Strength in, *Mar. 9*, 1146.
  Chatham Dockyard—Eligibility of Employees to join Territorial Force, *Mar. 12*, 1733.
  Coal—Quantities and Prices in 1906 and 1907, *Feb. 27*, 33.
  Coastguard Service
    Amalgamation with Customs Waterguard Department, Proposals for, *Mar. 11*, 1489.
    Duties now carried on by Coastguards, Arrangements for, on Reduction, *Feb. 27*, 34; *Mar. 2*, 320.
    Future of—Report of Departmental Committee, *Mar. 3*, 554.
    Policy as to, *Mar. 9*, 1370.
  Cordite, Provision for Storage of, and Loss incurred by Destruction of Unfit Stores, *Mar. 10*, 1368; *Mar. 12*, 1732.
  Cruisers—Strength of Great Britain and Germany, *Mar. 9*, 1140.

[*cont.*

Robertson, Rt. Hon. E.—*cont.*
- Devonport Engineering College—Food supplied to Cadets, *Mar. 12*, 1733.
- "Dreadnought," Test of, *Mar. 12*, 1730.
- Engineering Officers
  - Emolument Grievances, *Mar. 3*, 555.
  - Regulations as to, *Mar. 5*, 867, 868.
  - *Status* of, *Mar. 10*, 1369, 1370.
- Estimates
  - Appendix No. 8 and Tables showing Nucleus Crews, Omission of, *Mar. 11*, 1517.
  - Automatic Increases, *Mar, 9*, 1141.
  - *Statement*, *Mar. 3*, 554–557.
  - Works Loans, Annuity Chargeable for, *Feb. 28*, 210.
- Greenwich Hospital—Case of S. J. Andrews, *Feb. 27*, 33.
- Gun Reserve, *Mar. 10*, 1295.
- Home Fleet
  - Composition of, and Number of Vessels taking part in Manœuvres, *Mar. 11*, 1510, 1511.
  - Nore Division, Constitution of, *Mar. 9*, 1139, 1140.
  - Refit, Vessels undergoing, and manned with Nucleus Crews, *Mar. 9*, 1138.
  - Strength of, *Mar. 9*, 1138, 1173.
- Loch Long Torpedo Range, Establishment of, *Mar. 2*, 403.
- Mechanician and Boy Artificers—Abolition of Training Establishments, proposed, *Feb. 27*, 32.
- Officers—Reserve Lieutenants—Terms of Order of 11th July, 1905, *Mar. 5*, 867.
- *Personnel*, Reduction in, proposed, *Mar. 9*, 1198, 1199.
- Portsmouth Dockyard Lock, Expenditure on, *Mar. 2*, 402.
- Range-finders, Sum voted for, *Mar. 12*, 1732.
- Repairs, Policy as to Expenditure on, *Mar. 2*, 400–402.
- Reserve
  - Engine-room Artificers
    - Certificates held by, *Feb. 27*, 32.
    - Promotion of, *Mar. 4*, 660.
  - Re-enrolment, Regulations as to, *Mar. 12*, 1734.
- Rosyth
  - Granite, British, Use of, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1393.
  - Policy as to, *Mar. 2*, 402.
- Seamen,—Rate of Pay, *Mar. 10*, 1369.
- Shipbuilding
  - Expenditure on, *Mar. 3*, 556; *Mar. 9*, 1142–1144.
  - Programme 1908–9, *Mar. 2*, 397–399; *Mar. 3*, 555.

Robertson, Rt. Hon. E.—*cont.*
- "Speedwell" Steamboat, loss of, *Mar. 5*, 866.
- Spirit Ration, Discontinuance of in favour of Money Allowance, proposed, *Mar. 3*, 612, 616.
- Stores
  - Provision of and Expenditure on, *Mar. 9*, 1147, 1148.
  - Reserve at certain Ports, *Mar. 11*, 1510
- Strength, Comparison with Germany, *Mar. 9*, 1146.
- Torpedo Boat Destroyers—Comparative strength of Great Britain and Germany, *Mar. 3*, 556, 557; *Mar. 9*, 1080; *Mar. 9*, 1140.
- Two-Power Standard, Maintenance of, *Mar. 2*, 398, 399; *Mar. 9*, 1145.
- Warrant Rank, decision as to extension of, *Feb. 27*, 32.

Robertson, Mr. J. M. [Northumberland Tyneside]
- Armaments, Reduction of Expenditure on, proposed, *Mar. 2*, 421–430.
- Indian Newspapers prosecuted in 1907, *Mar. 12*, 1708.
- Merchant Shipping, Protection of in time of War, *Mar. 2*, 428.

Robertson, Sir G. S. [Bradford, Central]
- Africa, East
  - British Indian Population, *Feb. 27*, 42.
  - Disturbances, Information as to, *Feb. 27*, 41.
- Army—Drunkenness Statistics (1897–1907) *Mar. 5*, 863.
- India
  - Emigration Statistics, *Feb. 27*, 37.
  - Punjab Irrigation Colonies, Area of, *Feb. 27*, 36.
- Naval Reserve Lieutenants, Terms of Order of 11th July, 1905, *Mar. 5*, 867.

Robson, Sir W. S.—*Attorney-General* [South Shields]
- Birmingham County Court, Perjury committed in—remarks of Judge Bray, *Feb. 27*, 60.
- British South Africa Chartered Company—Terms of issue of fresh Capital, *Feb. 27*, 59, 60.
- Magistrates, County—Appointments in 1907, *Feb. 27*, 59.

Rochdale Corporation Bill
- *c. Rep.* Mar. 12*, 1704.

Roche, Mr. J. [Galway, E.]
- Ballinagar—Outrage at House of J. Minogue, *Mar. 11*, 1544.
- Mount Bellew
  - Labourers' Cottages
    - Applications, Decision as to, *Mar. 2*, 349.
    - Site for, *Mar. 4*, 695.
  - Land Commission Cases, hearing of, *Feb. 27*, 65.

Rochester Bridge Bill
- *l.* 2R., *Mar. 3*, 473.

Rogers, Mr. F. N. [Wilts, Devizes]
- Education (Local Authorities') Bill, 2R., *Mar. 6*, 1023–1027.

Rosebery, Earl
- Admiralty Policy — German Emperor's Letter to Lord Tweedmouth, *Mar. 9*, 1075–1077.

Rosyth Naval Base
- *See under* Navy.

Rowlands, Mr. J. [Kent, Dartford]
- Criminal Procedure—Case of W. and J. Faulkner, *Mar. 6*, 991.

Royston
- School—Case of Mr. O. B. Milnes.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Lane-Fox, Mr. Rawlinson; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 10*, 1314.

Runciman, Mr. W.—*Financial Secretary of the Treasury* [Dewsbury]
- Army
  - Enfield Lock—Case of West, *Mar. 10*, 1294, 1298.
  - Expenditure (1905–8), *Feb. 28*, 204.
- Carrickfergus Harbour Loan — Remission of Balance, *Mar. 9*, 1131; *Mar. 10*, 1319.
- Civil Service Estimates—Irish Proportion of Certain Votes, *Mar. 12*, 1723, 1724.
- Civil Service Second Division Clerks—Pay under New Scheme, *Mar. 2*, 317, 318.
- Cunard Subsidies, Information as to, *Feb. 27*, 58.
- Edinburgh—Fees Demanded by Walker Trustees, *Feb. 27*, 25; *Mar. 9*, 1094.
- Education
  - National School Teachers' Salaries, Provision for Increase in, *Mar. 12*, 1772, 1773.
  - Teachers Pension Fund, Proposals as to, *Feb. 27*, 67.
- Estimates—Reductions during last Ten Years, *Mar. 3*, 492.
- Friendly Societies Transfer, Regulations as to, *Mar. 12*, 1768.
- Galway—Loss of Life from Wood Quay, *Mar. 2*, 349.

Runciman, Mr. W.—*cont.*
- Gibraltar—Local Audit Arrangement, *Mar. 10*, 1283.
- Income-Tax Abatement on Income of £690, *Mar. 10*, 1299.
- Inland Revenue
  - Excise Secretary, Duties of, *Mar. 12*, 1722.
  - Stamps, Revenue derived from, *Mar. 11*, 1525.
- Inverliever Estate Afforestation, Control of, *Mar. 11*, 1526.
- Liquor Traffic
  - Irish Licensing Statistics, *Mar. 11*, 1551.
  - Scottish Licensing Statistics, *Mar. 11*, 1525; *Mar. 6*, 993.
  - Statistics for County Boroughs—Return proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1291.
- Loan Societies Act, Amendment of, proposed, *Mar. 2*, 320.
- Naval Expenditure (1905–8), *Feb. 28*, 204.
- Parliamentary Debates—Responsibility for Compilation, and Vote on which Contract is Taken, *Mar. 11*, 1495.
- Persia—Fighting between Kurds and Persians at Sug Bulak, *Mar. 4*, 675.
- Railways
  - Great Western Company—Passenger Duty Returns, *Mar. 5*, 854.
  - Highland Extension Proposals, *Mar. 4*, 683.
  - Passenger Duty, Method of Claiming, *Mar. 5*, 855.
- Taxation—Surveyors' Clerks, *Status* of, *Mar. 6*, 993.
- Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill—Government Attitude, *Mar. 11*, 1495.
- United Shoe Machinery Company—Establishment of Branch in England, Proposals for, *Mar. 2*, 337.
- West Indies—Intercolonial Mail Service, Payment for, *Mar. 10*, 1298, 1299.
- Works Board
  - Cabinet - making Contract — Boy Labour Employed, *Mar. 5*, 853.
  - Irish Materials, Use of, in Building, *Mar. 10*, 1289.

Russell, Rt. Hon. T. W.—*Vice-President of the Agriculture and Technical Instruction Department* [Tyrone, S.]
- Adulterated Foodstuffs, Power to Prevent Sale of, *Mar. 4*, 700.
- Donegal Whaling Stations, Proposals for Establishing, *Mar. 4*, 699.
- Filgate, Mr., Duties, etc., of *Mar. 5*, 897–899.
- Fodder, Imported, Precautions against Danger of Infection from, *Mar. 2*, 352. *Mar. 4*, 703.

[*cont.*

Russell, Rt. Hon. T. W.—*cont.*
- Foot-and-Mouth Disease Outbreak, Prevention of, *Mar. 5*, 900.
- Linen, Hand-woven, Protection of, *Mar. 4*, 702, 703.
- Milk
  - Import Statistics, *Mar. 5*, 897.
  - Skim-Milk, Evils arising from use of, *Mar. 4*, 700, 701, 702.
- Potato Spraying, Value of, etc., *Mar. 4*, 699.
- Technical Schools, Repayments for Building, *Mar. 4*, 666.
- Trade Statistics available, *Mar. 2*, 315.

Russia
- Import Duties on Indian Tea.
  Qs. Mr. Rees; Mr. Mitchell-Thomson; *As.* Mr. J. A. Pease, *Mar. 3*, 527.

Russo-Japanese War
- British Vessels sunk or Damaged—Progress of Negotiations.
  Q. Major Anstruther-Gray; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 3*, 526.

Rutherford, Dr. V. H. [Middlesex, Brentford]
- Egypt
  - General Assembly Resolutions, Lord Cromer's Attitude towards, *Mar. 3*, 525.
  - University, Establishment of, proposed, *Mar. 3*, 525.
- Postmen, New Scale of Pay for, *Mar. 2*, 339.
- Soudan Campaign Prisoners—Place of Detention, Restrictions, etc., *Mar. 3*, 526.

Rutherford, Mr. J. [Lancs., N. E. Darwen]
- Insurance—Gambling in Lives, Remarks of Judge Hans Hamilton, *Feb. 27*, 47.

Rutherford, Mr. W. H. [Liverpool, W. Derby]
- Asiatics on British Ships, Increase in Number Employed—Inquiry into Working of Act of 1906, proposed, *Mar. 3*, 651.
- Hull Post Office—Pay of Webster, *Mar. 5*, 881.
- Licensing Bill, *Intro.*, *Feb. 27*, 199.
- Liquor Traffic—Employment Statistics, *Mar. 5*, 901.
- Liverpool Corporation (Streets and Buildings) Bill Referring to Police and Sanitary Committee, *Mar. 5*, 845.

St. Andrew's Ambulance Association
- Merchant Service First Aid Certificates—*see* Merchant Shipping—First Aid.
- Recognised Lecturers in Scotland.
  Q. Major Anstruther-Gray; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Feb. 27*, 24.

St. John Ambulance Association
- First-Aid Certificates of Masters and Mates, *see under* Merchant Shipping.

St. Patrick's Day
- Conditions of Observance as Holiday in Government Departments.
  Q. Mr. T. Harrington; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1719.

Salt
- Export and Import Statistics.
  Q. Mr. C. B. Harmsworth; *A.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 2*, 319.

Saltoun, Lord
- Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, 2R. *Mar. 10*, 1278–1280.

Sands Estate
- Untenanted Lands, Sale of.
  Q. Mr. O'Shaughnessy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5*, 862.

Sandys, Col. T. M. [Lancs., Bootle]
- Army
  - Expeditionary Force of 160,000, *Mar 12*, 1805.
  - Organisation of, *Mar. 12*, 1803–1805, 1807.
  - Territorial Force—Value as a Fighting Force, *Mar. 12*, 1805–1807.
- Militia, Abolition of, *Mar. 12*, 1806.

Sassoon, Sir E. A. [Hythe]
- Education—Non-provided Schools.
  - Exchequer Grants during 1907, *Mar. 4*, 679.
  - Expenditure by local authorities in 1907, *Mar. 2*, 342.
- Education (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 6*, 1019–1023.
- Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill.
  - Contracted-out Schools and Scholarship Schemes, *Mar. 9*, 1120.
  - Grants, *Mar. 12*, 1765.
  - Voluntary Transferred Schools, Provisions as to, *Mar. 9*, 1119, 1120.
- Indian Railways—Expenditure contemplated (1908–1909), *Mar. 2*, 332.

Savings Banks
- *See titles* Post Office Savings Bank, Trustee Savings Bank, etc.

Science and Art, Royal Colleges of
- Report (1906), Presented, *Mar. 10*, 1237, 1282.

Science and Technology, Imperial School of
- Governing Body, Constitution of.
  Qs. Mr. J. R. Macdonald; Sir P. Magnus; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 2*, 341.

Scotland
- *Secretary*—Rt. Hon. J. Sinclair.
- *Lord Advocate*—Rt. Hon. T. Shaw.
- *Solicitor-General*—Mr. A. Ure.
- *For* Particular Places *see their names.*
- Deer Forests
  - Circular as to Fencing, Issue of. *Qs.* Mr. Weir; *As.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 9,* 1128.
  - Return (1883–1908) Ordered, *Mar. 9,* 1079.
- Royal Scottish Museum—Report (1907) Presented, *Mar. 9,* 1070, 1078.
- Sheriffs-Substitute, Age Limit for. *Q.* Mr. Watt; *A.* Mr. T. Shaw, *Mar. 4,* 681.

Scott, Mr. A. H. [Ashton-under-Lyne]
- Belfast Corporation Bill, 2R., *Feb. 27,* 168.

Seaham Harbour Dock Bill
- c. 2R.* *Mar. 2,* 311.*

Seaverns, Mr. J. H. [Lambeth, Brixton]
- Loan Societies Act, Amendment of, proposed, *Mar. 2,* 320.
- Technical Telegraphy—Telegraphists eligible for Increment, *Mar. 10,* 1287.

Secretary of State for the Colonies
- *Rt. Hon. Earl of Elgin.*

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs
- *Rt. Hon. Sir E. Grey.*

Secretary of State for the Home Department
- *Rt. Hon. H. Gladstone.*

Secretary of State for India
- *Rt. Hon. J. Morley.*

Secretary of State for Scotland
- *Rt. Hon. J. Sinclair.*

Secretary of State for War
- *Rt. Hon. R. B. Haldane.*

Seddon, Mr. J. R. [Lancs., S.W., Newton]
- Army
  - Officers
    - Promotion from the Ranks, *Mar. 12,* 1813–1815.
    - Training—Alterations in Present System, *Mar. 4,* 763.
  - Territorial Force—Conditions of Service, *Mar. 4,* 764, 765.
  - Venereal Diseases, Decrease in, *Mar. 4,* 764.
  - Wastage, Decrease in, *Mar. 4,* 764.
- Asiatics on British ships—Cause of Death of Certain Men, *Mar. 3,* 504.

Seddon, Mr. J. R.—*cont.*
- Liverpool Corporation Bill, 2R., *Mar. 12,* 1842, 1845.
- London County Council General Powers Bill, 2R., *Mar. 5,* 985.
- Milk Supply—Legislative proposals, *Mar. 5,* 985.
- Post Office—Punishment for Minor Offences, *Mar. 10,* 1287.

Seely, Maj. J. E. B. [Liverpool, Abercromby]
- Armaments, Reduction of Expenditure on, proposed, *Mar. 2,* 409–414.
- Army
  - Cardwell System, Objections to, *Mar. 2,* 412.
  - Soldiers, Tuberculous.
    - Sanatoria, Grant for Provision of, *Mar. 2,* 328.
    - Treatment—Date of Tabling Report, *Mar. 2,* 329.
- Bread—Cause of Increase in Price, *Mar. 4,* 783–786.
- Coastguard
  - Future of—Report of Departmental Committee, *Mar. 3,* 592–594.
  - Life-saving Duties, *Mar. 3,* 593, 594.
  - Policy as to, *Mar. 9,* 1230; *Mar. 10,* 1359, 1360, 1372.
- Transvaal Mine Labour
  - Compounds, Use of, *Mar. 9,* 1104.
  - Conditions of employing, *Mar. 5,* 874.
- Yeomanry
  - Attestation Form, New Regulations as to signing, *Mar. 12,* 1808.
  - Pay under New Scheme, *Mar. 12,* 1810.

Shaftesbury Estate
- Case of Mr. McKaig, etc. *Qs.* Mr. Sloan; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5,* 858, *Mar. 11,* 1544.
- Situation on.
  - *Q.* Mr. Sloan; *A.* Mr. Cherry, *Feb. 27,* 28.

Shannon Bridge
- Barracks, Present use of. *Q.* Mr. Hayden; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Feb. 27,* 34.

Shaw, Rt. Hon. T.—*Lord Advocate* [Hawick, Burghs]
- Juries—Scottish Justices of the Peace, Liability of, *Mar. 4,* 681.
- Sheriffs-substitute, Age Limit for, *Mar. 4,* 681.
- Statute Law Revision (Scotland) Act, 1906—Pre-Union Scots Statutes, revised Edition of, *Mar. 5,* 854.

Sheehan, Mr. D. D. [Cork Co., Mid.]
- Colthurst Estate, Sale Proposals, etc., *Mar. 9*, 1081 ; *Mar. 11*, 1548, 1549.
- Cooldorihy Estate, Sale of, *Mar. 5*, 894.
- Housing of the Working Classes—Irish Legislative Proposals, *Mar. 11*, 1493.
- Housing and Town Planning Bill—Extension to Ireland, proposed, *Mar. 9*, 1086.
- Leader Estate—Case of C. Rahilly, *Mar. 11*, 1550.
- Millstreet Labourers Acts Inquiry, Cause for Delay in, *Mar. 4*, 697.

Sheerness Bar
- Dredging of.
  - *Os.* Mr. Lambert, *Mar. 10*, 1375.

Sheffield, Sir B. [Lincs., Brigg]
- Africa, East—Portugese Native Labour Recruitment Negotiations, *Mar. 9*, 1105.
- Army Furlough—Special Facilities for Men Abroad, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1295.
- Indian Imperial Cadet Corps, Proposals as to, *Mar. 12*, 1710.
- Naval Shipbuilding Programme — Information for 1904, *Mar. 3*, 516.
- Persian Gulf Slave-traffic, Vessels engaged in Suppressing, *Mar. 3*, 517.
- Transvaal Mine Labour—use of Compounds, *Mar. 9*, 1103.

Shelton Estate
- Sale of.
  - *Q.* Mr. O'Shaughnessy ; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1502.

Siam
- Government Negotiations with.
  - *Q.* Mr. Mitchell-Thomson ; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 5*, 873.
- New Treaty with, Terms of.
  - *Q.* Mr. Lonsdale ; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 12*, 1748.

Simon, Mr. J. A. [Essex, Walthamstow]
- Armaments
  - Estimates for—Growth since 1893, *Mar. 2*, 405.
  - Reduction of Expenditure on, proposed, *Mar. 2*, 404–409.

Sinclair, Rt. Hon. J.—*Secretary for Scotland* [Forfarshire]
- Beauly and Ness Rivers Estuary, Area of, *Mar. 11*, 1527.
- Cattle—Scottish Inspections in 1906 and 1907, *Mar. 12*, 1722.
- Clyde—Prohibition of Beam-Trawling, *Mar. 5*, 887.
- Deer Forests—Circular as to Fencing, *Mar. 9*, 1128.

Sinclair, Rt. Hon. J.—*cont*-
- Dumbarton—Sewage Disposal into River Leven, *Mar. 9*, 1126.
- Durness Crofters, Grazing Land available for, *Mar. 2*, 346.
- Fisheries
  - Grounds, Measures for Protection of, *Mar. 4*, 681.
  - Seine Nets and Drift Nets, use of, *Mar. 4*, 682, 683 ; *Mar. 5*, 888.
- Greenock Admiralty Land, Rateable Value of, *Feb. 28*, 209.
- Hume, Joseph, Case of — Petition sent from Inverness, *Feb. 27*, 61.
- Lewis, Island of
  - Emigration to Mainland, Scheme for, *Mar. 11*, 1526.
  - Land available for Small Holdings, *Mar. 9*, 1129.
  - Sanitary Condition, Proposals for Improving, *Mar. 11*, 1526.
- Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889. Amendment proposals, *Mar. 4*, 682 ; *Mar. 9*, 1128.
- Meat Inspection System, Appointment of Veterinary Surgeons, etc., *Mar. 10*, 1317.
- Milk Supply—Inspection System, Improvement of, *Mar. 9*, 1126.
- Moray Firth
  - "Benaigen" and "Bangkok" Case, Procedure in, *Mar. 12*, 1721.
  - Fishery Protection, Measures taken for, *Mar. 10*, 1318.
  - Illegal Trawling Prosecutions in 1907–8, *Feb. 27*, 61 ; *Mar. 11*, 1527.
  - "Paramount" Case—Result of Inquiry, *Mar. 9*, 1127.
- Motor Speed Limit—Applications from Local Authorities, *Feb. 27*, 60.
- Nith River Fishery Season, Extension of, *Mar. 12*, 1709.
- Poor Law—Organs for Poorhouses, Provision of, *Mar. 4*, 683.
- Stenhousemuir House-rating System, *Mar. 10*, 1318.
- Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill, Facilities for, *Mar. 9*, 1130.
- Vatersay and Barra
  - Papers Date of Publishing, *Mar. 9*, 1127.
  - Situation on—Proposals for Tabling Papers, *Mar. 2*, 345.
- Whaling Industry
  - Proposals as to, *Mar. 9* 1129.
  - Scottish Stations, Effect of, on Herring Fishing, *Mar. 12*, 1770.
- Whale Fishing, Close Time for, *Mar. 5*, 888.

Sir John Soane's Museum
Statement of Funds, Presented, *Mar. 2*, 291, 312.

Sloan, Mr. T. H. [Belfast, S.]
Belfast
Post Office
Sub-Offices, Notice Plates supplied to, *Feb. 27*, 68.
Temporary Clerks in, *Feb. 27*, 21.
Technical Instruction, Accommodation for, *Mar. 11*, 1551.
Westbourne National Schools, Information as to, *Mar. 5*, 859.
Belfast Corporation Bill, 2R., *Feb. 27*, 165–167.
Carntall School, Decision as to closing, *Mar. 11*, 1545.
Constabulary Fund, position of, *Mar. 4*, 694, 695.
Linen, Irish Hand-woven, protection of, *Mar. 4*, 702.
Monaghan Post Office—cause for delay in erection, *Mar. 5*, 851.
Railway Conference—representation of Fruit trade, etc., *Mar. 5*, 847.
Shaftesbury Estate
Case of Mr. McKaig, etc., *Mar. 5*, 858; *Mar. 11*, 1544.
Sale proposals, *Mar. 5*, 861.
Situation on, *Feb. 27*, 28.
Telegraph Service Adult Night Messengers, application of Hobhouse scheme to, *Mar. 11*, 1523, 1524.

Small Holdings
Purchase Money, Repayment of.
Q. Mr. E. Davies *A.* Sir E. Strachey, *Mar. 11*, 1507.

Small Holdings Bill
c. 2R., *Mar. 11*, 1655.

Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill
l. 2R., *Mar. 10*, 1238; *Mar. 11*, 1438.

Smeaton, Mr. D. M. [Stirlingshire]
Anglo-Japanese Treaty, maintenance of, *Mar. 9*, 1195–1198.
Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, Proposals as to, *Feb. 27*, 45.
Local Government (Scotland) Bill, Facilities for, *Mar. 9*, 1127.
Navy *Personnel*, reduction in, proposed, *Mar. 9*, 1194.
Stenhousemuir House-rating system, *Mar. 10*, 1317, 1318.
Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill, Facilities for, *Mar. 9*, 1129.
United Shoe Machinery Company—Establishment of branch in England, *Mar. 2*, 3336.

Smith, Mr. A. H. [Herts., Hertford]
Army Bayonet of new pattern, order for, *Mar. 12*, 1717.

Smith, Mr. F. E. [Liverpool, Walton]
Licensing Bill, *Intro.*, *Feb. 27*, 132–143.
Teachers' Salaries—Conditions in Code, *Feb. 27*, 55.

Smith, Mr. W. F. D. [Strand, Westminster]
Railway Conference—representation of Fruit trade, etc., *Mar. 5*, 848.

Smyrna
Abbott, Mr., Ransom of—measures for recovery.
Qs. Mr. Fell, Major Anstruther-Gray; *As.* Sir E. Grey, *Feb. 27*, 43.

Snowden, Mr. P. [Blackburn]
Colliery Enginemen's Hours of Labour—case of H. Jenkinson, *Feb. 27*, 48.
Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28*, 265–270.

Soares, Mr. E. J. [Devon, Barnstaple]
Coastguard, Policy as to, *Mar. 10*, 1354–1356.
North Devon or Cornwall Coast, Harbour on—Tabling of Report, *Mar. 9*, 1090.

Solar Physics Committee
Report (1906) Presented, *Mar. 10*, 1237, 1282.

Solicitor-General—*Mr. S. T. Evans.*

Solicitor-General for Ireland—*Mr. R. Barry.*

Solicitor-General for Scotland—*Mr. A. Ure.*

Solicitors
Scotland—annual fee payable.
Q. Mr. Watt; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 3*, 528.

Soudan Campaign
Prisoners—Place of Detention and restrictions, etc.
Q. Dr. Rutherford; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 3*, 526.

South African War
Lydenburg Estates, case of.
Q. Mr. B. S. Straus; D. Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 4*, 665.
Royal Artillery Batteries sent.
Q. Mr. Cochrane; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 9*, 1098.

Spain
Carthagena Acting Vice-Consul's Refusal to supply Inventory of Effects of John Riddle.
Q. Mr. Summerbell; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 12*, 1750.

Speaker and Deputy-Speaker—Rulings
Amendment to which Objection was taken, Could not be Moved, *Mar. 2,* 471.
Irrelevant Matter, *Mar. 3,* 616; *Mar. 5,* 939, 943, 946; *Mar. 5,* 977, 987; *Mar. 11,* 1653.
Privilege, Time for raising Question of, *Mar. 9,* 1133, 1136.
Questions, *see that title.*

Stacpoole Estate
Case of Lennon Girls.
Q. Mr. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 5,* 890.

Standing Orders
Resolutions reported from Select Committee, *Mar. 3,* 488.

Stanger, Mr. H. Y. [Kensington, N.]
Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28,* 212–221.

Stanley, Mr. Albert [Staffs, N.W.]
Asiatics on British Ships—Cause of Death certain Men, *Mar. 3,* 501.
Brereton Collieries—Coppice Pit Disaster. Proposals for Inquiry, etc., *Mar. 3,* 529.
Hamstead Colliery Disaster, Information as to, *Mar. 9,* 1113; *Mar. 12,* 1755.
Post Office, Political Organisations in, *Mar. 12,* 1759.

Statute Law Revision (Scotland) Act 1906
Pre-Union Scots Statutes, Revised Edition of.
Q. Mr. J. D. White; *A.* Mr. T. Shaw, *Mar. 5,* 854.

Staveley-Hill, Mr. H. [Staffs., Kingswinford]
New Hebrides Native Labour—Report of High Commissioner and Regulations, Tabling of, *Mar. 11,* 1520.
Waltham Abbey
Discharges, *Mar. 11,* 1515.
Wage Reductions since 1906, *Mar. 12,* 1731.
Woolwich Arsenal Employment Statistics and Reduction Proposals, *Mar. 11,* 1516.

Stenhousemuir
House-Rating System.
Qs. Mr. Smeaton; *As.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 10,* 1317.

Stewart-Smith, Mr. D. [Westmoreland, Kendal]
Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill, Clause 1, Sub-sections (1) and (2), Effect of, *Mar. 10,* 1292.

Stockport Corporation Bill
c. Rep. * *Mar. 11,* 1487.

Strabane
Labourers' Cottages, Proposals for Erecting, *Q.* Mr. C. MacVeigh; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 12,* 1714.

Strachey, Sir E.—*Treasurer of the Household* [Somerset, S.]
Agriculture Inspectors—Regulations as to Welsh Language, *Feb. 27,* 56.
Cattle
Diseased Animals exposed for Sale, Safeguards against, *Feb. 27,* 57.
Diseases—Basis of Diagnosis, *Feb. 28,* 210.
Dungeness Bay—Lug Worms removed by French Fishermen, *Feb. 27,* 22.
Fodder, Danger from Import of and Proposals for prohibiting, *Mar. 4,* 666; *Mar. 9,* 1092.
Food Imports in 1906, *Mar. 9,* 1091.
Meat—Foreign Beef Trusts, Operations of, *Mar. 3,* 510.
Milk Supply—Warranty with Consignments from Farmers, Hardships Inflicted by Demanding, *Mar. 11,* 1509.
Northamptonshire
Muzzling Order, Scope of, *Mar. 11,* 1508.
Rabies Outbreak—Result of Post Mortem, *Mar. 11,* 1508.
Ordnance Survey—Charge on Vote for Pay of Royal Engineers, *Feb. 27,* 23.
Small Holdings—Purchase Money, Repayment of, *Mar. 11,* 1507.
Swine Fever—Result of Investigations, *Mar. 10,* 1291.

Straus, Mr. B. S. [Tower Hamlets, Mile End]
British South Africa Chartered Company—Terms of Issue of Fresh Capital, *Feb. 27,* 59.
South African War—Case of Lydenburg Estates, *Mar. 4,* 665.
Weights and Measures—Local Authorities availing themselves of Regulation 9, *Feb. 27,* 23.

Suffolk and Berkshire, Earl of
Sat First in Parliament after the Death of his Father, *Mar. 9,* 1069.

Sugar
Brewing, Quantity Used in (1906–7).
Q. Mr. H. Cox; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Feb. 28,* 207.
Refining in Bond, Regulations as to.
Q. Mr. McArthur; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 5,* 857.

Summary Jurisdiction (Ireland) Bill
*c. 1*R.*, *Mar. 4,* 706.

Summerbell, Mr. T. [Sunderland]
  Coastguard Service—Duties now Carried on by Coastguards, Arrangements for, on Reduction, *Feb. 27*, 33.
  Consumption, Treatment of Soldiers Suffering from, *Mar. 5*, 960–963.
  Kew Gardens
    Gardeners, Conditions of Employing, *Mar. 5*, 884 ; *Mar. 10*, 1316.
    Lectures, Student Admitted Free to *Mar. 10*, 1316.
  Merchant Shipping
    Asiatics on British Ships—Cause of Death of certain Men, *Mar. 3*, 493, 531.
    Cunard Subsidies, Information as to, *Feb. 27*, 58.
  Spain—Carthagena Acting Vice-Consul's Refusal to Supply Inventory of Effects of John Riddle, *Mar. 12*, 1750.
  Trade, Board of—Regulations as to Rocket Apparatus, *Mar. 5*, 879.
  Trinidad Indentured Labour, Conditions of Employing, *Mar. 10*, 1302.
  Unemployed Relief Works—Sanction to Loans, *Mar. 3*, 533.
  United States—New York Unemployed, Practice as to Out-of-Work Benefits for, *Mar. 3*, 531.
  Yachts, Pleasure, Dues and Fees Payable by, *Feb. 27*, 50.

Sunday Closing (Shops) Bill
  l. 1R.*, *Mar. 5*, 821.

Supply
  Proceedings to have Precedence
    Motion (Mr. Asquith), *Mar. 5*, 904.

Surinam
  Post Office Money Order Agreement, Presented, *Mar. 9*, 1237, 1282.

Sutherland, Mr. J. E. [Elgin Burghs]
  Moray Firth Illegal Trawling Prosecutions in 1907–8, *Feb. 27*, 61.

Swansea
  Education Dispute—Present Position.
    Qs. Lord R. Cecil ; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 9*, 1117 ; *Mar. 12*, 1766.
  King's Dock Accident on 3rd March, Inquiry into.
    Qs. Mr. J. Ward ; *As.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 10*, 1312.

Sweden
  Accession to International Sanitary Convention, Presented, *Mar. 6*, 990 ; *Mar. 9*, 1070.

Swine Fever
  Result of Investigations.
    Q. Sir W. J. Collins ; *A.* Sir E. Strachey, *Mar. 10*, 1291.

Switzerland
  Tariff and Employment Statistics.
    Q. Mr. Mitchell-Thomson ; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 5*, 880.
  Trade Reports Presented, *Mar. 2*, 290.

Talbot, Lord E. [Sussex, Chichester]
  Army—Divisional Cavalry recruited from Yeomanry, Abandonment of Scheme for, *Mar. 12*, 1852, 1853.
  Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill, Ownership of Furniture of Contracting-out Schools, *Mar. 12*, 1760, 1761.

Taxation
  Local (Ireland)—Accounts (1906–7) Presented, *Mar. 5*, 821, 846.
  Surveyors' Clerks, Decison as to.
    Q. Mr. J. MacVeagh ; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 5*, 851.
    Q. Mr. Wilkie ; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 6*, 993.

Taylor, Mr. A. [Liverpool, E. Toxteth]
  Asiatics on British Ships, Increase in Number employed — Inquiry into Working of Act of 1906, proposed *Mar. 3*, 631–635.

Taylor, Mr. J. W. [Durham, Chester-le Street]
  Usworth Colliery Accident — Bravery of M. Howarth, *Feb. 27*, 49.

Telegraph Service
  [*See also Names of Places*]
  Messengers
    Adult Night, Application of Hobhouse Scheme to.
      Qs. Mr. Sloan ; *As.* Mr, Buxton, *Mar. 11*, 1523.
    Over-age, Appointments available for.
      Q. Mr. Nannetti ; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 4*, 659.
  Soldiers, System of employing.
    Q. Mr. W. T. Wilson ; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 11*, 1509.
  Technical Telegraphy — Telegraphists eligible for Increment.
    Q. Mr. Seaverns ; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 10*, 1287.

Telephone Service
  Irish Extension Proposals.
    Q. Mr. Farrell ; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 5*, 895.

Tennant, Mr. H. J. [Berwickshire]
Children Bill, Proposals as to, *Feb. 27*, 50.
Factories and Workshops
Charitable and Reformatory Institutions, Inspection of, *Mar. 5*, 875.
Inspectors—Work of Home Department Staff, *Feb. 27*, 20, 46.

Territorial Force
[*See under* Army]

Thames River Steamboat Service Act, 1904 (Amendment) Bill
l. 2R.* *Feb. 27*, 3.

Thorne, Mr. W. [West Ham, S.]
Railways
Great Western Company—Passenger Duty Returns, *Mar. 5*, 854.
Passenger Duty, Method of Claiming. *Mar. 5*, 854.

Tibet
Anglo-Tibetan Trade Agreement, Tabling of.
Q. Mr. O'Grady; *A.* Mr. Morley, *Mar. 12*, 1735.
Gyantse and Gantok, British Trade Agents at.
Q. Mr. Rees; A. Mr. Morley, *Mar, 10*, 1299.

Tillett, Mr. L. J. [Norwich]
Uganda Railway, Expenditure on, *Mar. 12*, 1707.

Tipperary
Magistrates, Additional, Necessity for.
Q. Mr. Condon; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 10*, 1292.

Tobacco
Dealers' Licences, Graduation of, proposed.
Q. Mr. Hart-Davies; *A.* Mr. Asquith, *Mar. 2*, 315.

Tobacco Growing (Scotland) Bill
*c. Rep.** *Mar. 9*, 1137.
Facilities for.
Q. Mr. Smeaton; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 9*, 1129.
Q. Mr. Ainsworth; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 11*, 1494.

"Tolesby"
Cause of Stranding and Loss.
Q. Mr. H. J. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 11* 1493.

Toulmin, Mr. G. [Bury, Lancashire]
Army, Expenditure (1905–8), *Feb. 28*, 204.
Navy Expenditure (1905–8), *Feb. 28*, 204.

Trade, Board of
President—Rt. Hon. D. Lloyd-George.
Parliamentary Secretary—Mr. H. E. Kearley.
Rocket Apparatus, Regulations as to.
Q. Mr. Summerbell; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 5*, 879.

Trade Marks
Protection of British Trade Marks in the East.
Q. Mr. Mitchell-Thomson; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Mar. 5*, 878.
Q. Mr. Lonsdale; *A.* Sir E. Grey, *Mar. 12*, 1747.

Trade Marks Act
Rules under.
Q. Mr. Boland; *A.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 9*, 1113.

Trade Reports
Annual Series Presented, *Feb. 28*, 202; *Mar. 2*, 290.

Tramways Order Confirmation (No. 1) Bill
l. 1R.* *Mar. 11*, 1437.

Transvaal
Chinese Labour
Conditions of Employment on Expiry of Ordinance.
Q. Sir G. Parker; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 11*, 1520.
Importation on same Terms as Kaffir Labour, proposed.
Qs. Earl Winterton; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 12*, 1740.
Retention of, proposed.
Qs. Mr. Fell; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9*, 1104.
Statistics (1906 and 1908.)
Qs. Earl Winterton, Sir G. Parker; *As.* Mr. Churchill, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 4*, 669.
Civil Service, Compensation on Discharge from—Speech of General Botha.
Q. Mr. Wedgwood; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 2*, 335.
Mine Labour
Compounds, Use of.
Qs. Sir B. Sheffield, Sir G. Parker, Lord R. Cecil, Sir J. Randles, Colonel Seely; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9*, 1103.
Qs. Earl Winterton; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 12*, 1741.
Conditions of Employing.
Qs. Mr. Fell, Colonel Seely; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 5*, 873.
Import of Labourers, Negotiations for.
Q. Mr. Mitchell-Thomson; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 9*, 1105.

[*cont.*

Transvaal—*cont.*
Mine Labour—*cont.*
Mortality among Labourers.
Qs. Earl Winterton, Sir G. Parker, Mr. Lyttelton; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 12*, 1742.
Q. Mr. Fell; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar.* 12, 1746.
Native Labour
Comparison with Chinese.
Qs. Mr. Fell; *As.* Mr. Churchill, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 12*, 1745.
Medical Inspector, Retirement of.
Qs. Mr. Fell, Mr. Lyttelton, Mr. Hay; *As.* Mr. Churchill, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 12*, 1746.
Nationality of Mine Employees.
Qs. Mr. Guinness; *As.* Mr. Churchill, Mr. Speaker, *Mar. 12*, 1738.

Trawlers Certificates Suspension Bill
c. 1R.* *Mar. 11*, 1553.

Trawling
[*See under* Fisheries.]

Treasury
First Lord—Rt. Hon. Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.
Financial Secretary—Mr. W. Runciman.

Trevelyan, Mr. C. P. [Yorks., W.R., Elland]
Duke of York's School, Proposals as to and Source of Funds, *Mar. 9*, 1088, 1089.
Small Holdings Bill, 2R., *Mar. 11*, 1655.

Trinidad
Indentured Labour, Conditions of Employing.
Qs. Mr. Summerbell, Mr. Moore, Mr. A. S. Wilson; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 10*, 1302.

Trustee Savings Banks
Annual Report Presented, *Feb. 27*, 3, 19.

Trusts Bill
c. 2R.* *Mar. 11*, 1656.

Tuberculosis Prevention (Ireland) Bill
Provisions of
Q. Sir T. Esmonde; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 2*, 322.

Tully
Grazing Land of Mr. Bond, Purchase of.
Q. Mr. Farrell; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1531.

Tweedmouth, Lord—*First Lord of the Admiralty*
Policy — German Emperor's Letter, *Mar. 9*, 1072.
Small Landholders (Scotland) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 10*, 1279.
Territorial Force—Eligibility of Employees in Dockyards, *Mar. 2*, 300.

Tyrone
Lieutenancy, Holder of.]
Q. Mr. Muldoon; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 3*, 549.

Uganda
Game Preservation in.
Q. Mr. Courthope; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 3*, 523.
Qs. Sir C. Hill, Mr. J. C. Wason; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 4*, 671.
Railway
Accounts.
Qs. Mr. Courthope, Mr. Cox; *As.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 3*, 523.
Presented, *Mar. 2*, 312.
Expenditure on.
Q. Mr. Tillett; *A.* Mr. Churchill, *Mar. 12*, 1707.

Unemployed
Operative Stone-masons' Society, Unemployment among.
Q. Mr. T. F. Richards; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Feb. 27*, 52.
Relief Works—Sanction to Loans.
Q. Mr. Summerbell; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Mar. 3*, 533.

Unemployed Workmen Bill
Facilities for.
Q. Mr. T. F. Richards; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Feb. 27*, 52.
Qs. Mr. O'Grady; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Feb. 27*, 52.

United Shoe Machinery Company
Establishment of Branch in England, Proposals for.
Q. Mr. Smeaton; *A.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 2*, 336.

United States
New York Unemployed — Practice as to Out-of-Work Benefit.
Qs. Mr. R. Duncan, Mr. J. Ward, Mr. Summerbell; *As.* Mr. Lloyd-George, *Mar. 3*, 530.

Upton Town Hall Bill
l. 2R*., *Mar. 10*, 1237.

Usworth Colliery
Accident—Bravery of M. Howarth.
Q. Mr. J. W. Taylor; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Feb. 27*, 49.

Vaccination Acts
Breaches of — Imprisonments since 1873.
Qs. Mr. Lupton; *As.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 5*, 852, 876.
Expenditure out of Rates since 1895.
Q. Mr. Lupton; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Mar. 5*, 877.
Prosecutions under (1906 and 1907).
Q. Mr. Lupton; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 3*, 511.

Valentia, Rt. Hon. Lord [Oxford]
Yeomanry
Attestation Form, New Regulations as to Signing, *Mar. 12*, 1799, 1800.
Conditions of Service under New Scheme, *Mar. 12*, 1799.
Pay under New Scheme, *Mar. 12*, 1800, 1801.

Vatersay and Barra
Report of Inverness County Council, Presented, *Mar. 11*, 1489.
Situation on — Proposals for Tabling Papers.
Q. Mr. J. Dewar; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 2*, 345.
Q. Mr. Mitchell-Thomson; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 9*, 1127.

Vehicles
Accidents caused by — Returns furnished.
Q. Mr. J. C. Wason; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 9*, 1111.

Ventry Estate
Sale of.
Q. Mr. T. O'Donnell; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 10*, 1323.

Vereker Estate
Claims of M. Hartnett and J. Collins.
Q. Mr. O'Shaughnessy; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11*, 1502.

Verney, Mr. F. W. [Bucks., N.]
Education (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 6*, 1041–1045.
Fodder, Dangers from Import of and Proposals for Prohibiting, *Mar. 5*, 885.

Victoria and Albert Museum
Report (1906) Presented, *Mar. 10*, 1237, 1281.

Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H. [Sheffield Central]
Africa, East, Under-Secretary's Visit, Reports on, *Feb. 27*, 40, 41.
Army—Territorial Force
Attestation Form
Cost of Printing, etc., *Mar. 2*, 328.
New Forms issued, *Mar. 11*, 1582
Brigadier-Colonels, Duties and Pay of, *Mar. 11*, 1582, 1583.
Cost of, *Mar. 11*, 1580.
County Association Secretaries — Number appointed, *Mar. 2*, 327.

Vincent, Col. Sir C. E. H.—*cont.*
Army
Field Artillery
Organisation as a Fighting Force, *Mar. 11*, 1581.
Re-engagement, Terms of, *Mar. 2*, 330.
Constabulary—Legislative Proposals, *Feb. 27*, 63.
Duke of York's School
Proposals as to and Source of Funds, *Mar. 9*, 1088.
Site, Value of and Proposals as to, *Mar. 2*, 344.
New Hebrides Native Labour Statistics (1907–8), *Mar. 9*, 1099.
Probation of Offenders Act Rules, Tabling of, *Mar. 9*, 1110.

Vivisection
Report of Commissioners Presented, *Mar. 4*, 658; *Mar. 5*, 821.

Volunteers
Disbandment Proposals.
Q. Mr. H. P. Pease; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1717.
Officers, Disposal of.
Q. Mr. C. H. Corbett; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 3*, 516.
Financial Liabilities, Estimate for.
Qs. Mr. V. Cavendish, *Mar. 5*, 950.
Long Service Cases.
Qs. Lord Ampthill; Earl of Portsmouth, *Mar. 2*, 309, 310.
Medical Inspection under new Scheme.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 2*, 315.
Medical Officers, Application of new Scheme to.
Q. Sir F. Powell; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 5*, 868.
Officers
Outfit Grant on Transfer.
Q. Mr. A. Allen; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11*, 1517.
Rank on Transfer to Territorial Force.
Q. Sir G. Fardell; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1730.

Walker, Col. W. H. [Lancashire, S.W., Widnes]
Glanders—Use of Mallein Test, *Mar. 3*, 541, 542.

Walker, Mr. H. de R. [Leicestershire, Melton]
Education (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 6*, 994, 995.
Estimates—Reductions during last Ten Years, *Mar. 3*, 492.

Walker Trustees
See under Edinburgh.

Walsh, Mr. S. [Lancashire, S.W., Ince]
Asiatics on British Ships—Cause of Death of Certain Men, *Mar. 3*, 505.

War Office

Secretary of State—Right Hon. R. B Haldane.

Parliamentary Under-Secretary—Earl of Portsmouth.

Financial Secretary—Mr. T. R. Buchanan.

Clothing Contracts—Wages Paid by Contractors.
Q. Mr. J. R. Macdonald, Mr. Curran; *As.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 10*, 1295.

Writers' Pensions and Duties.
Q. Mr. Horniman; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11*, 1496.

Ward, Mr. J. [Stoke-on-Trent]

Asiatics on British Ships—Increase in Number Employed, *Mar. 3*, 648–651.

Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, Postponement of, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1311.

Earthenware and China—Special Rules, Revision of, *Mar. 10*, 1307.

Government Departments—Conference of Heads to devise means for exchange of Workmen to regulate Hours of Work, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1313.

Letchworth Social Democrat Meeting, Conduct of Volunteers at, *Mar. 10*, 1297

Natal—Trial of Dinizulu, *Mar. 4*, 674.

Navy

Dockyard Accommodation for Ships of "Dreadnought" type, *Mar. 3*, 603.

Personnel. Reduction in, proposed, *Mar. 9*, 1207.

Portsmouth Dockyard Lock, Expenditure on, *Mar. 3*, 603.

Rosyth, Policy as to, *Mar. 3*, 603, 605; *Mar. 10*, 1377.

Short-service System, Introduction of, proposed, *Mar. 9*, 1207–1209.

Railway Relations with the State—Nature of Inquiry, *Mar. 4*, 677.

Swansea—King's Dock Accident on 3rd March, Inquiry into, *Mar. 10*, 1312, 1313.

Trade Disputes, Power of Chief Magistrates to call out Troops during, *Mar. 5*, 929.

United States—New York Unemployed, Practice as to Out-of-Work Benefit for, *Mar. 3*, 531.

Wardle, Mr. G. J. [Stockport]

Ballachulish, Postal Name for, *Mar. 2*. 339.

Railways

Goods Yard at Soho—Cause of Death of G. Taylor, *Mar. 5*, 877.

Relations with the State—Nature of Inquiry, *Mar. 4*, 676.

Trade Disputes Power of Chief Magistrates to call out Troops during, *Mar. 5*, 914–920.

Waring, Captain W. [Banffshire]

Fishery Grounds, Measures for Protection of, *Mar. 4*, 681.

Moray Firth

Fishery Protection, Measures take for, *Mar. 10*, 1318.

"Paramount" Case—Result of Inquiry, *Mar. 9*, 1127.

Warner, Mr. T. C. T. [Stafford, Lichfield]

Army Officers—Special Reserve, Conditions of Enrolment, *Mar. 4*, 724; *Mar. 5* 963.

London County Council General Powers Bill, 2R., *Mar. 5*, 987.

Milk Supply—Legislative Proposals, *Mar 5*: 987.

Washington Glebe Colliery

Inquest, Proposals for.
Q. Mr. J. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 12*, 1755.

Wason, Mr. J. C. [Orkney and Shetland]

Africa, East

Game Preserves, Opposition to, *Mar. 9*, 1108.

Portuguese Native Labour Recruitment for Transvaal Mines, *Mar 11*, 1522.

Cattle—Diseased Animals exposed for Sale, Safeguards against, *Feb. 27*, 57.

Congo Free State—Condition of Affairs in Lado Enclave, *Mar. 2*, 334.

Donegal Whaling Stations, Proposals for establishing, *Mar. 4*. 699.

Merchant Shipping—Life-saving Apparatus, Ship's Drill with, *Feb. 27*, 50.

Motor Speed Limit—Applications from Local Authorities, *Feb. 27*. 60, 65.

Uganda, Game Preservation in, *Mar. 4*, 671.

Vehicles, Accidents caused by—Returns furnished, *Mar. 9*, 1111.

Whale-fishing, Close Time for, *Mar. 5*, 888.

Whaling Industry, Proposals as to, *Mar. 9*, 1129.

Women's Enfranchisement Bill, 2R., *Feb. 28*. 225–232.

Waterford

Evicted Tenants—Progress made with Reinstatements.
Qs. Mr. Moore; *As.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 2*, 347.

Land, Proposals for compulsory acquisition of.
Q. Mr. Moore; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 2*, 347.

Untenanted Land offered for Purchase.
Q. Mr. Moore; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 2*, 346.

Watt, Mr. H. A. [Glasgow College]
- Army—Pimlico Clothing Factory Assistant Inspector, Delay in Appointing, *Mar. 5,* 871.
- Cattle—Scottish Inspections in 1906 and 1907, *Mar. 12,* 1721.
- Coal Mines (Eight Hours) Bill, Postponement of, proposed, *Mar. 10,* 1310.
- Cunard Subsidies, Information as to, *Feb. 27,* 57.
- Fisheries
  - Grounds, Measures for Protection of, *Mar. 4,* 681.
  - Seine Nets and Drift Nets, use of, *Mar. 4,* 682; *Mar. 5,* 888.
- Indian Mutiny Pensions, Conditions of granting, *Mar. 12,* 1716.
- Madagascar Native Labour Recruitment, Proposals, *Mar. 9,* 1102.
- Meat—Scottish Inspection System, Appointment of Veterinary Surgeons, etc., *Mar. 10,* 1317.
- Milk Supply
  - Legislative Proposals, *Mar. 9,* 1117.
  - Scottish Inspection System, Improvement of, *Mar. 9,* 1126.
- Plural Voting Bill, Proposals as to, *Mar. 5,* 902.
- Sheriffs-substitute, Age Limit for, *Mar. 4,* 681.
- Solicitors—Annual Fee payable, *Mar. 3* 528.

Webb Estate
- Case of Mrs. Kelleher.
  - *Q.* Mr. W. Abraham; *A.* Mr. Birrell, *Mar. 11,* 1500.

Wedgwood, Mr. J. C. [Newcastle-under-Lyne]
- Children Bill—Date of taking Second Reading, *Mar. 9,* 1132.
- Education
  - Corporal Punishment, Restrictions on, *Mar. 2,* 343.
  - Schools—Fire Safeguards, *Mar. 9,* 1120.
- Education (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 6,* 1008–1013.
- Juvenile Offenders—Age for sending to Reformatories, *Mar. 9,* 1110.
- Natal Public Debt, Amount of, *Mar. 9,* 1106.
- Navy
  - Engineer Officers, Regulations as to, *Mar. 5,* 867, 868; *Mar. 10,* 1363–1368, 1369.
  - Two-Power Standard, Maintenance of, *Mar. 10,* 1363.

Wedgwood, Mr. J. C.—*cont.*
- Nigerian Land Tenure, etc.
  - Presentation of Sir P. Girouard's Memoranda, *Mar. 9,* 1101.
  - Systems, Assimilation of, *Mar. 2,* 335.
- Transvaal Civil Service—Compensation on Discharge, *Mar. 2,* 335.
- West Indies Inter-Colonial Mail Service, Payment for, *Mar. 10,* 1298.

Weights and Measures
- Regulation of Local Authorities availing Themselves of.
  - *Q.* Mr. B. S. Straus; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Feb. 27,* 23.

Weir, Mr. J. G. [Ross and Cromarty]
- Beauly and Ness Rivers Estuary, Area of, *Mar. 11,* 1526.
- Deer Forests—Circular as to fencing, *Mar. 9,* 1128.
- Indian Railways—Bombay-Sind Line, Route for, *Mar. 12,* 1720.
- Lewis, Island of.
  - Emigration to Mainland, Scheme for, *Mar. 11,* 1526.
  - Land available for Small Holdings, *Mar. 9,* 1128.
  - Sanitary Condition, Proposals for Improving, *Mar. 11,* 1526.
- Moray Firth, Illegal Trawling Cases, *Mar. 11,* 1527.
- Navy
  - "Caesar" Firing Practice, Girl injured by—Compensation offered, etc., *Mar. 9,* 1097, 1098.
  - Devonport Engineering College—Food supplied to Cadets, *Mar. 12,* 1733,
  - Reserve—Re-Enrolment, Regulations as to, *Mar. 12,* 1733.
- Whaling Industry
  - Proposals as to, *Mar. 9,* 1129.
  - Scottish Stations, Effect of, on Herring Fishery, *Mar. 12,* 1770.

Wenlock, Lord
- Army—Territorial Artillery, Organisation of, *Mar. 12,* 1701.

West Bridgford Urban District Water Council Bill
- c. *Rep.* Mar. 11,* 1487.

West Indies
- Inter-Colonial Mail Service, Payment for.
  - *Qs.* Mr. Wedgwood, Mr. Cox, Mr. L. Jones; *As.* Mr. Runciman, *Mar. 10,* 1298.

Whaling Industry
Close Time, Decision as to.
Q. Mr. J. C. Wason; *A.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 5*, 888.
Proposals as to.
Qs. Mr. Weir, Mr. J. C. Wason; *As.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 9*, 1129.
Scottish Stations, Effect of, on Herring Fishing.
Qs. Mr. Weir; *As.* Mr. Sinclair, *Mar. 12*, 1770.

Wheat
Crop, Shortage in.
Os. Sir J. Leese, *Mar. 4*, 779–781.
Cultivation within the Empire, Encouragement of, proposed.
Os. Mr. Goulding, *Mar. 4*, 786–791; Earl Winterton, 791; Mr. Essex, 797; Mr. Lloyd-George, 809, 810.
Prices on the Continent.
Os. Earl Winterton, *Mar. 4*, 793, 794; Mr. A. Chamberlain, 803–805.
Price of Wheat in 1907, Charges included in.
Q. Mr. Fell; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Feb. 27*, 23.

White, Mr. J. D. [Dumbartonshire]
Army Submarine Mining Work, Decision as to, *Mar. 2*, 312.
Births—Irish Statistics (1907), *Feb. 27*, 30.
Cloch Point—Land purchased and re-sold by War Office, *Mar. 12*, 1731.
Greenock Admiralty Land, Rateable Valu of, *Feb. 28*, 209.
Public Trustee Vote, Charges included in, *Mar. 12*, 1730.
Statute Law Revision (Scotland) Act, 190
Pre-Union Scots Statutes, Revise Edition of, *Mar. 5*, 854.

White, Mr. P. [Meath, N.]
Agriculture Department—Duties, etc., of Mr. Filgate, *Mar. 5*, 899.
Balfour Estate—Case of J. Gore, *Mar. 4*, 698.
Kearney Estate—Case of Luke Caffrey, *Mar. 5*, 847.
Navan Postal Facilities, *Mar. 5*, 896.
Railways—Free Passes for Legislators, proposed, *Mar. 5*, 848.

Whitehead, Mr. R. [Essex, S.E.]
Army—Civil Employment for ex-Soldiers, *Mar. 5*, 946–948.
Railways
Disputes—Number of Arbitrators appointed, *Mar. 9*, 1089.
Workmen's Trains, Demand for and Inquiries held during last Ten Years, *Mar. 2*. 318, 319.

Whiteley, Rt. Hon. G.—*Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury* [Yorkshire, E.R., Pudsey]
Black Scab, Measures taken to check, *Ma 2*, 344, 345.

Whittaker, Sir T. P. [Yorkshire, W.R. Spen Valley]
Licensing Bill, *Intro.*, *Feb. 27*, 108–117.

Widnes Corporation Bill
c. 2R.* *Mar. 5*, 988.
Milk Clauses—Instruction to Committee *Mar. 5*, 988.

Wiles, Mr. T. [Islington, S.]
Cabs, Privilege System—Petitions sent from Wimbledon and Clapham Junction, *Feb. 27*, 44.
Fodder Importation—Date of Prohibitory Order, *Mar. 9*, 1092.

Wilkie, Mr. A. [Dundee]
Coastguard Service—Amalgamation with Customs Waterguard Department, *Mar. 11*, 1489.
Liquor Traffic—Scottish Statistics as to Sale of Spirits, *Mar. 6*, 993.
Taxation—*Status* of Surveyors' Clerks, *Mar. 6*, 993.

Williams, Col. R. [Dorsetshire, W.]
Education (Local Authorities) Bill, 2R., *Mar. 6*, 1017–1019.

Williams, Mr. J. [Glamorgan, W.]
Asiatics on British Ships—Cause of Death of Certain Men, *Mar. 3*, 494.

Williams, Mr. W. L. [Carmarthen District]
Ancient Monuments—Proposals as to Royal Commissions, *Mar. 10*, 1286.
Questions, Form of—Power of Clerks at the Table as to Alterations, *Mar. 2*, 353.

Wilson, Mr. A. S. [Yorkshire, E.R., Holderness]
Africa, East—Native Labour Recruitment for Transvaal Mines, *Mar. 12*, 1739.
Army
Officers—Public Schools and Universities as a Source of Supply, *Mar 12*, 1782.
Territorial Force
Artillery Drivers, Training, Proposals for, *Mar. 12*, 1785.
Attestation Form—New Forms Issued, *Mar. 12*, 1785.
Cost of, *Mar. 12*, 1781.
Decorations, Decision as to, *Mar 12*, 1785.
Horses, Source of Supply, *Mar. 12*, 1785.
Separation Allowances—Extension to Privates, proposed, *Mar. 12*, 1784.

[*cont.*

Wilson, Mr. A.,—*cont.*
- House of Commons—Indicator in Lobby to show Speaker and Subject in House of Lords, proposed, *Mar. 10*, 1315.
- Kilnsea and Easington Coast Erosion, Measures for Checking, *Mar. 10*, 1311, 1312.
- Matches—White or Yellow Phosphorus, Restrictions on use of, *Mar. 9*, 1112.
- Moray Firth—Illegal Trawling Cases, *Mar. 11*, 1527.
- Natal—Trial of Dinizulu, *Mar. 12*, 1744.
- Parliamentary Relations between Lords and Commons, Proposals for Dealing with, *Mar. 4*, 704.
- Plural Voting Bill, Proposals as to, *Mar. 5*, 902.
- Post Office, Regulations as to Political Organisations, *Mar. 3*, 541; *Mar. 12*, 1759.
- Trinidad Indentured Labour, Conditions of Employing, *Mar. 10*, 1302.
- Yeomanry
  - Conditions of Service under New Scheme, *Mar. 12*, 1782–1784.
  - Pay under New Scheme, *Mar. 12*, 1784, 1809.
  - Training under New Scheme, *Mar. 12*, 1782, 1783.

Wilson, Mr. J. [Durham, Mid.]
- Washington Glebe Colliery Inquest, Proposals for, *Mar. 12*, 1755.

Wilson, Mr. J. H. [Middlesbrough]
- Asiatics on British Ships
  - Causes of Deaths, *Mar. 3*, 629, 630.
  - Increase in Number Employed—Inquiry into Working of Act of 1906, etc., proposed, *Mar. 3*, 625, 333, 644.
- "Bramley," Crew, Complaints by, *Mar. 11*, 1490.
- "Craigisla," Crew, Complaints by, *Mar. 11*, 1491.
- "Frankby," Chinese Crew, Incendiarism by, *Mar. 11*, 1489.
- "Huddersfield," Cause of Loss of, *Mar. 11*, 1492.
- "Indrasamha," Lascars, Madness and Suicide of, *Mar. 9*, 1115.
- Merchant Seamen—Figures given in Return, *Mar. 9*, 1114.
- "Mount Temple," Cause of Stranding, *Mar. 11*, 1491.
- "Pernambuco," Cause of Loss of, *Mar. 12*, 1706.
- "Queen Eleanor"—Mutiny of Chinese Crew, *Mar. 3*, 510.
- "Tolesby"—Cause of Stranding and Loss *Mar. 11*, 1493.

Wilson, Mr. W. T. [Lancashire, S.E., Westhoughton]
- Army, Territorial Force—Eligibility of Government Employees, *Mar. 12*, 1718.
- Bristol, Postal Telegraph Staff, Pay of, *Feb. 28*, 203.
- Post Office Savings Bank Circular, Display of, *Mar. 11*, 1510.
- Telegraph Service—System of Employing Soldiers, *Mar. 11*, 1509.
- Woolwich Arsenal—Machinery lying Idle, *Mar. 11*, 1515.

Winchester, Marquess of
- Army Territorial Force—Eligibility of Employees in Dockyards, *Mar. 2*, 299.

Wines
- Imports in 1907—Return Ordered, *Mar. 12*, 1705.

Winterton, Earl [Sussex, Horsham]
- Army
  - Cavalry Distribution System, *Mar. 5*, 869.
  - Territorial Force
    - Colour-Sergeants, Decision as to, *Mar. 5*, 870.
    - County Associations, Recruiting Methods Permissible to, *Mar. 3*, 518.
- Bread—Causes of Increase in Price, *Mar. 4*, 793–797.
- Food Taxation, Policy as to, *Mar. 4*, 791.
- Glenaheiry Outrage—Public Inquiry proposed, *Mar. 11*, 1536.
- Madagascar Native Labour Recruitment, *Mar. 4*, 669, 670, 671; *Mar. 9*, 1102.
- Parliamentary Relations between Lords and Commons, Proposals for Dealing with, *Mar. 4*, 704.
- Post Office Regulations as to Political Organisations, *Mar. 3*, 538; *Mar. 12*, 1759.
- Railway Communication Cords, Occasions for Using, *Mar. 5*, 880.
- Transvaal
  - Chinese Labour
    - Importation on Same Terms as Kaffir Labour, proposed, *Mar. 12*, 1740, 1741.
    - Statistics (1906 and 1908), *Mar. 4*, 669.
  - Mines
    - Compounds, Form of, etc., *Mar. 12*, 1741.
    - Mortality among Labourers, *Mar. 12*, 1742.

Winterton, Earl—*cont.*
Wheat
Cultivation within the Empire, Encouragement of, proposed, *Mar. 4*, 791.
Prices on the Continent, *Mar. 4*, 793, 794.

Wishaw Burgh Electricity, etc., Bill
c. 2R.* *Mar. 2*, 311.

Wolff, Mr. G. H. [Belfast, E.]
Belfast Corporation Bill. 2R., *Feb. 27*, 158–160, 167.

Wolverhampton
Postal Telegraph Office, Pay in.
Q. Mr. T. F. Richards; *A.* Mr. Buxton, *Mar. 12*, 1710.

Women's Enfranchisement Bill
c. 2R., *Feb. 28*, 212.

Woolwich Arsenal
EmploymentStatistics and Reduction Proposals.
Q. Mr. Staveley-Hill; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11*, 1516.
Machinery lying Idle.
Q. Mr. W. T. Wilson; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 11*, 1515.
Reduction Policy, Dangers of.
Os. Mr. Crooks, *Mar. 11*, 1603–1607; Mr. Haldane, 1861.

Workmen's Compensation
Bankruptcy of Employer, Remedy Against.
Q. Mr. Rees; *A.* Mr. Gladstone, *Mar. 4*, 675.

Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. S. [Sheffield, Hallam]
Elementary Education (England and Wales) Bill. Enactments affected by—Circulation of Print, proposed, *Mar. 2*, 342.
Licensing Bill—Central Licensing Commission, Tenure of Office by Members of, *Mar. 9*, 1134.

Wyndham, Rt. Hon. G. [Dover]
Armaments, Reduction of Expenditure on, proposed, *Mar. 2*, 383–391.
Army
Artillery, Objections to Reduction of, *Mar. 12*,1865, 1866.
Cardwell System, Adherence to *Mar. 4*, 745, 751, 752; *Mar. 11*, 1598.

Wyndham, Rt. Hon. G.—*cont.*
Army—*cont.*
Cavalry, Divisional, Recruited from Yeomanry — Abandonment of Scheme, *Mar. 12*, 1863.
Expenditure, 1904–5–1907–8, *Mar. 2*, 385, 386.
Organisation of, *Mar. 11*, 1590, 1591 *Mar. 12*, 1864–1867.
Reductions Effected, *Mar. 2*, 385, 386; *Mar. 4*, 752; *Mar. 11*, 1591, 1592
Reserve, Strength of, *Mar. 4*, 728.
Territorial Force
Artillery Organisation, *Mar. 4*, 746, 753; *Mar. 11*, 1594, 1595.
Cost of, *Mar. 2*, 389; *Mar. 4*, 730, 731, 746, 747.
Enlistment into the Regular Army, Regulations as to, *Mar. 11*, 1597.
Lords - Lieutenants, Political Position of, *Mar. 12*, 1863.
Special Reserve
Officers, Conditions of Service, *Mar. 11*, 1596, 1597.
Value in Time of War, *Mar. 11*, 1596, 1594, 1597–1599.
Value as a Fighting Force, *Mar. 11*, 1593.
Defence of the Empire, Provision for, *Mar. 4*, 747–753.
Military Assistance to Civil Power—Terms of Reference of Proposed Committee *Mar. 5*, 937, 942.
Navy
Cordite—Condition of Stores, *Mar 2*, 388.
Cruiser Programme, *Mar. 3*, 583.
Expenditure, 1904–5–1907–8, *Mar. 2*, 396.
Rosyth, Policy as to, *Mar. 2*, 387, 402.
Torpedo Boat Destroyers
Comparative Strength in, of Great Britain and Germany, *Mar. 3* 584, 585, 587.
Provision of, *Mar. 2*, 388; *Mar. 3*, 581, 582, 585.
Yeomanry
Attestation Form, New, Regulations as to Signing, *Mar. 12*, 1809.
Pay under New Scheme, *Mar. 12* 1809, 1810.

Feb. 27—*Mar.* 12.

Yachts, Pleasure

Dues and Fees Payable by.
Q. Mr. Summerbell; *A.* Mr. Kearley, *Feb. 27*, 50.

Yeomanry

Attestation Form, New, Regulations as to Signing.
Os. Viscount Valentia, *Mar. 12*, 1799, 1800; Mr. Acland, 1808; Colonel Seely, 1808; Mr. Wyndham, 1809.

Conditions of Service under New Scheme
Os. Mr. A. S. Wilson, *Mar. 12*, 1782–1874; Viscount Valentia, 1799.

Netheravon School, Abolition of.
Os. Viscount Helmsley, *Mar. 12*, 1835; Mr. Haldane, 1856.
Q. Viscount Helmsley; *A.* Mr. Haldane, *Mar. 12*, 1717.

Pay under New Scheme.
Os. Mr. A. S. Wilson, *Mar. 12*, 1784, 1809; Viscount Valentia, 1800, 1801; Mr. Haldane, 1800, 1810, 1812; Mr. Acland, 1808, 1809; Lord Balcarres, 1808; Mr. Wyndham, 1809, 1810: Colonel Seely, 1810.

Training under New Scheme.
Os. Mr. A. S. Wilson, *M* 82, 1783; Mr. Haldane, 178.

Yorkshire

North Riding—Single School Areas.
Q. Mr. Acland; *A.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 4*, 666.

West Riding
Appeal Case, *see* under Education (England and Wales).

Education Loans, Payments on.
Q. Mr. Carlile; *A.* Mr. Burns, *Mar. 12*, 1756.

Schools, Accommodation in.
Qs. Mr. Carlile; *As.* Mr. McKenna, *Mar. 12*, 1732, 1763.

Younger, Mr. G. [Ayr Burghs]

Fisheries — Use of Seine Nets and Drift Nets, *Mar. 4*, 683.

Juries—Scottish Justices of the Peace, Liability of, *Mar. 4*, 681.

Licensing Bill, *Intro.*, *Feb. 27*, 174–179.

Liquor Traffic—Return as to Population and On-Licences in Rural and Urban Districts, *Mar. 9*, 1080.

Local Government (Scotland) Act, 1889—Amendment Proposals, *Mar. 4*, 682; *Mar. 9*, 1128.

Railways—Highland Extension Proposals, *Mar. 4*, 683.

Zululand

Martial Law, *see* Natal.